

NADE 2000 – Meeting the Challenges and Serving as a Beacon for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
Thursday, March 16, 2000  
9:00 a.m.  
MS Coast Coliseum & Convention Center

- This is a meeting of the Mississippi Association for Developmental Education. This is an audience of 1,500. Chances are, your image will be projected onto a large screen so that the audience can see you. Think about voice tone. Speak slowly and be conscious of your gestures. Make strong definitive statements. Smile and stand up tall.
- Keep in mind that this is just a Welcome.

Good morning.

I would like to thank Vashti Muse, State Coordinator for the Mississippi Association for Developmental Education, for giving me the opportunity to welcome you to the great state of Mississippi.

The Mississippi Association for Developmental Education gave me the opportunity to make a video, which you saw at last year's conference in Detroit inviting you to hold your conference in Mississippi in

the year 2000. I am so pleased that you took us up on our invitation, and have given us the chance to show you why Mississippi is called the Hospitality State.

While you are visiting our beautiful state for your conference, I hope time will allow you the chance to enjoy the friendly people, great attractions, abundant natural resources and a multitude of recreation and entertainment options that can be found here on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and surrounding communities.

Whenever given the opportunity, I like to speak with educators. Education is one of the most important issues that we face in Mississippi. I campaigned on,

and am still fighting for teacher pay raises. We pay our teachers well so that we can attract the best of the best, because, after all, these are the people that we are entrusting with the future of Mississippi. That future is our children.

We are headed in the right direction. Just last week we announced the formation of the Governor's Task Force on Computer Technology. The educators, parents, business owners and professionals that serve as task force members are challenged with the goal of placing an Internet-accessible computer in every public elementary and secondary classroom in Mississippi by the end of the year 2002.

This is one step of many that we are taking to

improve the educational opportunities and tools that our young people will need to enter the world of advanced technology. Our children of today are our workforce of tomorrow and they must be prepared to face the challenges of the working world.

I commend you on your efforts to educate all children. I hope that you have a productive conference, and that you enjoy your visit to Mississippi. Hopefully, this will be one of many times that you visit us in the future.