

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

*Commencement*



2015

SPEECH

*Brendan Foor*

## GOOD AFTERNOON CLASS OF 2015

HOW CRAZY IS THIS ... IN JUST A FEW MINUTES WE WILL ALL BE CONSIDERED COLLEGE GRADUATES. WHEN I FIRST SAT DOWN TO WRITE THIS SPEECH, I ASKED MYSELF WHAT IT ACTUALLY MEANS TO BE A COLLEGE GRADUATE; AND A POEM WRITTEN BY ROBERT FROST CAME TO MIND. IT PERFECTLY DEPICTS THE DECISIONS WE HAVE ALL MADE. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY IT DEPICTS WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO BE A COLLEGE GRADUATE. THE END OF THE POEM IS MOST TELLING:

TWO ROADS DIVERGED IN A WOOD, AND I  
TOOK THE ONE LESS TRAVELED BY,  
AND THAT HAS MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THIS POEM: THE ROAD NOT TAKEN. I STRONGLY BELIEVE IT EMULATES EXACTLY WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES TODAY: AT THE END OF THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED BY.

TO BETTER PAINT THIS PICTURE, LET'S PRETEND IF THE ENTIRE WORLD WAS MADE UP OF ONLY 100 PEOPLE: 26 OF THESE 100 PEOPLE WOULD BE CHILDREN. AND FOR THOSE MATHEMATICS MAJORS OUT THERE, THAT MEANS THERE WOULD BE 74 ADULTS.

77 PEOPLE WOULD HAVE A PLACE TO SHELTER THEM FROM THE WIND AND THE RAIN,

BUT 23 WOULD NOT... 83 OF US WOULD BE ABLE TO READ AND WRITE;

BUT 17 WOULD NOT BE AS FORTUNATE

21 WOULD BE OVERWEIGHT

15 WOULD BE UNDERNOURISHED...

AND 1 WOULD BE DYING OF STARVATION.

OUT OF THESE 100 PEOPLE, ONLY 7 WOULD HAVE A COLLEGE DEGREE.

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I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A MINUTE TO THANK THE UNSUNG HEROES OF THIS BEAUTIFUL STORY, FOR WITHOUT THEM, NONE OF US WOULD BE SITTING HERE TODAY. CAN WE PLEASE PUT OUR HANDS TOGETHER FOR OUR PARENTS AND ANYBODY WHO HAS SUPPORTED US THROUGH THIS GREAT ENDEAVOR!

WE ARE ALL LIVING PROOF OF THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED BY. ISN'T IT CRAZY TO THINK THAT WE HAVE ALL MADE THOUSANDS OF CONSCIOUS DECISIONS DURING OUR PATHS THROUGHOUT LIFE AND YET WE ALL FIND OURSELVES AT THIS COMMON DESTINATION. CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HAS PROVIDED US WITH THE ROAD... BUT IT WAS US WHO CONTINUALLY MADE THE CONSCIOUS DECISIONS... TO PICK OUR FEET UP ONE AT A TIME, DAY IN AND DAY OUT, PUSHING OURSELVES TO THE LIMIT BOTH MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY, WITH ALL THE BLOOD SWEAT AND TEARS LEADING US TO THIS VERY DAY. AND THE BEAUTY OF TODAY, IS THAT IT'S NOT THE END ... TODAY IS THE BEGINNING. TODAY IS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ROAD. MANY OF US MAY REFER TO THIS ROAD AS THE ROAD TO SUCCESS. THIS ROAD IS NOT GOING TO BE PAVED... THIS ROAD IS NOT GOING TO BE SMOOTH... AND THIS ROAD IS NOT GOING TO LAY ITSELF.

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BEFORE WE LEAVE TODAY, I CHALLENGE ALL OF YOU, TO ADOPT A SIMPLE PHILOSOPHY. THE LAST TIME THAT YOU WERE WALKING ALONG, AND LET'S SAY THAT YOU WERE IN A MALL OR AN AIRPORT, AND YOU CAME UP TO A SET OF ESCALATORS, AND SOME STAIRS ... DID YOU TAKE THE STAIRS? WHICH DO YOU THINK IS THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED? WHY IS IT THAT WE CHOOSE THE ESCALATOR? IS IT BECAUSE WE ARE NATURALLY PROGRAMMED TO TAKE THE SHORT CUT ... TO LOOK FOR THE EASY WAY? ON THIS DAY, WE CAN ALL ATTEST TO THE FACT THAT SUCCESS IN ANYTHING THAT REALLY MATTERS MOST IN OUR LIFE, IS NOT ABOUT TAKING THE ESCALATOR ... IT'S ABOUT TAKING THE STAIRS .. .IT'S ABOUT TAKING THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED BY. AND WE ARE A TESTAMENT TO THIS FACT! HOW GOOD DOES THIS FEEL RIGHT NOW!

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN A VERY LONG AND TIRING SET OF STAIRS, BUT NOW THAT WE ARE AT THE TOP, IT'S UP TO US TO CONTINUE THIS CLIMB. IT IS UP TO US TO CONTINUE THIS CLIMB TO SUCCESS.

SO THE NEXT TIME THAT YOU ... ARE IN FRONT OF A SET OF ESCALATORS, AND SOME STAIRS, I CHALLENGE YOU TO TAKE THE STAIRS ... BECAUSE THE FACT THAT YOU ARE SITTING HERE TODAY, THE FACT THAT YOU ARE A COLLEGE

GRADUATE, MEANS THAT YOU HAVE DEVELOPED THE HABIT OF TAKING THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED BY.

I WISH YOU ALL THE BEST OF LUCK... THANK YOU.

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