

CONVOCATION ADDRESS  
BYU-COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION  
APRIL 23, 2010

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ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES I HAVE IN LIFE IS TAKING THE TIME, THE EFFORT AND THE INTEREST TO KEEP ABREAST OF WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THINKING, ACHIEVING, STUDYING, THE LIST GOES ON. I FEEL I WILL NEVER GROW OLD MENTALLY OR SPIRITUALLY IF I AM IN TUNE WITH YOU, THE YOUTH OF TODAY.

FACEBOOK, TWITTER, TEXTING, BLOGGING, ARE JUST A FEW OF THE NEW INNOVATIONS THAT YOU ACCEPT AS A NATURAL PART OF YOUR LIFE. AS I ATTENDED THE INAUGURATION OF DR. STEPHEN NADAULD AS THE 17<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT OF DIXIE STATE COLLEGE OF UTAH LOCATED IN ST. GEORGE, UTAH, HE STATED THAT HE HAD JUST VISITED THE DIGITAL LEARNING BUILDING. HE HESITATED A MOMENT AND THEN SMILED AND SAID-----I USED TO CALL IT THE LIBRARY. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOU ARE ALL HIGHLY PROFICIENT IN WHAT I CALL THE NEW TECHNOLOGY.

A CONSTANT IN OUR LIVES COMES FROM THE TEACHINGS IN THE BIBLE AND THE BOOK OF MORMON. THE WORLD MAY CHANGE, AS IT IS CERTAINLY DOING TODAY, BUT THE CONSTANT OF THE SPIRITUAL ELEVATES EACH ONE OF US TO HIGH IDEALS THAT LEAD TO A MORE

PRODUCTIVE AND HAPPIER LIFE. HOW FORTUNATE TO HAVE OUR SAVIOR, A GREAT TEACHER, AS A CONSTANT COMPANION IN OUR LIVES. TO LIVE THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL IS TO EXPERIENCE HAPPINESS AND A FULFILLMENT OF SELF-WORTH. THE LORD IS THERE TO TEACH US, IF WE BUT LISTEN.

WHAT ARE THE VALUES THAT FORM A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE? THE VALUES THAT NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE. THE SAME VALUES THAT EXISTED YESTERDAY, TODAY AND WILL EXIST TOMORROW? I WANT TO SHARE WITH EACH ONE OF YOU THE MAGIC THAT COMES INTO YOUR LIFE WITH THE ACCEPTANCE OF TRIED AND TRUE PHILOSOPHIES.

THE SUCCESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE PROGRAM CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO TAKING THESE PHILOSOPHIES INTO THE PROGRAM AND INTO OUR LIVES. THESE PHILOSOPHIES WERE THE CORE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM. STARTING WITH ONLY SIX COUPLES, TODAY IT IS A WORLD RENOWNED, HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.

WHERE DID MY FIRM BELIEFS IN 'PEOPLE' PARTICULARLY YOUNG PEOPLE SUCH AS YOU ARE, COME FROM? NOW THAT YOU ARE READY TO STEP ONTO THE WORLD STAGE, LET ME SHARE MY PHILOSOPHIES FOR SUCCESS.

I SINCERELY FEEL I WAS SENT TO EARTH ON A MISSION TO WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE. AFTER MANY AND VARIED EXPERIENCES IN LIFE, I FOUND BYU. AND I FOUND YOUNG PEOPLE THAT WERE EAGER TO LEARN,

ABLE TO ADAPT TO CHANGE, WITH AN OPEN MIND FOR GROWTH, AND SOME OF THE NICEST KIDS I HAVE EVER MET. THIS IS WHERE MY CALLING BLOSSOMED FROM A DREAM---TO REALITY.

