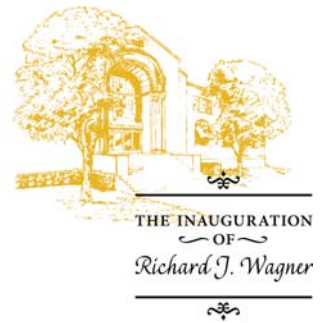


The Inaugural speech of President Richard J. Wagner

September 18, 2009

Decker Auditorium, Dunwoody College of Technology



Thank you Chairman Peterson for your support and the support of the Board of Trustees. I appreciate your confidence and will do everything in my power to embrace the great heritage of this institution, lead the college to ensure its long-term sustainability and viability and always hold near to my heart Dunwoody's great mission. Members of the Board of Trustees, members of the Alumni Board of Managers, esteemed faculty and staff of the college, presidents emeritus Wright, Starke and Philips, former president Bensen, honored guests and family. It is with a combination of excitement and humility that I stand before you as Dunwoody's ninth president.

Nearly 100 years ago, a visionary named William Hood Dunwoody penned in his Last Will and Testament the language that established Dunwoody. He specifically indicated that it was his purpose and aim to provide for all time a "place" and I would like to focus on that place because over the course of the last 95 years, we and those that came before us have created a special place. For nearly a century we have provided opportunities for people to have a better life through meaningful work made possible by technical education. For these people and for many yet to come, we stand as a beacon of hope. We have many accomplishments to celebrate over the course of our illustrious history.

The first director at Dunwoody College was Charles Prosser and he is often referred to as the father of vocational education. Prosser's work went far beyond establishing Dunwoody as the premier career and technical education facility in the county. It was his vision that created the Vocational Education Act of 1917. This act, sometimes referred to as the Smith Hugh's Act created the United States' vocational education system. It created the framework for funding vocational education until it was amended in 1963 with the passage of the Vocational Education Act. Prosser's educational philosophy shaped the American vocational education system. He served Dunwoody from 1915 to 1945.

Dunwoody supported education efforts during both World Wars. In our archives we have pictures of the Navy's aviation carpentry training class of 1918. We worked to prepare women for the industrial workforce during World War II. And we participated in the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 by helping train the veterans of World War II for employment in the changing workplace. And that work continues today as we work with our veterans returning home from Iraq, Afghanistan or where ever duty calls.

During the Depression Dunwoody's commitment to excellence in education and relevant programs helped our graduates find jobs. We have a number of loyal alumni that are from this era and they credit the education they received at Dunwoody as the key to the livelihood they enjoyed from gainful employment during a time when our nation's unemployment rate exceeded 25%.

Dunwoody expanded its sphere of operation and conducted classes around the world. International training programs took Dunwoody faculty and staff to places like Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Liberia, Indonesia, India, Korea, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, Columbia and a host of other nations where we delivered technical programs and helped build technical training schools.

Twenty one years ago we started a program called the Youth Career Awareness Program (YCAP) to reach out to high school students that might not have the chance to succeed at a post-secondary education institution. Of the students that participate in YCAP, nearly 96% graduate from high school. This program has helped more than 1,000 students graduate from high school, and move on to post-secondary institutions, including Dunwoody.

Today, Dunwoody offers more than 25 associate degree programs, 3 bachelor degrees and an assortment of certificates. We serve more than 1,500 students per year through our traditional offerings, serve numerous corporate customers, host the plumbers and pipefitters apprentice programs, actively partners with a host of public school districts, including the Minneapolis Public Schools, and sponsor a charter high school in North Minneapolis. The place Mr. Dunwoody envisioned nearly 100 years ago is vibrant and continues to thrive. And its success is founded in the faculty and staff and most importantly, the students and graduates.

It is estimated that we have educated nearly 300,000 people worldwide in our nearly 100 year existence. We have stories of alumni, some sitting in this room that grew ideas into companies. And their success has propelled Dunwoody's success through their philanthropic giving. We can tell stories of international companies started by Dunwoody alumni; we purchase cars from dealerships owned by Dunwoody alumni and have our cars serviced by Dunwoody alumni; construction companies started by Dunwoody graduates and those that employ Dunwoody graduates have help build Minneapolis, our state and our nation. Manufacturing firms, essential to the economic viability of our region, have been started by our graduates, are run by our graduates and employ our graduates. In all fields in which we have academic programs, Dunwoody alumni have had a profound impact on our economy and our society.

And while the names of many of these alumni are easily recognized with the who's who in the business community, we have stories of students that thought they couldn't achieve success or didn't think that had the tools or commitment for academic success, and we, through our rigorous education process, have helped those students realize their dreams. Students that graduate from Dunwoody show-up for work, on-time, expect to provide a hard day's work and do whatever it takes to get the job done, aren't afraid to go the extra mile, solve problems, take initiative and are proud of their work. We view the success of all of our students with the same satisfaction.

William Hood Dunwoody knew that education provides hope. To all of us that labor hard to ensure higher education meets the needs of the citizenship of our city, our state and our nation, we agree. We have seen, first hand at Dunwoody, the profound impact education has on students. It is through our students that we see hope, share dreams and celebrate success.

