

President's Remarks

New Student Assembly, August 25, 2007

Good afternoon one and all!

On behalf of the thousands of loyal Heidelberg alumni, on behalf of our dedicated college staff, and on behalf of my distinguished faculty colleagues, From all of us: Welcome to Heidelberg College !

Please help me welcome these new students!

Students, you have made a wonderful choice to join the Heidelberg family ... the first of many choices in college.

Everyday choices, like

Diet or Regular Pepsi.

Regular or Decaf Starbucks.

Reds or Indians.

Browns or Bengals

Work out or Vegg out.

Beyoncé or Rihanna.

Letterman or Leno.

Many other choices will not be made so easily and will have far greater consequences.

Which courses will you take – and which will you drop?

What career will you pursue?

Where, how and with whom will you spend your free time?

You will have the opportunity to make these and thousands of other choices.

But, I remind you, there are some areas in which there is only one choice.

As a citizen of the Heidelberg community, you are obliged to live by a code of conduct that requires honesty, that you think for yourself, and that you do your own work. Your integrity and that of the college demands it.

You are also obliged to embrace civility on and off the campus. Understand that we treat others with respect and celebrate the dignity of each person. About such matters there is no choice if you are part of the Heidelberg community.

As with your selection of a college, you will not face these choices alone. The Heidelberg faculty and staff are talented individuals who are committed to your success and are willing to help you choose wisely.

After conversations with many of you, I am confident that you are prepared to begin making choices today. But - I am not so sure that your families and friends are quite ready to “turn you loose.”

They are sitting here remembering all the times you forgot your lunch money. They are thinking about the places you wanted to pierce – and - they are trying to imagine how on earth you are going to budget your time, your money, and your cell phone minutes.

Parents - my daughter graduated last May, and I can assure you that miraculously, these students will not only survive. They will thrive!

To all of the parents, step-parents, siblings and best friends, grandparents, spouses and sweethearts who are here this afternoon, I warmly welcome you, too, to the Heidelberg family. You will share this adventure with your student, and I know it will be challenging, fun, and fast.

Graduation sounds far off for the many of you who should be in the Class of 2011. But it will be here in a hurry!

When we gather in May 2011, there will be four more editions of Madden NFL. four more Shrek, Die Hard and Captain Jack Sparrow movies – and four more American Idols.

In your college career, most of you will spend only about 120 weeks on campus. So, each course, each class matters a great deal.

Beyond class, take off your headphones and listen to real life.

Hone your leadership skills.
Become a better communicator.
Sing in a choir or play in a band.
Study abroad.
Raise money for the disadvantaged.
Write for the newspaper.
Give tours of campus.
Play on a team or cheer one to victory.
Ring the victory bell.
Volunteer for those needing a hand.

I urge you to join something.
Dream big.
Laugh often.
Make memories.

At Orientation, we talked about your Heidelberg legacy. When your 120 weeks are gone, how do you want to be remembered? As the one who created a new club or organization? For the outcome of an innovative research project? For a campus tradition you started? For an extraordinary Grade Point Average? For extending your reach to another culture or country? Or for making friends that will last a lifetime?

As Heidelberg students, you are now part of the college's heritage that stretches back more than 150 years.

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Extending the legacy of our founders now rests with you. Together, we will build on that cherished foundation. Help us build it wisely by the choices you make and the legacy you leave behind.

Your journey to commencement begins today.

You have made a wonderful choice: Heidelberg College. Or as it is called in our alma mater: "Sweet Alma Home."

To our students and your families and friends: Best wishes for a successful and joyous journey, and welcome home!