

IU SOUTH BEND 2005 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. They have earned an Indiana University degree that will benefit them the rest of their lives. They have sacrificed and worked hard. Today they can celebrate.

Commencement also is special for the families and friends of the graduates. They have witnessed the ups and downs of the journey a student takes to earn a degree. They have seen the struggles and the triumphs. Today they can celebrate.

This ceremony also is special to me, as chancellor, to President Herbert, to the trustees of Indiana University, and to the faculty and staff of IU South Bend because these graduates make us proud of our work and our institution.

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 74 IU South Bend students have earned degrees this year.

We will be conferring 227 master's degrees, 635 bachelor's degrees and 212 associate degrees.

This includes 35 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 26-thousand IU South Bend alumni who reside in all 50 states and 29 foreign countries.

More importantly, more than 70 percent of our graduates stay in the area to contribute to the economy and enhance the quality of life here.

This evening's youngest graduate is 20 years old.

This evening's oldest graduate is 64 years young.

I want to share with you a special moment that occurred in the Monogram Room just prior to the start of commencement ceremonies.

President Herbert and I were honored to present a diploma to the family of David Smithson who passed away last April.

David was one of the non-traditional students at IU South Bend who we love so much. He worked for the NCR Corporation for 35 years.

He came to IU South Bend as a part-time student in 1976. He completed the Certificate in Management program in 1985. David then began working on a bachelor's degree in business.

After taking classes off-and-on for many years he returned as a full-time student at the age of 62. David would have graduated with the class of 2005 this evening.

We are proud to honor his memory.

Tonight's graduating class has made an impact on campus and in the community. Many graduates are shining examples of public service, outstanding intellect and overcoming adversity. Here are some examples:

Penny Povlock of South Bend has tutored nearly 200 students over the last five years while she earned her degree in accounting and worked 40 hours per week. She graduates with a 3.7 grade point average and is already working on her masters.

Jerry Morris Jr. was instrumental in creating the Titans of Tomorrow, an IU South Bend tutoring program. Jerry and a dozen fellow tutors left a lasting impression on 20 young boys and girls from Jefferson Elementary School. In addition to tutoring, Jerry volunteers at Hospice and the Chapin Street Clinic. He is president of the Native American Student Union and a senator with Student Government. Next year he will do research at Indiana University School of Medicine - South Bend before beginning medical school in 2006

John Spurgeon has several titles. He is an intensive care nurse. Tonight he is an IU South Bend graduate. And he is also a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve. Over the past two years, he has spent 476 days in Iraq helping

civilians with health care. His challenge has been finishing his nursing degree while serving his country. Mission accomplished.

Gloria Miller graduates this evening with a bachelor's degree in nursing. She has a 3.9 grade point average. She always wanted to go to college but her husband and her four children came first. Her plan was to graduate from college as her last child graduated from high school. She has succeeded.

Nancy Cook has kept good company during her studies in social work. During her practicum she went to India where she worked with Sisters of Charity and Mother Teresa. In Calcutta she cared for the sick and dying. Today, Nancy serves as a chaplain with the St. Joseph County Hospice.

There are three sets of mother -daughter graduates tonight.

Bonnie De Loof and Rosetta De Loof-Primmer have both earned a bachelor's degree in sociology.

Judy Slabach is graduating with a degree in elementary education. Her daughter, Maridith Johnson, has earned a degree in psychology.

And Fines Mosby and her daughter Ericka have both earned degrees in General Studies.

Ryan and Janian Oleson are graduating together tonight as husband and wife. Both have earned a bachelor's degree in education. Both of their mothers graduated from IU South Bend with degrees in education.

Diona Jackson is a single parent with three children. At IU South Bend she was the President of the Black Student Union and earned a degree in accounting. She has already accepted a position at Crowe Chizek and Company.

Emily Ladd has a 3.8 grade point average in business. She also has some other impressive stats for IU South Bend. As a leader on the women's basketball team, she made first team All-Chicagoland Conference. She is the Lady Titan's all-time leader in rebounds, field goals and blocked shots.

Melanie Leslie was elected the first president of the IU South Bend Student Alumni Association. She earned her bachelor's degree in business. She also spent her senior year as the reigning Miss Elkhart.

Leila Ndong was raised in Senegal. Tonight she receives a bachelor's degree in biological sciences with minors in chemistry and mathematics. She completed her course work in her fourth language (English) with a 3.7 grade point average.

Rebecca Ruvalcaba is well known in her west side neighborhood for her civic pride. She volunteers in schools, nursing homes and the Center for the Homeless. She was recognized as an Unsung Latina Heroine for her works as a role model and servant to the community. Rebecca has earned an Associate of Arts Degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Jennifer Brunt was recently awarded the 2004 Student Excellence Award by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Her grade point average is an impressive 3.98.

Jennifer is blind and suffers from kidney disease but is not deterred from reaching the highest standards. Her record of excellence and initiative is not limited to academics. She volunteers for Hospice of St. Joseph County, participates in the Hospice Walk, and presents guide dog demonstrations in the community with her dog Daffy. Her next goal is to earn her master's degree in social work. She is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. President, I have presented a brief profile of our IU South Bend student body. They are successful, hard-working and creative. Each with a desire to make a difference in a changing and challenging 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 2005.