

Student Leadership Luncheon, Installation Week, 2/16/2006

It's an honor for me to address this group of outstanding student leaders. You have chosen to lead and to be role models, and I congratulate you. Your work – just as much as my own -- is helping to build an even greater university here in Chattanooga. This week, I have the rare opportunity to state what I believe in, to share my vision for the future of UT Chattanooga, and to ask you, our faculty, our staff, and the community to work with me to make the vision a reality. For my part, I promise to dedicate myself to making your educational experience, your degree, and your Alma Mater more valuable each year than it was the last.

Let me start by sharing with you what I think leadership means, and what I believe it will mean to you.

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf :
Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without the strategy.

Rosabeth Moss Kantor, MIT management professor: Leaders are more powerful role models when they learn than when they teach.

Dwight D. Eisenhower: You do not lead by hitting people over the head - that's assault, not leadership.

Here are some of the traditions that we enjoy today that were created by student leaders like yourselves:

In 1904, a student named Elizabeth Hullihen penned the words to the Chattanooga Alma Mater, one we still proudly sing today.

In 1911, a group of senior students dubbed the campus yearbook the Mocassin. The term was later shortened to Mocs, and today still stands as a nickname for our athletics teams and campus friends and supporters.

In the mid 1990s, a group of students brought forward the idea for a student amphitheater, and today that facility is home to several campus events and is situated as a landmark on the campus greenway.

Just a few years ago, our Student Government President promoted the notion of a student park in the heart of campus, which is now located just behind Brock Hall near the Lupton Library.

These are just a few examples of how students have made history for both themselves and for the institution. And so my charge to you this morning is to make your own history during your time on campus. I encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities this campus and this community afford you.

Now, here are some of the things that I pledge to work for on your behalf – and with your help:

I. Students must be prepared to work in a global economy

a. Mastering math and science maximizes opportunities in technology. I will strive to make UTC's programs in math, science, and technology the strongest in the state and comparable with any in the country. According to many experts, we are losing our competitive edge in the world economy because American students are not studying math and science in great enough numbers and are not entering the fields of employment that create new technologies to solve the critical world problems like those in medicine and health care, environmental threats, transportation, energy sources, and international business. I want to see our degree programs be state-of-the-art in both their content and their equipment so that you will be prepared the day that you leave here to make a contribution to your company, your community, and to the world.

b. Students preparing to educate our state's children will be a valuable asset from pre-k through high school. We all have a favorite teacher, and we all know the impact a good teacher can have on the future of a child. We need some of our best and brightest students to become teachers to pass on a love for learning and an excitement and enthusiasm that can only come when you yourselves have mastered the field of study which you intend to teach. The days of having teachers be just one chapter ahead of the students in an elementary science class or a high school calculus class must come to an end. We cannot afford to have mediocre or poor elementary and high school educations while our competitor nations in the world are leaving us behind.

II. Students must have other creative outlets available to them in addition to math, science, and technology. We must continue to produce artists, dancers, singers, and poets.

For those of us like me who do not have the talent to create these beautiful works of art and culture, the University must continue to find ways to

nurture an appreciation of the arts and humanities so that we love them as part of our human experience. My very favorite courses in college were my Philosophy courses. It was a thrill to study some of the great thinkers and to learn some of the processes and techniques of how to think about a problem in new and surprising ways. I promise to keep the arts and humanities courses at UTC strong and exciting for you and future students.

II. The college experience embraces much more than attending classes

*Student involvement creates possibilities for learning from fellow students, faculty, administrators and community leaders.

*Ideas become reality, and big changes can occur.

Oliver Wendell Holmes: A mind, once stretched by an idea, never returns to its original shape.

I want to see a highly involved student body with new student organizations evolving, new partnerships among organizations, new energy and excitement about being a UTC Moc. I want to see big entertainment shows every semester and locally produced shows every week.

I want to see 24-hour coffee shops and internet cafes, retail shops within easy walking distance for everything from food, to t-shirts, to CDs, to sports equipment, to cell phones, to dressy clothes.

I want to see a Wellness Center that will be better than any other fitness center in the city, and with an Olympic-size swimming pool.

III. I am very proud of all that already do. Students are the University's most valuable assets. You tell the story of UTC:

*Each time a fraternity helps the Chattanooga Food Bank collect and package groceries for struggling families

*When an education major volunteers at Battle Academy

*When SAC members decorate and participate in the Holiday StarLight Parade in Chattanooga

*When Amy Prevost represents students across the UT System to the UT Board of Trustees

*When students from the Pres House take their fall and spring breaks to help those still recovering from the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina

*You show your community, your state, your nation what it means to lead at a University that means so much to so many.

*No press release or marketing effort could ever be as effective as the positive actions of our student body.

I strongly urge you to stay involved, inside the walls of the University, and long after you leave.

*You will leave your mark

*Your voice will be heard

*Your example will be a powerful example to others

Participation in student organizations, attending the variety of campus events offered throughout the year, and exploring the treasures found in Chattanooga and the surrounding area will enhance your college experience and build memories you will cherish for years to come.

Indira Gandhi, great Prime Minister of India:

My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group. There is much less competition.

I am proud to be your Chancellor

*I invite you to work with me to make University the best it can be

*I challenge you to take every opportunity to encourage your fellow students to do the same.

Thank you!!