

SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
2007 COMMENCEMENT SPEECH  
DELIVERED MAY 31, 2007 BY SENATOR GALE D. CANDARAS

PRESIDENT RUBENZHAL, TRUSTEES, OUTSTANDING FACULTY,  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, GRADUATES:

I BRING YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES GREETINGS AND CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS GREAT AND GENERAL COURT AND FROM OUR GOVERNOR, HIS EXCELLENCY DEVAL PATRICK, A PERSON WHO ROSE FROM POVERTY AND OVERCAME ADVERSITY TO LEAD OUR GREAT STATE.

DEVAL PATRICK'S ASCENSION IN MASSACHUSETTS TO THE HIGHEST SEAT OF GOVERNMENT IS NO ACCIDENT! HE WORKED HARD, HE STUDIED HARD AND HE WAS COMMITTED TO DOING HIS BEST EVERY DAY OF HIS LIFE. THAT'S WHAT IT TOOK TO MAKE HIM SUCCESSFUL AND THAT'S WHAT WILL MAKE YOU SUCCESSFUL AS WELL.

NOW, GRADUATION SPEAKERS ARE SUPPOSED TO EXHORT YOU TO SAVE THE WORLD. I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT. BUT I AM GOING TO EXHORT YOU TO HELP REVITALIZE SPRINGFIELD!

LIKE MANY GREAT NORTHEASTERN CITIES, SPRINGFIELD NEEDS A RENAISSANCE THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. WE NEED TO BRING THOUSANDS OF JOBS TO SPRINGFIELD TO REPLACE THE THOUSANDS OF JOBS LOST OVER THE PAST 40 YEARS AND WE NEED TO REINVENT ONE OF MASSACHUSETTS' LARGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT CITIES AND MAKE IT THE ECONOMIC ENGINE IT ONCE WAS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH.

GOVERNOR PATRICK AND THE LEGISLATURE ARE COMMITTED TO SPRINGFIELD'S RENAISSANCE AND MANY TALENTED INDIVIDUALS ARE TEAMING UP TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. EXPERTS TELL US THAT WE'RE AT THE DAWN OF A NEW ECONOMIC AGE HERE IN WESTERN MASS, ONE DRIVEN BY BIO TECHNOLOGY AND LIFE SCIENCES. SPRINGFIELD IN PARTICULAR, IS POISED TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE BUT WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU! IN FACT, THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE EQUATION IS YOU!

OUR ABILITY TO ATTRACT MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND INVESTORS DEPENDS UPON YOU!—THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROFESSIONALS.

WE NEED YOU TO COMMIT TO THE CITY! COMMIT TO BUILDING YOUR LIVES HERE AND COMMIT TO BEING PART OF THE COMMUNITY THAT WILL LEAD SPRINGFIELD IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR COMMITMENT CANNOT BE OVERSTATED. WHEN BUSINESS LEADERS THINK ABOUT RELOCATING TO A CITY, THE FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IS WHETHER THERE EXISTS IN THAT CITY AN EDUCATED WORKFORCE.--A LARGE NUMBER OF EDUCATED PEOPLE READY, WILLING AND ABLE TO WORK HARD! THAT'S WHAT ATTRACTS CORPORATIONS TO INVEST AND RELOCATE.

YOU CAN BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF A SPRINGFIELD AND WESTERN MASS RENAISSANCE BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO COMMIT YOURSELVES TO THAT GOAL AND MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS NOT ONLY BY YOUR OWN WEALTH BUT BY THE WELFARE OF YOUR COMMUNITY. YOU MUST BRING IT EVERY DAY. YOU MUST BRING YOUR EDUCATION, INTEGRITY AND WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD TO THE STARTING GATE EVERY DAY OF YOUR WORKING LIVES. IF YOU DO THAT, YOU WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND OUR COMMUNITY WILL BE STRONGER.

AND MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT: THERE ARE NO SUBSTITUTES FOR EDUCATION, INTEGRITY AND HARD WORK! PEOPLE WILL TRY TO CONVINCEN YOU THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORK HARD IF YOU WORK SMART, OR WORK FAST, OR KNOW THE ANGLES, OR KNOW THE BOSS OR KNOW HOW TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN FOR YOURSELF. THESE APPROACHES LEAD TO FAILURE TEN OUT OF TEN TIMES.

AGAIN, THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION, INTEGRITY AND HARD WORK. JUST BEING SMART ISN'T ENOUGH. RECRUITERS WILL TELL YOU THAT THERE ARE PLENTY OF SMART PEOPLE IN AMERICA—WHAT WE NEED ARE SMART PEOPLE WITH INTEGRITY WHO ARE WILLING TO WORK HARD TO HELP MOVE OUR CITY, OUR STATE, AND OUR NATION FORWARD.

I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT! I HAD THE PLEASURE OF TEACHING BUSINESS LAW FOR A SEMESTER AT SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE WHEN ONE OF YOUR PROFESSORS BECAME ILL. I HAD A GREAT CLASS AND REMEMBER WELL HOW BRIGHT AND READILY ENGAGED THEY WERE—EVEN LATE IN THE EVENING. THEIR MOTIVATION WAS INSPIRING. I KNOW YOU RECEIVED A GREAT EDUCATION AT STCC—AN EDUCATION THAT WILL STAND YOU IN GOOD STEAD FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIVES. YOU HAVE MADE A GREAT INVESTMENT IN YOURSELVES AND YOUR COMMUNITY, AN INVESTMENT THAT WILL NEVER STOP PAYING OFF.

I WILL CLOSE BY SAYING WHAT IS NEAREST AND DEAREST TO MY HEART. VOTE, VOTE, VOTE! VOLUNTEER, VOLUNTEER, VOLUNTEER! NEVER MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE. NEVER HESITATE TO VOLUNTEER TO SERVE YOUR CITY OR YOUR STATE. I STARTED MY CAREER IN GOVERNMENT TWENTY YEARS AGO AS A LOCAL VOLUNTEER SERVING MY COMMUNITY. THAT SIMPLE ACT OF VOLUNTEERING CHANGED MY LIFE IN WAYS I NEVER EXPECTED. VOTE AND VOLUNTEER! NEXT TO YOUR INDUSTRY AND COMMITMENT, WE NEED AN ENGAGED ELECTORATE AND PEOPLE WILLING TO LEAD IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY. YOU'VE GOT ALL THE RIGHT STUFF. NOW GO DO IT!

AGAIN, CONGRATULATIONS FROM GOVERNOR PATRICK AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE—YOU ARE OUR GREATEST ASSETS, OUR MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCES, AND OUR FUTURE. AND WE ARE SO PROUD AND EXCITED FOR ALL OF YOU.

THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME!