

2011 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient Transcription

[2011 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient Donny Bounds speaking]

Thank you very much for this award. It is very humbling and surprising. I must first start by saying thank you to Teresa for nominating me. She is also a Heartland Community College graduate and just as worthy as I for this award. Secondly I would like to thank Heartland Community College. I would have never had these opportunities for this great success if it had not been for this college. It is hard to believe that there was once a time that we were all learning in basements of churches, in trailers to get our degrees. And that there were many people in the community that didn't believe that we really needed this college. Not only has Heartland Community College proven that there is a need... they have produced numerous graduates that have made a huge impact on the community.

As I was preparing for the day I wondered what my message to all of you graduates should be. I thought, "Well... I could encourage you to work hard, reach for your dreams, and persevere." But I figured you would open a lot of cards later that say the same thing and I didn't want to sound like a hallmark card. So I gave it a little bit more thought and decided that encouraging words are very wise and I believe they play a big roll in your success but I wanted to challenge you to go beyond those words. While you are working hard, reaching for your dreams, and persevering, I challenge you to live a life of reflection and meaning. Every relationship... whether it with our parents, a co-worker, boss, neighbor, partner or friend needs reflection. Challenge yourself to reflect on each situation and learn from it. Ask yourself, "What have I learned from this situation and how could it have been different." In the words of Steven Covey I encourage you to seek first to understand before being understood and to create a win-win situation. You all do great things measured in many different ways but always strive to create meaning and value along the way. Ask yourself two questions: Did I find joy in my life? And did I bring joy to other's lives?

As I have moved through my career I have strived to reflect on every situation and create win-win relationships. I have also challenged myself to work hard without losing focus on finding joy in my life and providing joy to other people's lives. Receiving this award validates that I have worked hard and found great success. But more importantly this award have given me the honor of knowing that I have touched at least one person's life.

I would like to leave you with one more quote. And I said I wasn't going to sound like a hallmark card but, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Thank you Heartland Community College for many things including this award. And good luck graduates. May you be the next award winner.