



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA
ST. PETERSBURG

**University of South Florida St. Petersburg
Spring Commencement Script
May 8, 2011, 6:00 p.m.**

PRELUDE **5:45 p.m.**

PROCESSIONAL **6:00 p.m.**

(SHANK from back of arena.)

SHANK:

Ladies and Gentlemen, please rise for the procession of the 48th Commencement of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg led by Commencement Marshal Dr. Richard Smith, who bears the Mace of the University.

PAUSE

The Spring 2011 Master Candidates of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg;

PAUSE

the King O'Neal 4.0 Scholar, the Outstanding Graduate, and our Vocalist;

PAUSE

the Faculty; Regional Vice Chancellors, and Deans of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg;

PAUSE

The USF St. Petersburg Student Government Representative and the USF Alumni Association Representative;

PAUSE

The Board of Trustee members;

PAUSE

The Regional Chancellor of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg;

LONG PAUSE

the President of the University of South Florida System, Dr. Judy Genshaft.

(SMITH approaches platform from right side. When the procession is completed and all are at their seats, SMITH goes to center microphone.)

SMITH:

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a privilege to welcome you to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg's Spring 2011 Commencement. I hereby declare this convocation open. On behalf of the faculty, I offer congratulations to all the graduates.

And now, the Regional Chancellor of USF St. Petersburg, DR. MARGARET SULLIVAN.

(SMITH returns to seat; SULLIVAN goes to center mic.)

SULLIVAN:

Good evening and welcome to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. Will the assembly please remain standing and join LAURA DAVIS in the singing of our National Anthem.

(DAVIS goes to center mic. SULLIVAN returns to seat.)

SINGING OF ANTHEM

(DAVIS returns to seat. SULLIVAN returns to mic.)

SULLIVAN:

Thank you, LAURA. You may all be seated.

A distinguished Platform Party joins us for today's celebration. I would ask you to please hold your applause until all introductions are completed.

I would like to introduce representatives of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg faculty... *(SULLIVAN gestures to faculty on arena floor and platform. Faculty stand, then sit.)*

Our Regional Vice Chancellors and Deans... *(RVCs and Deans stand, then sit)*

DONNA BRICKMAN, Co-Treasurer of the USF Alumni Association Board of Directors *(AA Chair stands then sits)*

The President of the Student Government Association, JAMES SCOTT

(Student Government representative stands then sits)

Our Outstanding Graduate recipient and King O'Neal scholar, AMANDA EMERY

(EMERY stands, then sits.)

Members of the University Board of Trustees, Trustees DEBBIE SEMBLER, and STEPHANIE GOFORTH.

(Trustees SEMBLER and GOFORTH stand, then sit)

And the President of the University System, Dr. JUDY GENSHAFT.

(GENSHAFT stands, then sits.)

Please join me in acknowledging these distinguished guests. *(pause)*

And now for our most important guests of the evening – you, the USF St. Petersburg graduates of Spring 2011. You’ve shown us your determination and I hope we’ve sparked your creativity. You brought your intellect and I hope we challenged it to the fullest.

You are ready now – you are ready to face a challenging world with the obstacles that will come along your way. You are ready because you dedicated yourself to receiving an education and earning a degree. It took initiative. It took resolve. It took hard work.

Each of you has had your own unique experience. You each carved your own path to today’s commencement. Consider the decisions you made, the ideals you embraced and the lessons learned. Take these with you as you leave us to create your next path in life as a USF St. Petersburg graduate.

You each came here for your own reasons and graduate today with your own goals, but yet, you are all united in this accomplishment – a milestone and symbol of the academics you have been and the professionals you will become.

Be proud, graduates, and yet retain your humility. Celebrate, and yet remember the friends, family and professors who helped you along the way. Look to the future and be confident that your past prepared you for where you want to go.

At this time, I would like to introduce Dr. Judy Genshaft, President of the University of South Florida System. She has made it clear that strong institutions such as USF St. Petersburg are an integral part of the university’s vision. With great pleasure I present President Judy Genshaft.

(SULLIVAN returns to seat, GENSHAFT goes to center microphone)

GENSHAFT:

On behalf of the faculty, staff and trustees, I want to thank our graduates for being a part of the University of South Florida.

This semester, more than 5,700 students are graduating from the USF System. This diverse group came to us from 45 states and 97 nations.

Our oldest graduate is Glenda Pinkston, age 65, who received a Bachelor of Social Work in Social Work from USF Tampa.

Our youngest graduate is 19-year-old Crystal Tenn, who received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry also from USF Tampa.

We are also proud to have 43 outstanding graduates who will join hundreds of other USF men and women who serve their country as commissioned officers in our armed forces.

All of you had the good fortune to study at the University of South Florida...one of America's leading research institutions.

