

Turning vision to reality

Malone urges graduates to maintain strong ethical foundation, aspire to lofty goals

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from the speech of Wallace Malone, vice chairman of the Wachovia Corp. and former president pro-tem of the Troy University Board of Trustees, given to graduates during the spring commencement ceremony in Troy on May 6, 2005. The Dothan native formerly served as chairman, president and chief executive officer of SouthTrust Corp. The fine arts building on the Troy Campus and the administration building on the Dothan Campus are named in his honor.

“This is a wonderful time to be a Trojan. Over these many years, I have seen the University grow and grow and grow in terms of many new buildings, large numbers of new academic programs, the offering of courses on television, multiple campuses; the transformation from a regional state university to a virtual worldwide university and from a small, unexciting athletic program to Division I-A football. And, I know that each and every one of you whom we are honoring this morning are just as proud of Troy University as Chancellor Hawkins and I are.

There are at least three related lessons I hope you will take along with your diplomas.

Lesson One: True success takes what I call ‘over the horizon’ vision – the ability to look farther ahead than the vast majority of people look. Learn to look ahead three months, six months, one year, 10 years. Remember, the average person barely looks ahead a month.

Remember, if you have vision, it doesn't matter whether your



degree is in business or education or the humanities or the sciences. You may be certain that whatever field you have chosen can be conquered, developed, improved and grown.

Lesson Two: Do the things that it takes to develop and improve your vision. Here are a few suggestions:

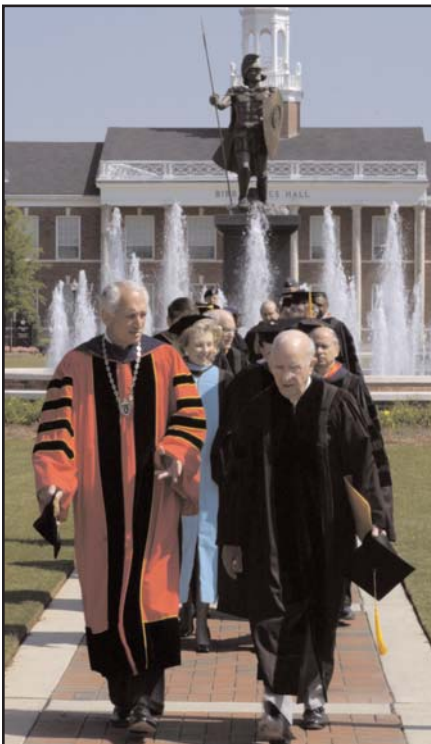
- Have a personal commitment to know more about your job than anyone else. To acquire real knowledge of your job, there are many highly desirable skills. Among these, I would most certainly include the ability to write well and communicate well.
- Ask questions and questions; that's where you learn and where you understand things. And, remember, whatever your job, always do more than you are paid to do.
- Learn to work hard and to work smart.
- When you get to the point in your career when you have people reporting to you, make sure to surround yourself with people who are smart, perhaps, smarter than you are. Smart people will help you see and attain that vision.
- You should love your job; love what you are doing. If you love your job, you will always be looking for ways to make things better.
- Finally, there is absolutely no such thing in this country as the last opportunity. Every single day there are new opportunities out there somewhere! Don't get discouraged.

Lesson three: Remember, as you are looking ‘over the horizon’ and searching for things that will change your life, it is people that turn vision into reality. None of the successes we have enjoyed at SouthTrust over the years would have ever been possible without great people.

Banking is strictly a people business. There is virtually no difference between banks and the services they can offer the public. The difference is clearly in the people that work for the bank. The same thing, of course, is also true for any company, any business or any university.

Let me close by saying that all I just told you will mean nothing if you don't build your life on a strong ethical foundation. Honesty and integrity will always be the best policy. Make it rule number one.

And, I want every single one of you here today to leave here and aspire to lofty goals and to be a real success in whatever your endeavors are.”



Chancellor Hawkins and commencement speaker Wallace Malone lead procession to Sartain Hall for the spring commencement ceremony.