Library Grand Opening Remarks—Thursday, December 3, 2009 5:45 p.m.

Thank you for being here today. This is another special occasion for this special university we know as Ship and I appreciate you taking the time to celebrate the grand Re-Opening of Lehman Library.

There's an interesting quote from noted author and Civil War historian Shelby Foote that many today will find appropriate. The quote is: ***"A university is just a group of buildings gathered around a library."*** How true this is!!!!

Now, I know that Ship has much to offer throughout campus, but you cannot deny that a library is at the heart of any great university, and that is especially true here. In the past several years, thanks to the outstanding work of library faculty and staff, Lehman Library has adapted, modernized and transformed into a facility that invites students in and provides them with the support they need to reach their goals.

And I'm not even talking about the Starbucks!

What has been accomplished in recent years has ensured that the library will retain its rightful place as one of the most important facilities on campus. This library is no longer just a repository — it is an engaging, lively building – truly a Library/Learning Center -- that is brought to life by all who work and study here. It's wonderful to walk into the library and see small groups of students working on a project, or a faculty member helping a student find needed material, either here or, thanks to the Internet, anywhere around the world.

For any of us who have spent any amount of time in higher education, it is immensely gratifying to see students in this type of atmosphere where information is shared and the enthusiasm is contagious. Students don't just come to the library; they **WANT** to come to the library. It is fast becoming the place to be.

Shortly before his death, tennis great Arthur Ashe spoke at Shippensburg and I think this quote from him is also appropriate today. "Throughout my formal education I spent many, many hours in public and school libraries. Libraries became courts of last resort, as it were. The current definitive answer to almost any question can be found within the four walls of most libraries."

While our search for knowledge has expanded far beyond the walls of this library or any other library, the spirit of what he said remains true. A library is a special place to learn.

Thank you again for being here.