The degrees we award today signify a special collaboration between students and their professors, advisors, fellow students and university staff. And virtually every degree represents the commitment and help of families and friends.

I would like to ask our graduates' mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, wives, husbands, sons, daughters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, partners and significant others to rise, so that we may show you how much your contributions mean to us.

(Applause)

You may be seated.

Today you are graduating from a first class university that is relevant and engaged.

The USF System is now 34th in the nation among public institutions for federal research expenditures and our research is making an impact in our global society. Last year, our students and faculty responded instantly to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and in hundreds of research projects, we are doing similar heroic feats – from addressing the challenge of sustainability to helping returning veterans to removing malaria.

Economists talk about the “education dividend” of higher education. Our graduates, faculty, students and staff ARE the dividend in the Tampa Bay region. Recently, USF’s economic impact to our region was calculated at an amazing 3.7 billion dollars. This is a direct impact on new jobs, revenue to the region and most importantly, quality of life.

The USF System is evolving quickly. As a system, our institutions are becoming a model of success in regional impact and national reputation.

USF Polytechnic and USF Sarasota-Manatee will join USF St. Petersburg in having their own accreditation, giving each of you local control in developing your missions. Together, we are creating an international reputation as a high impact system of universities dedicated to the success of our students in the modern world.

I hope you will look back at our time together at USF St. Petersburg as some of the best years of your life. It has been our privilege to have you with us at the University of South Florida.

Congratulations!

(Applause)

Now it's my pleasure to introduce JAMES SCOTT, Student Government Association President. JAMES...

(SCOTT goes to center microphone. GENSHAFT returns to seat.)

SCOTT :

Thank you, President Genshaft.

Good evening, friends. I'm grateful for the opportunity to share this moment with you all.

Today's ceremony marks a major personal achievement. It also celebrates a brighter future for our families and our communities. I'm inspired to say we are the educators, entrepreneurs and researchers of the future...the Bay Area will be a better place because of us.

I want to share two simple but valuable messages with you tonight.

First: Do what you love. Yes, it's a cliché, but only because it holds truth. We've all pursued our degrees for different reasons, but we do share in common the hopes of becoming successful professionals with rewarding careers. That is, after all, one of the greatest benefits a degree offers.

As we look toward a brighter new chapter in our lives, let's be sure to reflect

on the things that inspire and motivate us---the things that led us here today. Our professional careers will represent more than financial security; they will embody the things we value and the impact we choose to have on the world.

My second message: Measure success by the good you do for other people--even strangers. As we establish greater security and success in our lives, let's not forget how fortunate we are to be living the American dream despite the billions of other people living in poverty and oppression. From such a perspective, even our worst problems don't seem so bad. So while the world often seems be cold a place, remember: we hold the power to make it a little warmer. A positive attitude is both powerful and free.

Class of 2011 — the hard work and expensive books were worth it.

Now go forth and do good things.

(SCOTT returns to seat. SULLIVAN goes to mic.)

SULLIVAN

Thank you, James. It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Norine Noonan, Regional Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs.

(NOONAN goes to center podium microphone. SULLIVAN returns to seat.)

NOONAN:

At the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, we take pride in the academic achievements of all our students and we welcome opportunities to recognize and honor students who consistently meet the highest level of academic performance.

Undergraduate students who are graduating with a grade point average of 3.5 or

higher are recognized as graduating with honors. In the academy, we acknowledge the work and achievement of our students with the following honors designations.

Students graduating with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher are marked by the designation *Cum Laude*, “with praise.” Will those students please stand. Please be seated.

The designation *Magna Cum Laude*, “with high praise,” reflects a grade point average of 3.7 or higher. Will those students achieving at this level please stand. Please be seated.

Finally are those graduates who are recognized for achievement at the highest honor. *Summa Cum Laude* or “with highest praise” recognizes those graduates achieving a grade point average of 3.9 or higher. Will those students please stand. Please be seated.

Each Commencement, the USF Alumni Association recognizes the achievements of our graduates by awarding the King O’Neal Scholar Award. The King O’Neal award is given each semester by the Alumni Association in honor of charter graduates Lucas King and Evelyn O’Neal. It is presented to the graduating seniors with the highest possible cumulative grade point average, 4.0. The Spring 2011 graduating class at USF St. Petersburg has 1 qualifying graduate with a 4.0 GPA and she is with us at today’s ceremony.

At this time, we are fortunate to welcome DONNA BRICKMAN, Co-Treasurer of the USF Alumni Association Board of Directors for our Alumni welcome and presentation of the King O’Neal Scholar Award and Outstanding Graduate Award.

DONNA...

(BRICKMAN goes to center microphone. NOONAN returns to seat.)

BRICKMAN:

Thank you, DR. NOONAN.

On behalf of the University of South Florida Alumni Association and our more than 244,000 graduates, I offer each of you my deepest congratulations and I give you this simple challenge: stay involved with your alma mater.

