

Chancellor's Welcome

Good morning!

I'm pleased to welcome all of you – family, friends, and of course most importantly, the graduating class of 2016 – to our December commencement ceremony.

On behalf of the faculty and staff who have had the pleasure of working with you during your time here at UNCG, I congratulate you on this great accomplishment. There is nothing that makes me more proud as a chancellor than to look out over the thousand plus smiling faces sitting before me today.

As I've gotten to know some of you and your stories, I know the journey to this day hasn't always been easy. Some of you are the first in your families to attend and graduate from college.

Some of you have come from small towns and have experienced city life for the first time. And others of you have worked not

only in the classroom, but outside the classroom in local businesses, to financially support your education.

Whatever your journey, your dedication, determination, and drive have gotten you to this moment, and you deserve every accolade that is coming your way.

Today marks the beginning of a new start in your lives, and some of you may be anxious about what lies ahead. Parents and family members who are here today may have their own anxieties as well. As a parent of a daughter who graduated from college over a year ago and has recently decided to change her post-college course, and of a son who is about to start college, I understand.

But, I've been talking a lot this year about the importance of our university taking Giant Steps, and you now sit ready and prepared to take Giant Steps of your own. We are looking to

you to provide the leadership, vision, and commitment to effecting change for our local and global communities as we move into the future.

Remember that you do not begin this journey on your own. You have now joined the Spartan alumni family, the members of whom stand ready to support and encourage your next steps.

We are proud of your achievements, and as we celebrate here with you today, I hope that you will savor the moment and keep this memory as inspiration for the years to come. I know that I, and the rest of the UNCG family, look forward to seeing all that you can accomplish in the future.

Congratulations!