



**University of South Florida St. Petersburg
Fall Commencement Script
December 12, 2010, 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 47th 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 Fall 2010 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 of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg;
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 Executive Director;**

PAUSE

**the Board of Trustee member...(pause), the Campus Board Members (pause),
and the Regional Chancellor's Award for Civic Leadership recipients;**

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 Fall 2010 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.)*

JOHN HARPER, Associate Vice President and Executive Director of USF Alumni Association *(John Harper stands and then sits)*

The USF St. Petersburg Student Government Senate President, Christian Haas *(Student Government representative stands then sits)*

Our Outstanding Graduate recipient, Chelsea Lindsley, and our King O'Neal scholar, Kara Kennedy *(OG and KON stand then sit.)*

Members of the USF St. Petersburg Campus Board, Trustee Debbie Sembler and Board Members Stephanie Goforth and Bob Churutti. *(Trustee SEMBLER and Board Members stand, then sit)*

Our Regional Chancellor's Award for Civic Leadership recipients, State of Florida Representative, the Honorable Darryl Ervin Rouson and State of Florida Senator, the Honorable Dennis L. Jones *(Honorees 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 Fall 2010. 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 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. Her vision for USF is to become one of the nation's top 50 public research universities. She has made it clear that strong institutions such as USF St. Petersburg are an integral part of that 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 the graduates for being a part of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. This semester, more than 4,000 students are graduating from the University of South Florida

System. This diverse group came to us from 40 states and 88 nations. Our oldest graduate is Allen Gezelman (*Ge-zeel-man*), age 72, who received a Masters of Mechanical Engineering Degree in Mechanical Engineering from USF Tampa.

Our youngest graduate is 18-year-old Nyreese (*Ny-reese*) Castro, who received a Bachelor of Science Degree in BioMedical Science also from USF Tampa.

We are also proud to have 15 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. Recently, the USF System was named the nation's 36th leading institution in attracting federal research dollars by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute. We have also been named the fastest growing research university in federal funds by the Chronicle of Higher Education. We are a university that is relevant, engaged and involved. Our graduates become leaders in our community, state, nation and world.

The degrees we award today signify the 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.

Graduates: It seems like yesterday that your journey began, and now we arrive at a day of completion and celebration. A university experience is as individual as the person who completes it. There are challenges and success; loss and temporary setbacks; memories and lessons.

Although universities often dress themselves in the trappings of tradition, they are among the few cultural institutions whose responsibility it is to shape the future.

Universities are designed to educate the leaders of tomorrow from all over the world, the best and brightest of every generation.

Universities foster the development of respect for others' points of view while encouraging students to challenge even the most entrenched mindsets.

And universities are uniquely positioned to confront the grand problems of our times: climate change, food and energy insecurity, pandemics and the clashes of cultures.

Universities are global lighthouses, a gift to the future from the present. Starting today, you have a powerful new asset from your university: a degree from the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. As we succeed, so will the value of your degree and you can be confident that even in uncertain times your fellow graduates, your fellow alumni and your university are all behind you.

I hope you will look back at our time together at USF 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 St. Petersburg.

Congratulations!

And now, it's my pleasure to introduce Christian Haas, Student Government Association Senate President.

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

HAAS:

Thank you, President Genshaft.

President Genshaft, Regional Chancellor Sullivan, Special Guests, Faculty, Staff, Administration, family, friends and most importantly, the University of South Florida St. Petersburg graduating class of Fall 2010!

Again, my name is Christian Haas and I have been proud to represent and advocate for each of your best interests in the Student Government Senate.

It is a profound honor to have the opportunity to stand before all of you, who, through pure passion and commitment, have confronted the unknown and have emerged from the chaos to achieve what so many before you have not been able or willing to do. Because of your dedication and thirst for knowledge, you will soon join the 28% of Americans who have earned their Bachelors' degree.

My experience at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg has made me realize how lucky we are to attend a University on the water in beautiful St. Petersburg with a highly involved community culture. St. Petersburg is a wonderful city in a lot of ways, but there are plenty of services in need of

compassionate college graduates who have studied service-learning methods or ethics and journalism as interdependent fields of study. USF St. Petersburg has a history of caring for its community, and its graduates reflect that.