Wherever your final destination may be, your connection with USF can remain strong. You can participate in one of our 77 local and international alumni groups. You might support scholarships or university service projects. You can return and attend alumni, college and athletic events. And you can stay connected with news about the university and your classmates.

Just as there were many choices you faced when you began earning your degree—there are many paths of involvement you can choose as a graduate. By staying connected to USF, you and your fellow graduates can be proud and vocal advocates for the university in your workplaces, communities and homes.

This is the beginning of a lifelong relationship. Once a Bull, always a Bull!

At this time, it is my pleasure to present the recipient of the King O’Neal Scholar Award. The King O’Neal award is given each semester by the Alumni Association in honor of charter graduates Lucas King and Evelyn O’Neal. It is presented to the graduating seniors with the highest cumulative grade point average, 4.0.

The recipient of the King O’Neal award is honored with a certificate of accomplishment and a gold medallion of the university seal.

(GENSHAFT and SULLIVAN come forward. SULLIVAN stands to the right of the podium.)

GENSHAFT stands to the far right.)

The Spring 2011 King O'Neal Award recipient is AMANDA EMERY! Amanda, would you please come forward?

(EMERY comes forward and stands between SULLIVAN and GENSHAFT)

Today Amanda receives a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the College of Business. She has an auditing internship for this summer. Starting next fall, Amanda plans to continue her education at USF St. Petersburg in order to meet the education requirements for becoming a Certified Public Accountant. She will sit for the CPA exam and begin working in the accounting field.

Congratulations, AMANDA!

(BRICKMAN retrieves certificate from inside the podium and presents to EMERY. BRICKMAN, EMERY, GENSHAFT and SULLIVAN pose for photograph; EMERY remains standing)

BRICKMAN:

It is also my pleasure to present to Amanda the Outstanding Graduate Award, which is also given each semester by the Alumni Association. This award is being awarded to Amanda as the graduating senior who has embodied leadership, school spirit, community service, character, and scholarship. Along with working part-time and maintaining her 4.0 GPA, Amanda volunteered with several charitable organizations, giving of her time and resources for the betterment of her community.

Congratulations, AMANDA!

(BRICKMAN hands certificate to EMERY. BRICKMAN, EMERY, GENSHAFT and SULLIVAN pose for photograph; EMERY returns to seat; GENSHAFT returns to seat)

BRICKMAN:

I encourage all of you to stay connected to USF and help ensure that our University continues to grow and prosper.

On behalf of all USF alumni, I congratulate the SPRING 2011 graduates.

Welcome to the world of Alumni!

(BRICKMAN returns to seat. GENSHAFT moves to center of microphone.)

GENSHAFT:

Thank you.

And now we come to that part of the program that you have eagerly awaited, the conferring of degrees.

For presentation of candidates, I would like to recognize the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, DR. NORINE NOONAN.

(NOONAN stands up and takes position behind dean's podium)

| |
|----------------|
| MASTERS |
|----------------|

NOONAN:

For SPRING 2011, 69 individuals have earned Masters degrees and 47 are with us this evening. I would like to call forward DR. TODD SHANK to introduce and Trustee DEBBIE SEMBLER to greet the candidates.

(NOONAN returns to seat)

SHANK:

For the College of Arts and Sciences, Dean FRANK BIAFORA and hooding

Assistants, DRs. DEBY CASSILL and ANTONE SILVIA.

(BIAFORA goes to dean's podium)

BIAFORA:

Will the candidates for the Masters degree from Arts and Sciences please come forward? President Genshaft, on behalf of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, I present the Spring 2011 candidates for the Masters degree.

(Masters candidates begin walking across the stage; SHANK reads names; BIAFORA and hooding assistants assume hooding positions. SEMBLER gets up and assumes greeting position beside GENSHAFT and SULLIVAN. When the last student has crossed the stage, BIAFORA and hooding assistants return to seat. GENSHAFT, SULLIVAN and SEMBLER remain in greeting position.)

SHANK:

For the College of Business, Dean MALING EBRAHIMPOUR and DR. JAME FELLOWS, who will assist with the hooding.

(EBRAHIMPOUR goes to dean's podium)

EBRAHIMPOUR:

Will the candidates for the Masters degree from the College of Business please come forward? President Genshaft, on behalf of the faculty of the College of Business, I present the Spring 2011 candidates for the Masters degree.

(Masters candidates begin walking across the stage; SHANK reads names; EBRAHIMPOUR and hooding assistant assume hooding positions. GENSHAFT, SULLIVAN and SEMBLER assume greeting positions; When the last student has crossed the stage, EBRAHIMPOUR and hooding assistant return to seat. GENSHAFT, SULLIVAN and SEMBLER remain in greeting position.)