

*Remarks for the
Robinson-Watson Book Company 13th Annual Honors Luncheon
June 19, 2002*

Thank you for the invitation to be with you today (recognize dignitaries).

I also want to thank the Robinson-Watson Book Company for their good work in our communities and their efforts to recognize the success stories that inspire us all.

Each of you here today understand that in today's world, the number of ways to do business is limited only by our imagination.

Over the past two years here in Mississippi, we've shown how we can create our own opportunities as well as capitalize on opportunities before us.

We know we can't control what happens on Wall Street, but we can have an affect on what happens on Main Street. That's why we never stop working to not only bring new business to Mississippi, but expand the businesses that are already here.

We've been successful. In the face of a national recession that's hitting every state, we've created more than 17,000 new jobs through the expansion of existing businesses.

I'm proud of the fact, too, that minority business participation has been strong in this growth.

From the smallest projects all the way up to the Nissan plant and the projected expansion, minority contractors and businesses have been active in the growth of Mississippi.

Here at home, we've known about the quality of our work force. A quick look around this room – from the people around the tables to those we honor today – reminds us of that fact.

Now, others are beginning to realize what we have to offer here – and the word is spreading fast, and it's spreading far. Mississippi is ready and able to compete any time and any place.

We're making our mark in the world, and I want to thank you for helping us do it. The end result is going to make a tremendous difference for this state.

Congratulations to today's honorees and the past honorees here with us. Thank you.