Perhaps the most important realization I have had during my time at USF St. Petersburg is the true value of relationships. Having positive, lasting and reciprocal relationships is one of the most fulfilling and joyous feelings we can experience. When people can come together and develop bonds strengthened with trust, respect and a sense of common purpose, we become more hopeful, secure and invested in the well-being of others. Our willingness to value and invest in others is exactly what makes a community sustainable. Those who value the interdependencies among us understand the importance of putting the interest of the community above the interest of the individual, for the simple fact that the community exists to harness, protect and provide opportunities to the individuals who contribute within it.

I challenge all of you to lead with compassion as you use the skills you've developed to engage your community for the purpose of ensuring a stable and peaceful future for our children and grandchildren.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve the student body, and I look forward to the impact your service will have on our society.

Congratulations, Graduates!

Thank you, and Go Bulls!

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

SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Christian. 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, 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 Fall 2010 graduating class at USF St. Petersburg has 2 qualifying graduates with a 4.0 GPA and 1 of them is with us at today's ceremony.

At this time, we are fortunate to welcome JOHN HARPER, Associate Vice President and Executive Director of the USF Alumni Association for our Alumni welcome and presentation of the King O'Neal Scholar Award, and Outstanding Graduate Award.

MR. HARPER...

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

HARPER:

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 welcome you to the world of alumni.

And I give you this simple challenge: stay involved with your alma mater.

It's no coincidence that the nation's best and most well-respected universities all have strong, active alumni associations. I'm sure that you know that YOUR University is in that category.

USF's standing as one of Florida's three flagship universities...our status as a national top-tier research university...our rapidly growing campuses...and our outstanding academic programs... are among our many points of pride.

It might surprise you to learn that these points of pride are made possible in part by connected alumni. Their ongoing commitment to helping USF grow is reflected in the Alumni Association's ability to:

- **enhance USF's reputation**
- **shape USF's future**
- **honor and promote USF's rich history and best traditions**
- **connect students, alumni and faculty to each other and to USF**
- **express alumni pride and show loyalty as a cohesive group**

Although your days as students here are over, you will always be a part of USF, just as USF will always be a part of you. Whatever your final destination, wherever your careers may take you in life, you will be in the company of fellow USF alumni. It might be a co-worker, it might be a neighbor, it might be the owner of a local business—but you'll never be far from others who share your connection to USF.

So today I encourage each of you to beam with pride and revel in your accomplishments. And tomorrow, when the pomp and circumstance is over, I encourage you to remember that USF St. Petersburg is YOUR school and forever maintain your Bull pride!

Remember: 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.

When I call your name, please come forward to be recognized.

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

Kara Kennedy

(KON comes forward and stands between SULLIVAN and GENSHAFT)

Today Kara receives a Bachelor of Arts in Finance from the College of Business. She plans to devote more time to her husband and two daughters, Isabelle and Julieana, as well as grow the stock transfer agency that she founded in 2009, ClearTrust, LLC. She will also continue her studies by pursuing her doctoral degree in international business at a prominent university in the northeast.

Congratulations, Kara!

(ALUMNI RE retrieves certificate from inside the podium and presents to KON. ALUMNI REP, KON, GENSHAFT and RC pose for photograph; KON returns to seat);

HARPER:

The Outstanding Graduate Award is given each semester by the Alumni Association. It recognizes a graduating senior who embodies leadership, school spirit, community service, character, and scholarship. The Outstanding Graduate for Fall 2010 is CHELSEA LINDSLEY.

(SULLIVAN escorts OG to the right of center microphone. GENSHAFT stands to the right of the OG)

Today Chelsea receives a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communications from College of Arts and Sciences. Throughout her studies, she discovered the importance of using her writing to tell the stories of those people in the community who are facing adversities, but still trying to make a difference. Upon graduation, she and her business partner will formally launch their entrepreneurial effort, Nu Chapter Marketing LLC, which specializes in helping authors and small publishing companies market their books through social media. In her spare time, she will pursue her own writing career.

Congratulations, Chelsea!

(ALUMNI REP retrieves award from inside of podium and presents it to OG. ALUMNI REP, OG, GENSHAFT and SULLIVAN pose for photograph; OG returns to seat; GENSHAFT returns to seat; SULLIVAN briefly returns to seat.)

HARPER:

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