

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Honorary Degree Recipient Speech
May 14, 1994

President Wallace, members of the faculty, staff, alumni, and graduates of the Class of 1994, please allow me the opportunity to express my deepfelt appreciation for the honor you do me this day.

I am, on occasion, asked about pivotal events that shaped the course of my life, and none have been more important than the decision I made in my junior year to transfer from the University of Illinois to Illinois State University. Virtually everything that has happened to me since, evolved from that circumstance.

I cannot help but reflect on the rehabilitory character of time. To be standing before you on this stage, given the hell we raised on this campus, is truly remarkable. But it was an exciting time, and the work we did here was important. Some of us have been described as products of the 60's - I would rather think that the 60's were a product of us.

I am proud of this university for many things, not the least of which was the opportunity it seized to harness the energy of that period for constructive and useful purposes. As I have walked the grounds of this campus, I have seen in the diverse faces of the graduates, the faculty, and the community, a wonderful reflection of the work that was begun during those days.

College presidents stand as symbols of the good work of many people and, therefore, are often honored as surrogates for a broader community; and I have become comfortable with accepting accolades on behalf of others. It is, therefore, deeply humbling to be so honored in such a personal way by my Alma Mater.

I have carried from this campus two degrees and countless memories of friends, colleagues, and experiences. Accordingly I am left with a powerful sense of gratitude for the wonderful moment you have given me this day. Thank you.