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Admissions

What you won't hear anywhere else

FROM PREPMATTERS™ EDUCATIONAL COUNSELING & TEST PREP

Historical Trivia

Perhaps the most celebrated graduates ever were from the first graduating class, in 1824, of Columbian College, now George Washington University.

Commencement exercises were attended by former President John Adams, the Marquis de Lafayette, President James Monroe, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, Speaker of the House Henry Clay, Members of the Cabinet, the Justices of the Supreme Court, ministers from foreign powers, and many Members of Congress.

Degrees were conferred on three seniors.

The first honorary degree was conferred by Harvard University on George Washington, at that time Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army.

James Madison has been called America's first graduate student. Following graduation from the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University, he stayed on in 1771 to study Hebrew and ethics.

What 2008 Graduates Say

On June 5th of this year, Stefanie Malouf was nervous about her graduation from Walt Whitman High School -- not because of graduation itself but at the thought of being late. Once there and somewhat calm, she tried to take in the idea that she would never again be in high school and that all her hard work had come down to this one day. The thought was rewarding and almost overwhelming. She feels good about what she learned and satisfied in knowing that her hard work produced great grades. She is happy and feels she has made good decisions. Now looking ahead, Stefanie is excited about entering Catholic University in the fall. Her present thinking is to major in psychology and perhaps go on to law school. Her advice to other high schoolers: Enjoy high school, but work hard too and absorb as much as you can because it's worth it!



Alex Cohen has just graduated from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and is still getting used to the idea himself. He says graduation "snuck up" on him. Four years of high school seemed to last a long time but then it seemed to end very quickly. He had a greater sense of finality after finishing his last exam. He is quick to say that he liked high school and had a lot of fun but now is focusing on what lies ahead. He's "very, very excited" about going to Yale University in the fall where he will make new friends, learn even more, and have more personal choice in things such as picking classes. When not studying, he'll be practicing with his new teammates on the varsity fencing team, perhaps sharing pointers he'll pick up this summer at a special training camp in Poland. Alex characterizes his graduation day as a happy day, recognizing that it was a significant milestone in his life.



**Congratulations
to the
Class of 2008!**

The Straight Answer: What does it take to Succeed?

We've carefully culled some of the most cogent and dignified answers to this question from graduation speeches by illustrious figures at illustrious institutions.

Let's savor their advice.



The story is never over....

From Conan O'Brien's speech to the Harvard graduating class of 2000:

I've dwelled on my failures today because, as graduates of Harvard, your biggest liability is your need to succeed. Your need to always find yourself on the sweet side of the bell curve. Because success is a lot like a bright, white tuxedo. You feel terrific when you get it, but then you're desperately afraid of getting it dirty, of spoiling it in any way. . . .

So that's what I wish for all of you: the bad as well as the good. Fall down, make a mess, break something occasionally. And remember that the story is never over.

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Good advice should be savored.
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Thoughts on College ... Life ... Success ...

From Jon Stewart's speech to the 2004 graduating class from the College of William and Mary:

When I left William and Mary I was shell-shocked. Because when you're in college it's very clear what you have to do to succeed. And I imagine here everybody knows exactly the number of credits they needed to graduate, where they had to buckle down, which introductory psychology class would pad out the schedule. You knew what you had to do to get to this college and to graduate from it. But the unfortunate, yet truly exciting thing about your life, is that there is no core curriculum. The entire place is an elective. The paths are infinite and the results uncertain. And it can be maddening to those that go here, especially here, because

your strength has always been achievement. So if there's any real advice I can give you it's this.:

College is something you complete. Life is something you experience. So don't worry about your grade, or the results or success. Success is defined in myriad ways, and you will find it, and people will no longer be grading you, but it will come from your own internal sense of decency which I imagine, after going through the program here, is quite strong...although I'm sure downloading illegal files...but, nah, that's a different story.

Love what you do. Get good at it. Competence is a rare commodity in this day and age. And let the chips fall where they may.

College Graduation Rates

Graduation marks the end of one life chapter and the beginning of another. It's a time for looking back and for looking ahead. Those who are looking ahead to further education have passed two hurdles: meeting the requirements of the educational institution they are leaving behind and passing scrutiny of admission offices for those they wish to enter.

Today, there are more students attending college, graduate and professional schools than ever before, and that growth has changed the landscape of higher education.

Over 8.6 million students are enrolled in full-time, four-year undergraduate programs, and 1.350 million are enrolled in graduate programs and first professional programs, an increase in general of more than 60% since the 1970s when many parents were getting their own degrees. Even more startling are the numbers of female students, which essentially have doubled in that same amount of time. This changes student life and the admissions picture, too. Today's generation of students, and particularly females, face significant admission challenges.

Our challenge nationally, however, is not about students getting in but about students getting out. Some transfer and some abandon their education so retention and graduation rates are closely monitored.

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**Growth has changed the
 landscape of higher ed**

	Percentage of Growth from 1976 to 1986 to 1996 to 2006		
Undergraduate			
Overall Growth	14%	30%	61%
Males	2%	10%	32%
Females	11%	52%	91%
Graduate			
Overall Growth	7%	30%	67%
Males	-3%	6%	24%
Females	20%	59%	117%
	Percentage Earning a Bachelor's Degree In Four Years In Six Years		
National	36.1%	57.5%	
University of Maryland	54.5%	78.9%	
University of Virginia	84.2%	93.2%	



ASK THE CANDIDATES

For this special edition, we're presenting portions of graduation speeches from our presidential nominees. Whatever your politics, we have advice and wisdom for you to peruse and enjoy.

John McCain, presumptive Republican nominee. Excerpt from commencement speech given at Liberty University, 2006.

As blessed as we are, no nation complacent in its greatness can long sustain it. We, too, must prove, as those who came before us proved, that a people free to act in their own interests, will perceive those interests in an enlightened way, will live as one nation, in a kinship of ideals, and make of our power and wealth a civilization for the ages, a civilization in which all people share in the promise and responsibilities of freedom.

Barack Obama, presumptive Democratic nominee. Excerpt from the commencement speech at Wesleyan University, 2008.



... [Y]ou have an obligation to yourself. Because our individual salvation depends on collective salvation. Because thinking only about yourself, fulfilling your immediate wants and needs, betrays a poverty of ambition. Because it's only when you hitch your wagon to something larger than yourself that you realize your true potential and discover the role you'll play in writing the next great chapter in America's story.

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Then There's the Humorous Side...

Good advice can be delivered with humor. Who better makes that point than Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss), the 1977 Commencement Speaker at Lake Forest University, Illinois?

My Uncle Terwilliger
on the Art of Eating Popovers

My uncle ordered popovers
from the restaurant's bill of fare.
And, when they were served,
he regarded them
with a penetrating stare...
Then he spoke great Words of Wisdom
as he sat there on that chair:
"To eat these things,"
said my uncle,
"you must exercise great care.
You may swallow down what's solid...
BUT...
you must spit out the air!"

And...
as you partake of the world's bill of fare,
that's darned good advice to follow.
Do a lot of spitting out the hot air,
and be careful what you swallow.



Have a Great Summer!

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NEXT ISSUE:

THERE WILL BE NO JULY ISSUE. THE NEWSLETTER WILL RETURN IN AUGUST.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

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