

*Southaven High School Graduation  
Tuesday, May 22, 2001  
7pm  
DeSoto County Civic Center*

- **Thank you for invitation to be a part of tonight's celebration**
  
- **(story about graduation speaker not being intimidated by the hour, when he started his speech)**
  
- **Think about how do you want to be remembered...**
  - **As a wealthy individual?**
  - **As someone with a great degree of notoriety?**
  - **As someone who worked for the greater good?**
  
- **You are capable of achieving anything you want**
  
- **It doesn't matter which profession you go into**
  - **What matters is how you perform**
  - **It's not what you do, but how you do it, that matters**
  - **(Jordan / truck)**
  - **Mark Twain once said, "Always do right – this will gratify some and astonish the rest."**
  
- **Become a leader in your community**
  - **Your degree makes you capable**
  - **Leadership – not defined by titles or positions**
  - **The stand or action you take defines you**
  - **Sometimes this means making an unpopular decision**
  
- **There are those who are content with things the way they are, whose motto in life is "striving for mediocrity"**
  - **Not here; not in Mississippi**

- **We will not accept mediocrity; we will not be satisfied with the status quo; no allowance for saying “we tried”**
  - **We will create unparalleled opportunities for unparalleled progress**
  - **Change takes leadership, but it also takes people – people like yourself**
  
- **We were told we could not raise teacher pay**
  - **We were told, don’t waste your time; it can’t be done**
  - **It has happened**
  
- **“Time” magazine said no state has an internet-accessible computer in every classroom**
  - **Mississippi is over halfway to its goal of being the first state in the nation to accomplish this**
  - **Plan to have it all done by 2002**
  
- **There is so much more we can and will accomplish in Mississippi**
  - **You can be part of making it happen**
  - **We need you to help Mississippi reach its true potential**
  
- **Stretch yourselves**
  - **Make the most of God-given talents**
  - **(Your personal story; what they said we couldn’t do)**
  
- **Hodding Carter, native Mississippian: “Two things we can give our children – roots and wings”**
  - **You’ve been given your roots**
  - **They are here in DeSoto County**
  - **Your roots are your parents, teacher and friends**

- **Tonight, you've earned your wings**
  - **Use them to carry yourself to new heights**
  - **Explore; learn; enjoy**
  
- **Hope your wings will bring you back home to Mississippi**
  - **Bring you back to your roots**
  - **You can help establish the roots for the next generation**
  
- **Line from a poem by Edward Guest**
  - **“The things that haven't been done before  
Are the tasks worthwhile today.”**
  
- **Use your skill, talent, energy and drive to make a difference in your community**
  - **Do the things that haven't been done before**
  
- **Waverly W. Wray story**
  
- **God bless you and good luck**