A DREAM IS A MAGICAL PART OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S LIFE. YOUR IMAGINATION CAN TAKE YOU TO THE STARS AND BACK. I FOUNDED THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCERS WITH A DREAM TO TEACH YOUNG PEOPLE, NOT ONLY HOW TO FOLK DANCE, BUT TO EDUCATE THE TOTAL PERSON. I WANTED TO PROVIDE EVERY STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH, CHALLENGES TO BE A BETTER PERSON, AND I WANTED THEM TO KNOW THAT EVERY ACHIEVEMENT WAS APPRECIATED, ACCEPTED, AND ACKNOWLEDGED BY ME.

THE SECOND PART TO THE DREAM IS TO GIVE IT A FIRM FOUNDATION. THEN TAKE THAT DREAM TO MORE PRODUCTIVE PROGRAMS. I WOULD SPEND ALL SUMMER THINKING OF NEW AND DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THE FOLK DANCE PROGRAM. I WOULD WRITE ALL THE IDEAS DOWN AND HAND IT TO THE DEAN. AS HE TOOK THAT LIST, I WAS COMMITTED. **ACTION RIGHT NOW** TO MAKE IT ALL COME TRUE. AND I DID. BIGGER AND BETTER TOOK SHAPE AND FORM AND WE GREW FROM SIX COUPLES TO 380 DANCERS ON A TRY-OUT BASE.

TODAY YOU ARE IN THE SAME STAGE OF LIFE AS I WAS AT THAT POINT. I'M SURE, IF YOU COULD SHARE YOUR DREAMS THEY WOULD TAKE US ALL OVER THE GLOBE. SHARING MY PHILOSOPHIES FOR SUCCESS WILL BE MY GRADUATION GIFT FOR EACH OF YOU.

PEOPLE MAY ASK MY AGE. MY PAT ANSWER IS 'AGE IS A NUMBER AND MINE IS UNLISTED'. I ATTRIBUTE THREE WORDS TO MY LONGEVITY; **POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE**. NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE. IF YOU CAN DREAM IT, YOU CAN DO IT. OVER MY DESK WAS A SLOGAN---THE IMPOSSIBLE WE DO AT ONCE--MIRACLES TAKE A LITTLE LONGER. THAT WAS, AND IS MY ATTITUDE TODAY.

**NEVER GIVE UP.** HOW EASY IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TO TURN MY BACK ON ONE OF THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES THAT HAD COME TO THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCERS. IN 1964 THE 'PEOPLE TO PEOPLE' ORGANIZATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C. EXTENDED AN INVITATION FOR THE AMERICAN FOLK DANCERS TO TOUR EUROPEAN FOLK FESTIVALS AS OFFICIAL AMBASSADORS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. WE WERE THE FIRST AMERICAN GROUP TO RECEIVE AN OFFICIAL INVITATION. IN 1964 IT WOULD BE A LEARNING EXPERIENCE COMPARED TO NONE. THE ADMINISTRATION WAS SUPPORTIVE AND THOUGHT IT A GREAT HONOR. THE ONLY PROBLEM---THERE WAS NO MONEY TO PAY FOR THE TOUR.

NOW FOR THE LESSON IN NEVER GIVING UP.

MY HUSBAND AND I, IN OUR OWN NAMES, BORROWED 26,000.00 FROM THE UNIVERSITY TO PAY FOR THE TOUR. IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF FORTY FIVE YEARS OF TOURING. WHEN WE PAID THE TOTAL AMOUNT BACK TO THE UNIVERSITY. HAVING PERFORMED EVERY WEEKEND, I THOUGHT THE PRESIDENT WOULD JUMP UP AND DOWN WITH

EXCITEMENT OVER OUR ACHIEVEMENT. WRONG. A SMILE, A THANK YOU, AND HE LEFT.

