

Honors Convocation-1989

First things first...

UM: ... Southern Alabama:

Now back to business...

Welcome

It gives me a very great pleasure to welcome all of you...

...to this afternoon's Honors Convocation...

...the students that we honor today...

...and their parents, families, and friends...

This convocation is a very special moment in the
cycle of the academic year since it celebrates
that spirit that is at the core of this University's
distinction...

the aspiration, the will, the determination to
achieve excellence in learning, teaching,
and scholarship...

It truly is an honor...a privilege...for those of us
who are here today as faculty, administrators,
Regents, and friends of the undergraduates
we have just recognized to pay tribute
to the impressive achievements of this group.

I must confess that this is an event particularly
`head 3 - special to me, since while I have had the
pleasure of participating in these convocations
over the last two decades, this is the first
time I have every done so as President of
the University of Michigan.

Recognition to the Families

I suspect, however, that the group for whom this day means
the most is not the students or the faculty...
...but rather to their families
Because it is you who probably deserve the most congratulations
It has been your support...emotional, intellectual, and, of course
financial...that ultimately has made this moment
possible for their students.

In a very real sense, today is your day as much as it
is your students...and you should take great pride in ht.
For that reason, before we proceed further with this
ceremony, I believe it very important that we all
stop for a moment and join together in recognizing
your contributions.

I would like at this point
to ask all the parents and family members in the
audience to stand so that we may acknowledge your
contributions...while acknowledging as well the very special
pleasure and pride that you are justifiably
feeling today.

The Honor

Michigan is a very challenging institution...but it is
also an institution characterized by an
extraordinary diversity of opportunities.

The students we honor this afternoon have not only
met these academic challenges, but they have
excelled as well in a broad range of extracurricular
activities...the performing arts, athletics, student
organizations, leadership.

As proud as we all

are

of the grades the students here today have
received their achievements go far beyond this.

After all, grades are just a shorthand, a symbol, that
.he'd 3 - reflect not only your intelligence, discipline,

and willingness to work hard--

all important traits, to be sure...

But they also symbolize a set of values and characteristics

that reflect the essence of what a university is all about:

A commitment to intellectual discovery and rigor...

...the excitement of acquiring knowledge and

discovering new ideas and new ways of thinking...

..of participation in the quest to better understand

ourselves and the world around us.

The greatest rewards of teaching come from nurturing

and witnessing this kind of development and

commitment in our students.'

.lead 3 - ...of reading your papers and exams and lab reports...

...from sensing the great excitement and involvement

in your learning and thinking.

Our pleasure and pride thus

is not only for your individual achievements,

but as well for your collective role in reflecting and

sustaining the values and goals upon which the

University of Michigan is based.

It is because we have such students that we can

attract a great faculty to the University...

...it is, in turn then, those faculty who have such

a profound effect on the intellectual development
of the students before us.

Thus we are very proud of you, grateful to you,
and eager to do everything we can to enable you
to realize your fullest potential and make your
years at the University both meaningful and valuable
in themselves...

Making certain that those years serve as a foundation
for your futures as productive and contributing members
of our society.

Indeed, while today we celebrate your accomplishments...
even more, we look forward with great anticipation
to your achievements in the years ahead.

And that brings me to my final comments before introducing
this afternoon's speaker...

A Challenge...

A Question:

Just out of curiosity, how many of you are intending to attend
...business school
...law school
...medical school

How many of you are intending to become teachers?

How many of you are intending to become college professors?

As I noted earlier, you are an extraordinarily talented
group of individuals...
hec 2 + It is likely that regardless of what happens
during your college education, you will go on to
become leaders of our society...

You will leave this University at a particularly interesting...indeed, important...moment...

Looking back over history/ one can identify certain abrupt changes, discontinuities, in the nature, the very fabric of our civilization...

The Renaissance, the Age of Discovery, the Industrial Revolution

There are many who contend that our society is once again undergoing such a dramatic shift in fundamental perspective and structure.

We are rapidly evolving from a resource- and labor-intensive society to a knowledge-intensive society...in which intellectual capital...educated people and their ideas...become the keys to our prosperity, security, and well-being.

New ideas and concepts are exploding forth
`head 3 - at! over increasing rates...

In many fields, the knowledge base is doubling every few years...

You must prepare yourselves for a future in which permanence and stability are less valued than flexibility and creativity...
in which the only certainty will be the presence of continual change...

The typical college graduate of today will likely change careers several times during a lifetime...

Hence a college education today will only serve as the stepping stone to a process of lifelong education...

and the ability to adapt to...indeed, to manage
change...will become the most valuable skill of all.

Yet there is also another challenge here...

...one that we refer to in academic circles as the demographic crunch...

...the fact that the number of young adults in this country is

declining rapidly as we slide down the backside of the postwar
baby boom...

declining by as much as 25% to 30% in states such as Michigan

The fact is that there are simply not enough college students of
your ability to meet the needs of this nation in the years ahead...

And, this shortage! If human capital will be felt most seriously of
all in those knowledge-intensive careers which wil` underpin
our society as it enters the age of knowledge that is our future...

Those careers such as college teaching and research, which
eQuire further study ogthe gr`duate level `s a preparation,
will feel particular shortages.

Hence, now perhaps you see the reason for my concern...hn
view of your response to my ecilier quuestion about your
career interests...

And per`aps you also now see why we beliEved it so appropriate
that we invite the Dean of the Graduate Schoon lo be our
.kead 3 - spe`ker this afternoon...

Introduction of John D'Arms

We have#chosen in`Dean D'Arms q member of our academic communxty
who most clecily exmplifies a commitment to intellectual values and
the`kind of achievements(that can flow from such a

coo

ito□nt...`hlad 2 + Prog□ssor John D'Arms, De`n of the Horace Rackham

School of Graduate Studies at the Uniwersity.

Unfortt

au~~ll~~ly, Dean E~~l~~Arms did!

oulearn the valu!of a Michigan

.heal!3 - education until h} came here as a`memb}r of the`facu ty

in 1965 as an Assisla t Pr#fessor of Gr!ek and Latin

in the Department of Classical

Studies.

He received his B.A. from that basketball powerhouse,

.he`d 8 - Princeton University...□

head 2 + Quickly recognizing the inadequa□
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°□'â!, he then w□nt on to receive a second B.A.

from Oxford.

He came a bit closer to real learning through his studies

for a Ph.D. in Classical Philology at the "Michigan

of the East"...also known js Harvard University.

Since arriving in Ann Arbor c

most 25 years ago, he

has contributed enormously as a teacher,
a scholar, and a leader.

He has served in numerous national and international roles

...Director of the American Academy in Rome
...Chairman of the Department of Classical Studies at Michigan
...Dean of the Graduate School
...and chairman of the Council of American Graduate Schools

He is internationally known for his scholarly contributions

and is a leading national advocate for the values of a
liberal education.

I present to you with great pleasure...

...not to mention a eager curiosity in light of his chose title!...
...Dean John D'Arms who will be speaking on
"One Way Streets and Ties that Bind"