

Memphis Area Kiwanis Iodine Deficiency Disorder  
Wednesday, August 23, 2000  
12:00 p.m.  
Peabody Hotel, Memphis

They have asked that you talk about volunteerism, charitable outreach and your first six months in office. This is the keynote address.

## **Opening**

- Thank you for asking me to join you today.
- Story
- It has been a fast and furious seven months in office

## **Main Points**

1. On February 9<sup>th</sup> of this year I stood before both houses of the Mississippi Legislature and I outlined the state of the state – where we were in Mississippi. I also gave my assessment of where we should be and where we could be if we commit ourselves to a shared vision of the future.
  - a. Main areas of focus this administration
    - i. Education
      1. Raising Teacher Pay
      2. Computers in the classroom
      3. Accountability

ii. Healthcare

1. CHIP enrollment

- a. New plan of action
- b. New awareness campaign
- c. New partnerships for promotion
- d. More than doubled the number of children enrolled since the initiation of our efforts

2. Availability of Healthcare

Professional statewide

- a. Scholarships for medical school students

iii. Economic Development

1. New Plan

- a. The Advantage Mississippi Initiative
- b. New Incentives
- c. Better jobs for the people of Mississippi

2. Compete with Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, etc...

Because of the unusual beginning of this administration, our first six months were spent working on legislation and catching up because of no transition time.

Now that we have had the opportunity to get the legislative session behind us and we have tackled a few other issues, we are able to focus more attention to creating programs that can reach out to the community.

## 2. Governor's Internship Initiative

- a. Gives students practical hands-on experience
- b. Stipend for financial assistance
- c. Gives students a taste of public service

## 3. The Governor's Mentoring Initiative

- a. Key to our future are our children
  - i. So many need help that aren't receiving it
  - ii. The influences they have now influence their lives forever

- b. Effort to coordinate mentoring throughout the state

- i. Bring together all organizations that mentor

1. coordinate their efforts
  2. serve as a resource to those organizations
  - ii. Focus the public's attention on the importance of volunteering to mentor
  - iii. Recruit volunteer mentors
  - iv. Recruit more organizations that promote mentoring
- c. Partner with the National Mentoring Partnership
- i. Fourteenth state to join the partnership
  - ii. Serve as an advocate, guide and resource center
- d. Appoint the Governor's Leadership Council on Mentoring
- i. Representative of the people of our state
  - ii. Aid us in our efforts

## **Closing**

- As we improve our schools, provide health insurance for more Mississippi children and bring more job opportunities to the people of our state, we must also focus on the intangibles like teaching our people the importance of volunteerism.

- Whether volunteering through mentoring or volunteering at a hospital, tutoring or reading to a young child, it is critical that we learn to give back to our communities and our people.
- Our children are counting on us.
- The future is up to us.