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Winifred High School Graduation

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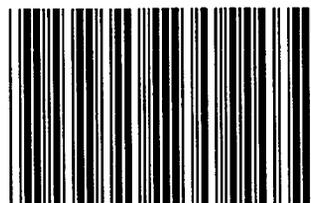
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BAUCUS

Remarks For The Winifred High School Graduation

5-16-09

INTRO:

Good evening. Thank you to your great Superintendent, Dusty Sturm (Pronounced STERM), for that wonderful introduction. Let's give Dusty a big hand.

Thank you for giving me the pleasure and the honor of delivering this year's commencement address.

To the families and teachers here, I want to say thank you.

Thank you for investing in your children and students, and thank you for investing in our state's future.

To our eighth grade graduates, Shelby and Lucas, congratulations on your achievement and good luck next year as high schoolers!

And to our distinguished guests, the senior class of 2009, tonight is about you. First off, I want to say congratulations.

Congratulations on not only what you have accomplished, but what you *will* accomplish. I, like everyone in this room, have the utmost confidence that each of you will go on to achieve great things.

DAN WICHMAN:

I also want to recognize a very special young man, Dan Wichman (pronounced which-man). Dan has been my friend for a number of years and he is a truly outstanding person.

Dan, I can't tell you how proud I am of you. To have watched you mature from a middle schooler to the young man you are today has been a wonderful experience.

I also want to give a special recognition to Dan's wonderful new parents, Mary and Gordon Wichman.

They have welcomed 14 children into their home, and let's just say they probably don't have to many dull moments! They also have three kids graduating tonight, Dan, Kenny, and Kelsey Berg.

What a proud moment! Let's thank them for everything they have done.

Before we came to the ceremony, I was at Dan's house and for graduation I gave him a watch as a graduation gift. A watch is an interesting thing. It is meant only to plan for the future. A watch can't tell you what happened yesterday, or last week. It is about seizing the moment, and taking advantage of everyday.

Watches also reminds us that the one thing you can never get back is time. Once a day is gone, it won't return and that is why we must make the most out of every moment we have.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE:

When I began to think about what to say tonight, I thought back to what it was a like to be a high school graduate. What was I thinking? What was I afraid of? What challenges did I face? And how was I going to overcome them.

And then I began to think, if I could go back and talk to myself then what would I say? What advice would I give?

The more I thought about it, the more that I began to realize there is no magic piece of advice, no pearl of knowledge that will guide you through every situation. But that is what makes life great. The uncertainty, the adventures, the ups, the downs.

And there will be ups and downs. But the measure of a person isn't how many times they get knocked down, it's how quickly they get up.

That is what I want to impart on each of you. If you take away just one thing, let it be this: trust yourself. You will face decisions and challenges that most folks my age can't even imagine, but trust yourself. Make a decision and go with it.

Of course you will seek advice from friends, family, and teachers, but at the end of the day listen to that small voice in the back of your head. Rarely will it lead you astray.

More than 400 years ago, Shakespeare wrote “to thine own self be true,” and that holds as true today as it ever will.

You have been given the tools you need to succeed, now it is up to you to use them. Coming from a place like Winifred is unique.

For some of you, you may go to a college where your dorm room has more people than your graduating class. But that is a good thing.

You have been able to develop the type of relationships that last for years.

And now, you will experience new horizons, embark on new adventures. But it won't be easy.

In the immortal words of Vince Lombardi:

“Dictionary is the only place that success comes before work. Hard work is the price we must pay for success. I think you can accomplish anything if you're willing to pay the price.”

And I know that all of you will work hard, and that is why, with the utmost confidence, I proudly say you will do great things.

CLOSING:

Watches all across the room are ticking. Time is moving forward. You can't hold on to what has happened, you can only take advantage of what is going to happen.

**So I urge you, Kelsey Berg, Ralph Carr, Rani
(pronounced RAINY) Hawks, Kelsey Johnson, Zack
Roberts, Kassie Stulc (pronounced STUL-TZ), Dan
Wichman and Kenny Wichman, the Winifred Class of
2009 to take advantage of every moment.**

Thank you.