THAT WAS THE DAY WE ADOPTED THE SLOGAN AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CAMPUS AS *OUR SLOGAN*—THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS. THAT WAS THE DAY THE EUROPOEAN CONTINENT, AND THE WORLD, BECAME OUR FUTURE CLASSROOM. THAT IS THE DAY WE TURNED OUR BOOK LEARNING INTO PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

JUST AS YOU ARE GOING OUT INTO A WORLD OF NEW EXPERIENCES, THE FOLK DANCERS WERE GOING TO EUROPE AND INTO THE UNKNOWN OF NEW EXPERIENCES. THOSE SAME PHILOSOPHIES THAT BECAME AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR FIRST TOUR WILL BECOME A HALLMARK OF YOUR DETERMINATION TO GO FORTH AND SERVE.

ONE OF THE MOST BASIC FEELINGS THAT WE ARE BORN WITH IS THE NEED TO BE WANTED, NEEDED, A PART OF, AND APPRECIATED. **AWARENESS** IS CRITICAL IN HELPING EACH ONE OF YOU FULFILL THIS NEED, NOT ONLY FOR YOURSELF, BUT FOR THE PEOPLE YOU ASSOCIATE WITH.

ONE OF LIFES GREATEST CHALLENGES IS TO **PUT YOURSELF SECOND TO YOUR GOALS AND DREAMS**. PUTTING YOURSELF SECOND TO AN UNSELFISH OUTLOOK IN LIFE AND BEING ABLE TO SHARE CREDIT FOR YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, BRINGS SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES AND HAPPINESS.

BECAUSE OF THE MULTIFACETED MATERIAL SHARED WITH THE STUDENTS THEY ORIGINATED A NAME FOR OUR CLASS-----THE MARY BEE JENSEN FINISHING SCHOOL. IT IS PRUDENT TO **BE EDUCATED IN PROTOCOL**, AND THEN YOU CAN FEEL COMFORTABLE IN EVERY SITUATION, FROM MEETING THE KING AND QUEEN OF A COUNTRY, TO VISITING WITH THE PEASANTS WORKING IN THE FIELDS IN PORTUAL. TO BE **SENSITIVE** TO PEOPLE, YOUR SURROUNDINGS, AND PARTICULARLY TO THE WIDE VARIETY OF INTERNATIONAL CULTURES, IS A MUST IN OUR CULTURE TODAY.

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS** MAKE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION. AWARENESS OF PERSONAL GROOMING AT ALL TIMES WAS OUR FIRST CHALLENGE. AS FOLK DANCERS IN EUROPE, OUR DRESS, ACTIONS, VOICES, AND SMILES BECAME A PERMANENT ATTRIBUTE IN OUR LIVES AS WE REPRESENTED AMERICAN YOUTH AT ITS FINEST.

DURING MY CAREER I FOUND MENTAL STIMULATION AND GROWTH FROM READING VERSE AND FROM THE SPOKEN WORD. FROM THE BOOK, THE TREASURE CHEST EDITED BY KENNETH HOLMES, I FOUND MY FAVORITE VERSE CALLED "JUST FOR TODAY". EVERY STUDENT I WORKED WITH RECEIVED A COPY. I STILL CARRY A COPY IN MY WALLET. MAY I SHARE A FEW LINES WITH YOU?

JUST FOR TODAY I WILL TRY TO LIVE THROUGH THIS DAY ONLY, AND NOT TACKLE MY WHOLE LIFE'S PROBLEM AT ONCE.

I CAN DO SOMETHING FOR TWELVE HOURS THAT WOULD APPALL ME IF I FELT THAT I HAD TO KEEP IT UP FOR A LIFETIME.

JUST FOR TODAY I WILL BE HAPPY. THIS ASSUMES TO BE TRUE WHAT ABRAHAM LINCOLN SAID, THAT 'MOST FOLKS ARE AS HAPPY AS THEY MAKE UP THEIR MINDS TO BE.

JUST FOR TODAY I WILL TRY TO STRENGTHEN MY MIND. I WILL READ SOMETHING THAT REQUIRES EFFORT, THOUGHT AND CONCENTRATION.

JUST FOR TODAY I WILL BE AGREEABLE AND NOT TRY TO IMPROVE OR REGULATE ANYBODY EXCEPT MYSELF.

