

5-22-2011

A Lifetime Pass From Augustana

Steven C. Bahls
Augustana College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/presidentsstatements>

Recommended Citation

Bahls, Steven C.. "A Lifetime Pass From Augustana" (2011). *Speeches and Statements*.
<http://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/presidentsstatements/54>

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the President's Office at Augustana Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Speeches and Statements by an authorized administrator of Augustana Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@augustana.edu.

A Lifetime Pass from Augustana

Commencement 2011 Steven Bahls, President of Augustana College May 22, 2011



President Steve Bahls congratulates graduate Kofi Sam.

Good afternoon and welcome to Augustana College's 151st Annual Commencement. On behalf of the faculty, staff and Board of Trustees, I am very pleased to congratulate the Augustana College Class of 2011. Graduates, we are proud of your considerable accomplishments.

Before I address the students directly, a special word to the parents. Most of today's graduates started at Augustana in the fall of 2007. In 2007, none of us had heard of or contemplated the Great Recession of 2008. No one anticipated the near crash in the stock market, slumping home values, scary decreases in retirement account values, and the high level of persistent unemployment.

Parents, in 2007, when you did the math about the cost of a top-quality college, you didn't know that the math would change in 2008. For many, if not most, it was a real sacrifice to keep your students in school during this difficult time. But you knew that education was important. You may have felt like hitting the pause button with your student's education, but you knew your student's future was too precious. Students, please join me in thanking your parents and all those who supported your college education during these difficult economic times.

Members of the Class of 2011, I wanted to tell you about one of the more interesting Augustana alumni whom I met this past year. His name is Don Clark. This past basketball season, Don was at Augustana to help cheer our men's basketball team on to its record-setting 20-game winning streak. Don is 94 years old and was a member of the 1935-36 Augustana basketball team that held the previous record of 16 straight wins.

As I was visiting with Don, he pulled out of his wallet a lifetime game pass that he was given 70 years ago. It was a bit worse for the wear and tear. One of the perks of being president of the college is a lifetime pass to athletic events — here is mine. And like Don, I carry it with me. With our athletic passes, Don and I always carry a piece of Augustana with us. And likewise, you too will always carry a piece of Augustana with you no matter where you go.

Today, you will graduate from Augustana, and, when grades are tallied, you will receive a diploma. Many of you will frame the diploma and hang it on the wall — others will keep the diploma with important papers and other keepsakes. But whatever you do, as an Augustana college graduate like Don Clark, you will always carry a piece of Augustana with you.

Here is what I hope you will carry from Augustana:

- The power of critical thinking, such that you might solve problems by “turning the crystal” and looking at problems from the vantage point of others.
- The power of reflection, such that you might think deeply on your life, and discern the places where your talents, passions and skills match up with the important needs of our society.
- The power of being a doer, not an observer, so that you and your generation may one day claim a place among our nation's Greatest Generations.
- The power of tolerance, so that you might understand that giving voice to those who differ from you can create a "marketplace of ideas" from which we find the best solutions for the world's complex problems.
- The power of family, so that even as you become more independent, you never forget the sacrifices your family made for you — and let that serve as a model for the sacrifices you will make in the years ahead for your loved ones.
- The power of enduring friendship, so that you might be sustained by the many friendships you've made at Augustana, especially when your life or your friends' lives take a detour from the road we expected to travel.
- The power of community, recognizing that our earth, as well as our global village, are delicate places that need our attention and care.
- The power of kindness and charity, so that you might help those who have not had all of the benefits with which you have been blessed.
- The power of humility, so that you become servant-leaders by acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with your God.

So students, though you may put your diploma behind glass or in a box, proudly carry your lifetime connection to Augustana with you. We are honored and have been privileged to have been part of your education and to have served you as you have grown in mind, body and spirit.

As is my custom, let me close with the words of our fourth president, Gustav Andreen. His benediction expresses my wish for you and for coming generations at Augustana College: "God has been with our forebears and with us their children. Surely He will also direct the footsteps of coming generations so they may walk upon His paths and accomplish His work."

Graduates, I am proud of your accomplishments. Use your Augustana education well. May God bless, keep and guide the footsteps of the Augustana College Class of 2011.



Accounting	Communication Studies	Geography	Music	Pre-Optometry
Africana Studies	Computer Science	Geology	Music Education	Pre-Pharmacy
Anthropology	Creative Writing	German Studies	Music Performance	Pre-Physical Therapy
Art	Economics	Greek	Neuroscience	Pre-Physician Assistant
Art History	Elementary Education	Graphic Design	Non-Profit Leadership	Pre-Seminary
Asian Studies	Engineering	History	Development	Pre-Veterinary Medicine
Biochemistry	Engineering Physics	International Business	Philosophy	Psychology
Biology	English (Literature)	Japanese	Physics	Religion
Business Administration	English (Writing)	Landscape Architecture	Political Science	Scandinavian Studies
Chemistry	Environmental Management	Latin	Pre-Dentistry	Secondary Education
Chinese	& Forestry	Library and Information	Pre-Law	Sociology
Classics	Environmental Studies	Science	Pre-Medicine	Sociology (Social Welfare)
Communication Sciences	Ethics	Mathematics	Pre-Music Therapy	Spanish
& Disorders	French	Multimedia Journalism	Pre-Nursing	Theatre
		& Mass Communication	Pre-Occupational Therapy	Women's & Gender Studies