

Bainbridge College Graduation
Friday, May 4, 2001
7:00 p.m.
Decatur County Coliseum – Georgia

Commencement Address

- I am aware of the real reason you are here today
 - You are here to get your hard thought, privileged piece of paper.

- (Story about graduation speaker not being intimidated by the time, when he started his speech.)

- How would you like to be remembered?
 - As a wealthy individual?
 - With a great degree of notoriety?

- You are capable of achieving all of these and more.

- Doesn't matter which profession you accept.
 - How you perform is what matters.
 - How, not what, you do, defines you.
 - We all know teachers or professionals who stand out.

- Becoming a leader in your community
 - Your degree makes you capable.
 - Leadership – not defined by titles or positions.
 - The stand/action you take, defines you and your impact on your community.

- Often we are concerned about our image in the state and what others outside our borders think of us
 - Be more concerned about our image of ourselves.

- Being 48th, 49th and 50th, we sometimes tend to think it's true.
- Our perception transcends our borders.
- The State of Mississippi should not accept mediocrity; we should not accept the status quo.
 - We should accept unparalleled opportunities for unparalleled progress.
 - We should not accept the excuse that's "the way it has always been."
 - Change takes leadership, but it also takes people.
- We were told that we could not raise teacher pay.
 - Don't waste your time; it cannot be done.
 - It has happened.
- Time magazine said no state has an Internet-accessible computer in every classroom.
 - Mississippi is on the way to being the 1st state in the nation to accomplish this by 2002.
- We must "stretch" ourselves.
- Move to do more than ever before
- Use skill, talent, energy and drive you have to make a difference in your community.
- How do you want to be remembered?
- (Waverly W. Ray Story)
- The manner and way you perform will influence others.