

**Fall 2012 New Student Convocation**  
**Thursday, August 23, 2012**  
**H. Ric Luhrs Performing Arts Center**

Thank you, Dave and welcome again to you, the members of the Class of 2016. The few short hours you have been on campus have been busy, and I'm sure you are all still trying to find your way around campus, making new friends and finishing unpacking.

As president of Shippensburg University, I have what I think is the greatest job in the world: I get to work with you and for you. That work started very early this morning as I, and many other volunteers, helped move you into your residence hall. I am still amazed at what you brought — and what you can get into your room. Back in June, I suggested you leave some things at home for your parents to remember you by. Apparently with all of the stuff I helped unload today, some of you didn't listen.

Helping with the move-in is just one of the many fun aspects of my job. But everything I do, and everything all of us at Shippensburg do, is designed to help you achieve your goal of earning a degree in four years and reaching your personal dreams.

You are now a university student — an emerging adult with many responsibilities. You have more freedom here, coupled with more responsibility for yourself. You also have some higher expectations to meet — expectations by your parents, by the university and, most importantly, your own.

To help you meet these expectations, we have in place a group of talented individuals committed to your success. My promise to you is that I will be accessible and meet with you regularly. That is also true of other administrators, your faculty members and all of the support staff. By the time you leave Ship in four years, you will know us — and we will know you. That's one of the many traits that makes this university so unique.

This year's theme is ***Success Starts Now***. As you sit here preparing for the remainder of orientation and the beginning of classes on Monday, your success does start now! I said earlier that you have high expectations to meet, and we will help you meet them. Primary among the people who will support you are outstanding faculty members who are dedicated to your education and committed to helping you as an individual. They will share not only their knowledge with you, but also share the analytical skills you need now and into the future.

We will also continue to work on your behalf to provide you with the academic programs you want and the facilities that support these programs. Look around campus and you see signs of that commitment, including the recently remodeled Lehman Library, the recently expanded Huber Art Center and the larger Ceddia Union Building (the CUB), as well as the three new residence halls that we will be ready to occupy this spring semester. In addition, technology continues to change our world and we are looking for better ways to incorporate these changes into your education.

Like all things in life, your achievement level is commensurate with your efforts. We expect you to go to class, do the assignments and be an active participant in class as well as in your overall learning experiences. These experiences should include attending any of the numerous co-curricular programs we offer such as talks by internationally-known speakers to arts-related programs in various venues on campus.

For many of you, your years in high school may seem to be among the best of your life. Your years here at Ship will be even better. You will make friends for life. You will learn skills that will help you adapt to an ever changing world. And you will form the foundation to be the exceptional men and women I know you will become. These years will challenge you — and that's good as a challenge shows your strengths and what you are capable of doing. By learning from those challenges and building upon your successes and strengths, you will be able to fulfill your potential. During my more than three decades in higher education, I have been privileged to work with students who achieved more than they thought they could. I know you can, too.

Ship is now your home, as well as your university. Every day you will have new opportunities, and I encourage you to use them. You've probably heard the quote that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. You have taken that single step. Now take the next one, and the next one and many, many more. These steps will become a journey of wonder and excitement for the rest of your life.

Welcome again to Shippensburg and to the Ship family. I look forward to seeing you this fall, this year and throughout the coming years.