

Rep. Paul Semmel (R-Lehigh/Berks)  
Graduation Speech  
Calvary Temple  
Thursday, June 16, 2005

Good Evening. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to congratulate the class of 2005 and reflect on the importance of this moment.

You have earned a degree and that is no small feat. But to be employed by the company you select, you need to know what businesses will be looking for in the people they decide to hire.

Businesses are looking for people who will continue to learn throughout their careers.

You will need to use your creativity to bring your employer new ideas that will pay dividends.

You have achieved a significant milestone, but once you start working, the milestones will keep popping up as you drive up your career path.

It is true that businesses hire graduates who have excelled and earned degrees, but they also look for people with other qualities.

Business leaders hire people who they believe will continue to learn from the training they receive. You have the ability to think on your feet, grow and adapt in a business setting.

Learning doesn't stop with the closing of your last textbook or the completion of the final answer on your last exam.

The qualities most often mentioned by employers include the ability to communicate effectively, exhibit work enthusiasm, eagerness to continue learning throughout your careers, people skills and the ability to perform as a team player.

You are now ready to accept the challenges before you. You have acquired many of the tools that will serve you well in your first job and beyond.

To succeed, you must be constantly looking to build on those skills. You must adapt to change and learn how to use new tools.

In your new jobs, you will encounter people who can help you get oriented. You will discover training opportunities that will show you there is no limit to what you can learn and how you can apply yourself.

You will soon establish yourself and set out your goals for the future. When doing so, keep in mind how you can best serve the community through your labors.

Continuing to educate yourself will help you be a part of your community and advance in your place of work.

Being informed and involved may mean participation in a local parent teacher organization, or attending a borough council meeting or simply keeping up with local happenings in the newspaper, radio or television.

The least you can do as an educated citizen is get out and vote. Registration is easy. Election day is only twice a year.

Last fall, turn-out was impressive but that was because we were voting for president in a highly-contentious race.

Unfortunately, voting for state, county and local leaders is often ignored by millions of Pennsylvanians each year.

Voting for your local leaders is just as important as voting for president.

Local candidates have a greater impact on issues that affect you daily: the quality of your schools, the municipal services your tax dollars pay for, and the judges who interpret the law.

Whether you will continue to live in our area, plan to reside in another part of Pennsylvania, or move to some other state after graduation, keep in mind how important your right to vote is.

Transfer your registration when you move, find out where your polling place is and get out to vote on Election Day.

Ideally, as an elected leader, I'd ask each of you to consider the opportunities Pennsylvania offers when choosing where you want to live and work after graduation.

Keep in mind, your skills and expertise are needed right here. To make this state great, we need your knowledge and desire to learn.



You have a lot to offer any employer and there are plenty of opportunities open to you in Pennsylvania.

So, whether it is in public affairs or in the workplace, there are always ample opportunities to continue to grow as a person and incorporate new knowledge into your range of skills.

I'm sure you will enrich your profession and realize your potential.

I am confident that you will make the most of what you have learned. I wish you the best of luck in applying your skills in the workplace.

So, whether it is in public affairs or in the workplace, there are always ample opportunities to continue to grow as a person and incorporate new knowledge into your range of skills.

I'm sure you will enrich your profession and realize your potential.

You are the next generation of leaders. I look forward to a world that will be, in ways great and small, transformed by each of you.

I am confident that you will make the most of what you have learned. I wish you the best of luck in applying your skills in the workplace.

Again, congratulations to all of you.

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