

IU SOUTH BEND 2004
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS PRESENTATION OF THE CLASS
CHANCELLOR RECK

Commencement is always a very special occasion and today is no exception.

First of all, it is special for the graduates and their family and friends. They have earned an Indiana University degree which will benefit them the rest of their lives.

This ceremony is also special because Indiana University President Adam Herbert is here. It was less than one month ago that he was installed as IU's 17th President. We are honored to have him with us today. Welcome, President Herbert.

Additionally, this evening is special because it is my second commencement as Chancellor at IU South Bend but my first with President Herbert. I am proud of what these graduates have accomplished and I am proud of the direction we are heading as a university.

I am originally from Texas, and Texans like to brag, so I want to brag for a few minutes about this graduating class.

A total of one-thousand and 58 students have earned degrees.

We will be conferring 254 master's degrees, 590 bachelor's degrees and 214 associate degrees. This includes 30 bachelor's and associate degrees from Purdue University School of Technology with whom we are proud to be campus partners.

Today's graduates will join more than 25,000 alumni who have earned degrees at IU South Bend since 1967. They reside in all 50 states and 29 foreign countries.

More importantly, 66 percent of our graduates continue to live in Indiana and the Michiana area.

This evening's youngest graduate is 19 years old.

This evening's oldest graduate is 65 years young.

Our students have made an impact on campus and our community. Here are some examples:

Heidi May is graduating with a degree in political science and a minor in sociology. She is a former victim of domestic violence and has dedicated herself to helping women in abusive situations. She is a volunteer for Indiana Legal Services and Americorps, and will go on to law school.

Sarah Freeman is graduating with honors with a bachelor's in sociology. She completed the rigorous Honors Program and she has been active with the Civil Rights Heritage Center. She organized an all-day event entitled "The Challenge of Hate" that involved national speakers and local activists.

David Seymour graduates with a master's in public affairs. He is the first African American male to graduate as a Fellow in the Housing and Urban Development program. He was a panelist for a campus discussion on "brain drain" in Indiana and co-hosted Providing Options on WSBT-AM.

Julio Del La Cruz graduates with a bachelor's in general studies. He is past president of the Latino Student Union. While attending classes he continued to help support his family by working full time as the manager in the family restaurant.

Theresa Brady graduates with a master's in social work. As an undergraduate she worked with the AIM Program as a mentor for teenage offenders. Today she is the regional director of the program. As part of her master's study, she researched the trauma experienced by developmentally disabled nursing home residents when they are moved between facilities. Her research is now being used to prevent harmful transfers.

Rebecca Shaffer is graduating with a degree in sociology and psychology. She served as the president of the Women's Student Union and worked to raise community awareness about domestic violence. She also organized a gender conference on campus this spring.

Tony Kingsolver is receiving his degree in sociology and political science. He has a knack for organizing. He received the Student Programmer of the Year Award from the Association for the Promotion of Campus Activities.

Kerri White, a graduate in political science, will teach English in China next year. She is an example of another graduate advancing IU internationally.

Dawn Jones has earned her master's degree in public affairs. She received a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development scholarship. She is currently the executive director of Youth Services at the Y-M-C-A. And as if that isn't enough, she is the mother of six children.

Roger Ramer could be the next Steven Spielberg. He is receiving his degree in fine arts. His next stop is graduate school at the Chapman University School of Film and Television in California where he will study directing.

Other students have faced challenges on their life's journey that make this ceremony even sweeter.

Annette Deguch started attending classes here in 1988. She married and started a family with her husband Paul who was a South Bend police officer. In 1997, Officer Deguch was killed in the line of duty. Annette came back to IU South Bend two years later and tonight she receives her bachelor's degree in general studies. We thank you, Annette, for the strength, courage and heart you have demonstrated to us all.

Mr. President, I have presented a brief profile of our Indiana University South Bend student body. They are successful, hard-working and creative with a desire to make a difference in a changing and difficult world.

These graduates have met Indiana University's expectations and aspire to achieve excellence in their lives. I present them to you with pride.

Ladies and gentlemen, graduates, families and friends, special guests, faculty and staff... it is now my pleasure to introduce Indiana University President Adam Herbert for his charge to the class of 2004.