

“Driving Forces at MVNU”
Excell Graduation Banquet
May 15, 2004

Congratulations! I join your family and friends in expressing pride in your accomplishment.

I encourage you to attend the Baccalaureate service next Friday evening!

- For Christian universities, worship always precedes commencement.
- The service will be a blessing to you.

Of course, the Commencement service next Saturday afternoon will be memorable for you – and us.

- I look forward to hearing your name called, extending my hand in congratulations to you and giving you your diploma folder.
- It will be a great day!

I want you to take pride in the degree you have earned, and in your alma mater.

- MVNU is one of eight liberal arts colleges or universities of the Church of the Nazarene in the U.S.A.
- It is one of 57 higher education institutions of the denomination worldwide.
- You know by now that our vision and values consume us as a Christian university.
- In the past several issues of our quarterly publication, the Mount Vernon NOW, I have briefly addressed these two themes.

In these few minutes I have with you, I want to remind you of what you have come to realize about your university, even if we have not articulated these themes often.

- These “driving forces” at MVNU characterize us at our best. It is who we are when we are faithful to our vision and values.

In the midst of a beautiful and spacious 401-acre campus, with extension campuses at four, soon to be five locations, with excellent academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, offered in tradition and non-traditional formats,

- Mount Vernon Nazarene University seeks to challenge each student to:
 - believe God can use him or her significantly in advancing Christ’s Kingdom, regardless of his or her vocational assignment.
 - regardless of where you are on the “academically gifted” scale, or the specific work assignment for which you have responsibility, God can use each one of you significantly – in each specific setting – significantly – to advance His Kingdom!
- We seek to challenge each student to:
 - view himself or herself as a global Christian with a world mission. “Red, yellow, black or white, all are precious in His sight” so goes the chorus we sang as children.
 - And its true. The whole world (or the entire company!) is the arena of God’s love and concern – and everyone is in need of the gospel of His forgiveness and grace.

And, MVNU seeks to challenge each student to believe he or she is called to embrace and reflect Christian values and principles in the home and the workplace, long after graduation from this institution.

- If we have been successful in our assignments as your faculty and administrators, you have been equipped increasingly, to integrate your faith, your learning, and your workplace.
- Decision-making, policy formulation, strategic planning and interpersonal relations will be informed and guided by Christian beliefs, values, and principles.

“Driving forces” pushing and pulling in all we do in and out of the classrooms and offices.

I hope and pray you have “felt” – or experienced – these forces with us as we have interacted with you.

Our vision as a university remains strong:

*MVNU: an academic community of faith, shaping Christ-like leaders,
for life-long service.*

Again, congratulations on completing your program of studies at MVNU.

- I am proud to be your university president!