So what is it that makes this institution great? It starts with a vision, a vision crafted nearly 100 years ago. It is perpetuated by a great faculty and staff that share a commitment to academic excellence — that share a passion

for their profession and a desire to help people succeed. It is our connection to business and industry partners through Program Advisory Committees, our faculty and the development staff. It is alumni who owe their success to an institution and so willingly give back with time, equipment and financial support. And it is through a dedicated Board of Trustees that provides oversight and governance to the college's affairs. This institution has stood the test of time; it is a prestigious, respected college with profound legacy and a proud heritage.

The higher education landscape is changing. The world in 2009 is different than the world of 1914.

Technology is one driver changing the higher education landscape. Today the rate of change in technology is radical and continues to accelerate. As an example: Volta, Ampère and Faraday conducted experiments with electricity in the late 18th century and it took another 80 years, until 1880, for us to generate and distribute electrical power. And it took another 66 years until the Electronic Numeric Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) was unveiled. It only took 30 years after ENIAC for us to see the PC: Altair 8800, Apple II, Tandy TRS-80, and Commodore 64 and the dawning of the computer age. Today, computing power has reached the teraflop, jargon for 1 trillion floating point operations (computations) per second. In a span of a few hundred years we have progressed from colonial America through the industrial revolution and into the digital age.

At the start of the twentieth century you could drive a car from San Francisco to New York City in 63 days. Some seventy years later, we took one eighth of that time — only eight days — to send an American to the moon and bring them back safely. And today, there is more computing power in a car than that which was used on the Apollo spaceships. In 1965, a mechanic needed to understand 5,000 pages of service manuals to fix any automobile on the road. Today, a mechanic needs to decipher nearly half a million pages of technical text.

Building information modeling (BIM) is a software package that provides a new approach to managing building information through the lifecycle of a building. This new software defines objects parametrically. Chuck Eastman of the AEC Integration Lab at Georgia Tech describes how objects are defined with parameters and relations to other objects, and if the modeler changes an object, all relations to that object also change. Parametric objects automatically re-build themselves according to the rules embedded in them. The rules may be simple, requiring a window to be wholly within a wall, and moving the window with the wall, or complex defining size ranges, and detailing, such as the physical connection between a steel beam and column. The results of this technology are dramatically changing our approach to building design, construction and service.

In all of our academic programs technology is changing and technology is changing our students and the face of the college. Many or most of our students today don't remember a world without the Internet or cell phones. Today, the most used form of communication is the text message. Social networks and blogs are more popular than ever. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, iTunes, and iPods are everywhere. Technology is changing the classroom as online learning institutions provide accessible bachelor, master and doctoral programs.

The availability of online education and the emergence of for-profit colleges create competition that did not exist 100 years ago. The Twin Cities area is served by 10 public college and universities, the University of Minnesota, three private colleges and numerous for profit post-secondary institutions. The competitive landscape of higher education has changed.

And all of these institutions of higher education compete for scarce resources. Public education is challenged by state policies that reduce allocations to operating and capital budgets. Private colleges have seen their endowments adversely effected by the recent collapse in the stock market. And, students are affected by financial aid policies and banking decisions that limit grants and restrict access to student loans. The cost of education continues to rise, and the cost of not educating our citizenship is more expensive. Thomas Jefferson believed that the key to a democracy is an educated citizenship. And in today's complicated ever changing world is it even more necessary. The job of higher education is critical, its mission essential, its reach limitless, we must be inclusive with programs that are accessible for all people.

Today, with challenges and opportunities, Dunwoody stands on the cusp of its centennial anniversary. We have much to celebrate and many accomplishments to cherish. I challenge us to again become visionaries. To think about this "place", created by the Last Will and Testament of William Hood Dunwoody, a place that has stood the test of time, has seen good times and endured hard times, a place that provides opportunities for students from all backgrounds and all generations, and create a vision for 2014, when we celebrate our 100th year — a vision that will perpetuate this institution's legacy for another 100 years.

It is a bright future. It is a future where Dunwoody's commitment remains focused on applied education with our core two-year programs and more programs at the bachelorette level, and perhaps the master's level that are as our academic programs are today — relevant and provide graduates with immediate employment, rewarding careers and meaningful engagement as a productive citizen. It is a future where Dunwoody engages with the local and worldwide community, through service learning opportunities and study abroad programs. It is a future where we continue to leverage technology by: delivering hybrid programs, providing online completion programs and utilizing technology to enhance the students' educational experience, the faculty's teaching ability and the support staff's functionality. It is a future with a vibrant, colorful campus that echoes with the accomplishments of the past and eagerly embraces the opportunities of tomorrow. It is a future that celebrates our legacy: academic excellence, student centeredness, connections to business and industry, proud network of alumni and outstanding board leadership. It is a future that embraces change.

Ben Sweetland said that "success is a journey, not a destination." So our journey continues. It is a journey I look forward to because I have experienced the capacity and commitment of the people that define Dunwoody as we together have risen to meet the occasion, I have seen the commitment of our faculty to academic excellence, the dedication of our staff to student success and together our ongoing quest for excellence.

I am excited about the journey — education is a noble cause, opportunities abound, Dunwoody's proud legacy is our destiny and my confidence about this journey is founded in the commitment and energy of the faculty, staff, students, alumni, trustees and friends of the college — that proudly and together shout, we are Dunwoody!

I want to thank the Board of Trustees for the opportunity to serve as the ninth president of Dunwoody and thank you to the faculty, staff, students, alumni, trustees and guest for being here to celebrate our heritage and embrace our future. Thank you.