JUST FOR TODAY I WILL BE UNAFRAID, ESPECIALLY I WILL NOT BE AFRAID TO ENJOY WHAT IS BEAUTIFUL, AND TO BELIEVE THAT AS I GIVE TO THE WORLD SO THE WORLD WILL GIVE TO ME.

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN EXCITED WITH LIFE. I AM ALWAYS LOOKING FOR A NEW ADVENTURE AND EXCITEMENT AROUND EVERY CORNER. I RECOGNIZE THAT ONE NEVER SEE'S ANYTHING UNTIL THEY SEE THE BEAUTY IN IT. I ENJOY PEOPLE, APPRECIATING AND RECOGNIZING THEIR DIFFERENCES. I KNOW THAT I AM SO BLESSED.

NOW, LET'S SHIFT GEARS AND TALK ABOUT THE FOLK DANCE GUIDELINES THAT CAME ABOUT OUT OF SITUATIONS THAT CALLED FOR A HUMOROUS AND IMMEDIATE RETORT. ON OUR SECOND OVERSEAS TOUR,

ONE OF THE LONGEST IN THE HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM, SIX PIECES OF LUGGAGE WERE STOLEN IN NEW YORK'S O'HARE AIRPORT. SIX GIRLS LEFT THE USA WITH THE SUIT THEY WERE WEARING, AND THEIR CARRY ON. WE WERE GOING FOR THREE MONTHS.

WE WERE TRAVELING THROUGH FOURTEEN COUNTRIES. WE UNITED AS A FAMILY AND SHARED EVERYTHING WE HAD. I OVERHEARD A YOUNG MAN SAY 'DOESN'T HER HAIR LOOK AWFUL'? SHE WAS ONE WHO HAD HAD HER LUGGAGE STOLEN. WE STOPPED EVERYTHING RIGHT THEN AND AN EXPRESSION I USE TODAY---WAS BORN.

1. THINK IT--DON'T SAY IT.
2. IF YOU CAN'T SAY ANYTHING NICE---DON'T SAY ANYTHING AT ALL.
3. IF WORRY WILL HELP, GO AHEAD AND WORRY. IF IT WON'T HELP, WAIT UNTIL YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.
4. SHIFT GEARS
5. EXTEND YOUR HAND OF FRIENDSHIP FIRST.

OUR MOTTO BECAME;

ONE FOR ALL--AND ALL FOR ONE-- RIGHT NOW.

THE FOLK DANCERS LEARNED AS THEY TRAVELED ABROAD, AND EVEN HERE AT HOME, THAT THE GREATEST WAY TO TEACH THE GOSPEL IS TO TEACH BY EXAMPLE. IN THE EUROPEAN FESTIVALS, THE DANCERS EARNED THE HIGHEST APPLAUSE FROM THE AUDIENCES, TIME AND TIME AGAIN. A COMMENT OFTEN HEARD WAS THAT 'ANYONE COULD DO THE DANCES, BUT THE BYU DANCERS WERE DIFFERENT.' THEY RADIATED



THEIR LOVE OF LIFE AND THE SAVIOR, THEIR EYES SPARKLED IN A WAY NOT OFTEN SEEN, SO WELL MANNERED, CLEAN CUT, AND THEY SHOWED ENTHUSIASM THAT CARRIED THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD FROM THE DANCER TO THE AUDIENCE.

AS YOU GRADUATE TODAY, RELYING UPON THE LORD'S ASSISTANCE, SAVOR YOUR DREAMS, PUT A FIRM FOUNDATION UNDER THEM AND KNOW THAT WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM AND EXCITEMENT, THE FUTURE BELONGS TO YOU. FOLLOW THAT DREAM TO A FULFILLMENT THAT YOU DESERVE. AS YOU INCORPORATE THESE PHILOSOPHIES MY HOPE AND PRAYER FOR YOU, IS THAT YOU WILL ENJOY A LIFE AS RICHLY BLESSED AS MINE HAS BEEN.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN