PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2001: What a special class! I'm confident that all of these graduates are destined to be spectacularly successful.

As a surrogate parent of sorts, I have watched our undergraduates grow intellectually and socially over the past four years. Here at Bryant we have tried to provide them not only with the academic subject matter, but also with the life skills and qualities they'll need to be successful in life and in business.

As Charles Silberman once wrote, "Education should prepare people not just to earn a living but to live a life — a creative, humane, and sensitive life."

As my wife Kati and I have watched these young people grow, we have marveled at how successfully they have navigated the challenges of holding part-time jobs, playing sports, excelling in challenging academic programs... and still making the time to have fun. We've been their neighbors for four years, and it's been a great experience.

Our advanced degree students, too, look forward to remarkable futures. In this time of intense global competition, when the demands on every entrepreneur force him or her to be something of a scholar — and when the demands on the scholar force him or her to be something of an entrepreneur — their degrees are valuable indeed. I salute their determination, their ambition, and their success.

I and the entire Bryant community feel almost as proud of these graduates as their own families. It has been a tremendous honor to be part of their lives, introducing them to new ideas, unleashing their potential, and becoming their friends as well as their mentors.

I won't say goodbye. Instead I'll say, see you soon. Come back and visit us. Share with us your successes. Whether for a class reunion or to recruit future graduates, come back as often as possible — for each of you will always be part of our prayers and our Bryant family.

Ronald K. Machtley
President
"I and the entire Bryant community feel almost as proud of these graduates as do their own families."

Ronald K. Machlley, President
"You have the education, the passion, the ability to go out into the world and make it better."

Juan Williams '01H, Host, Talk of the Nation (NPR)
Modern America has a lot of people who talk about being burned out. I ask you not to get caught up in that game. Think back to your grandparents, great grandparents, going through the Great Depression of the '30s. Think about WWII, Korea, Vietnam. Think of the hurdles 50 years ago for immigrants, for women, for black people. Every generation has its hurdles and I ask you not to allow yourself the poisonous luxury of saying, "I'm stressed out, I'm burned out, I can't do it." You will do it.

I think of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who had to inspire people to believe in themselves in a country that was in a depression. I think of Thurgood Marshall, who with Brown vs. Board of Education undid segregation in public schools.

Just 10 years ago, I was in South Africa. The Washington Post sent me there because Nelson Mandela had been released from prison. I wanted an interview with him, but it was difficult because there were reporters there from all over the world. But he had read a book I had written, *Eyes on the Prize*, so he agreed to shake my hand. When I got up I said, "Mr. Mandela, I've come all this way and I represent a big newspaper in the United States, and I would love to do an interview with you." He said, "Well, you're a writer, and I'm getting all of these congratulatory telegrams from around the world. You could act as a personal secretary for me. If you want to do that, you can hang around and I'll talk to you."

So I wrote some silly notes, like, "Thank you Comrade Gorbachev. It is great to be out. Hope to see you soon. Love, Nelson." In exchange, I got to sit with this tremendous individual as he was meeting grandchildren, as he was having home cooked food, as he was talking with friends. At one point I said, "You must have wanted to break apart apartheid from the time you were a child." He laughed. He said he had no intention of becoming a political player when he was a young man. He said if he had any rebellion in his heart, it was against his parents: He didn't want to grow up in a tribal tradition, didn't want to live in a township, wanted a western-style education, and wanted to become a lawyer.

Eventually, with his law partners, he became involved in the African National Congress. Pretty soon this young man who was trying to become the best that he could be was designated a man of such leadership potential that he was a threat to the government. He was tried and put in jail for 27 years.

But even as the government tried to cover his life, his life began to shine brighter and became a symbol to the world of a freedom struggle. When he got out of jail, people all over the world celebrated his release. Then this man even in his 70s went on to become president of a multi-racial democratic South Africa, and to share a Nobel Prize.

Today I see in all of you the spirit of a Franklin Delano Roosevelt, of a Thurgood Marshall, of a young Nelson Mandela. You have the education, the passion, the ability to go out into the world and make it better. Congratulations!
Excerpts from Bryant College
Graduate School Commencement Address
May 18, 2001

CONTINUE TO LEARN

Let me assure you that the effort you have put in to get these degrees at night shows that you have the commitment to yourselves and to others that companies need in these uncertain and demanding times. So let me begin by congratulating each and every one of you, and the families that have put up with you, for all that you have accomplished.

I know enough about Bryant to be absolutely certain that you have a wonderful education in basic financial, managerial, leadership, and teamwork skills. And you have already proven that you are not afraid of the hard work and sacrifice it takes to contribute to your own lives and the lives of others around you. Those of us whom you will be talking to over the years will value all those things and your willingness to think creatively and boldly, your ability to use your skills to learn new things.

The skills you have, along with your commitment to adaptation and teamwork, will allow you to cope with futures that none of us can truly envision. One of my accomplishments was working on the Massachusetts and Rhode Island electricity construction bills. But I noticed in the paper the other day that Speaker of the House John Harwood has now introduced legislation to see if [those bills were] a good idea in the first place. As you go forward you will find that many of the things you do will work for a while, but not later. I urge you to keep in mind that you may need to fix the things that you have done. Your wonderful experience at Bryant will be useful in this increasingly complex world we face.

There is an old joke that says a college education never hurt anyone who was willing to learn after getting it. Your education will help you a lot. But mostly, it will help you learn again now that you have it.
"I know enough about Bryant to be absolutely certain that you have a wonderful education."

John W. Rowe '01H, President and Co-CEO, Exelon Corporation
"There is no limit to how far our courage can take us."

Suzanne Trenary '01
Excerpts from Bryant College
Undergraduate Commencement Address
May 19, 2001

THE POWER OF COURAGE

Raymond Lindquist, an inspirational author, states, “Courage is the power to let go of the familiar.” To you, my fellow graduates, I offer this definition of courage as a reminder of how brave we all are for getting to this very moment, our graduation from Bryant College. Yes, it took a tremendous amount of hard work and dedication, but it also took courage.

Leaving home four years ago, I’m sure I was not alone in feeling scared and wary of the future. Although excited, all of us were stepping into the unknown. Little did we know how much our lives would change and how much leaving home would benefit us. How could we have predicted the unforgettable memories, experiences, and friendships we were to attain? How could we have measured the education we were to gain? We couldn’t have, and that is what makes our being here all the more impressive.

The courage to let go of the familiar got us to this ceremony as Bryant graduates, and it will get us even further in the years to come. Right now, we are in a familiar place where friends, family, staff, and faculty members surround us. After today, this familiar place will be a memory. Once again, I doubt I am alone in saying that I feel a bit fearful of what is to come. But we need not let that fear get in our way. True, the future is made up of unfamiliar terrain, but it is also where we will explore, achieve, and grow, using what we’ve gained here at Bryant. We’ve made it this far, and there is no turning back. There is no limit to how far our courage can take us.
Army the College. You know you may wish you'd had kind of connection.

We invite you to share your enthusiasm for the Bryant experience with high school students. The Alumni-Admission Connection is comprised of alumni throughout the nation and abroad who volunteer to represent Bryant in the recruitment process. Choose your level of involvement — depending on your availability, you might make a few phone calls or attend several college fairs.

For more information, contact Michelle (Barbana) Pelosi '95 at (800)622-7001 or mpelesi@bryant.edu

Share your success with a new generation
Bryant broadcasted graduation ceremonies live over the internet this year, attracting more than 700 virtual visitors in just two days. If you missed the events in May, you can still catch them—just go to www.bryant.edu and click “Watch Web Casts of Commencement Ceremonies.”

Honorary Degree Recipients

Graduate School Commencement

John C. Hoy
Former Trustee, Bryant College
President, New England Board of Higher Education
Doctor of Business Administration

John W. Rowe
President and Co-CEO, Exelon Corporation
Doctor of Humane Letters

Undergraduate Commencement

Judy George
Founder and CEO, Domain Home Fashions
Doctor of Humane Letters

Walter Stephan
Former Trustee, Bryant College
Co-Chairman, Babou USA, Inc.
Chairman, Babou USA Safety, Inc.
Doctor of Humane Letters

Juan Williams
Host, Talk of the Nation (NPR)
Doctor of Humane Letters

Visit Bryant’s Web Cam!
Bryant broadcasted graduation ceremonies live over the internet this year, attracting more than 700 virtual visitors in just two days. If you missed the events in May, you can still catch them—just go to www.bryant.edu and click “Watch Web Casts of Commencement Ceremonies.”
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