



Dr. Timothy Trainor | Convocation Speech

August 26, 2016

I want to thank everyone for the great welcome over the past few weeks. Donna and I have been made to feel like we are part of the Mount family, and we look forward to the future. I think I am almost beyond the 'new guy' stage as I am no longer wearing Adidas shirts!

As I thought about this ceremony, this symbolizes in large part why Donna and I thought this was the place to continue our service after the Army. The Mount provides a superb values-based education rooted in the liberal arts just like West Point so I believe our transition will be relatively smooth. The emphasis on teaching values consistent with the Catholic intellectual tradition is a hallmark of this institution. We are excited by what the Mount is, and what it will become as it transitions to adapt to a changing world.

I know the past year has not been easy and I am sorry an institution with such a rich tradition and history experienced this, but we together are moving forward, and I know you are ready for that.

I want to outline my thoughts for what I intend to focus on initially this year. First, I plan to engage and learn: I want to hear and learn from you. I have been walking around and talking to some of you and hope to speak with all. I will continue to visit classes, workspaces, campus activities and the many great organizations we have that contribute to the Mount's mission. I will be holding Town Halls with students, faculty and staff members in September and beyond so I can hear about why the Mount is so special to you, what we can do better, and your ideas for our future. I want your input to use for developing the next 5-year strategic plan for the Mount.

Second and always, I want to ensure we have the environment that enables us to be successful in meeting our mission. We have a great mission grounded in faith, discovery, leadership and community.

Third, I want to ensure we have an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and that all (faculty, students, staff) believe they are valued and trusted members of our team.

We as the Mount team are all responsible for having the type of culture and environment I just described and I ask that we collectively strive for this in our everyday interactions.

Nothing can destroy a team more than a member deliberately hurting another member of the team. I call on all of us in the Mount community to be actively involved in eliminating the scourge on college campuses of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

We move in the wrong direction on this when we allow an environment in which some individuals or particular groups are not treated with respect or are targeted for harassment. A disrespectful or harassing climate is ripe for something worse to happen, meaning physical assault.

So I ask for your help in not tolerating environments whether on campus or off that promote harassment or disrespectful behavior. Also, I ask you not to be bystanders when you think something is wrong, and a situation could lead to an assault. We all have our 'spidy senses' that will go off when you see a situation developing that could end bad, meaning end in a possible sexual assault. Listen to your senses and look for ways to intervene before the situation goes further. We talked to the freshman about this during orientation and will continue our discussion and training throughout the year. Thank you for your support and vigilance on this.

As I said earlier, we are moving forward and I am excited by the new opportunities and programs we are pursuing this year. In our schools we have started a new Forensic Accounting major, a minor in Data Science, a concentration in business analytics in our business major, and we have other new programs in the approval process for introduction next year. We have new programs at our campus in Frederick and are developing initiatives for additional continuing education programs there to serve the community.

I am very happy to announce the start of our Center for Student Engagement and Success located in the Niche. I see this as a source of even stronger and closer

connection between student and faculty member in helping students fully realize their potential and achieve their goals at the Mount.

I believe athletics are an important part of overall human development. Participation in sports at any level help develop important teamwork and leadership skills, build resilience as you learn to overcome adversity, and create a healthy work ethic. They are also fun to watch. My family was dubbed Team Trainor at West Point because we were avid fans and supporters of our teams. I understand that now we even have a # for Team Trainor! Donna and I will be the same here. This year at the Mount we added a men's swimming and diving team. I am very pleased to announce that we are reestablishing the Men's NCAA Soccer team starting competition in 2018. I want to acknowledge and thank our alumni who led the way in generating the resources and excitement behind restarting this program; thank you (applause).

We are also pursuing some other exciting programs for the future, like the Seton-Dubois initiative coming out of the great work put into developing the Mount 2.0 agenda. We will focus our efforts and resources on the most promising areas consistent with our core values as an institution. We will continue to move forward and adapt to a changing world.

As we embark on this year, I know you are also excited. Our seminarians are pursuing their calling to serve the Church and her people by further developing their intellect, pastoral skills, spirituality and inner self. Our seniors can see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel during this last year at the Mount, and no, that light is not a train! Our juniors and sophomores are delving deeply into their majors and engaging in high impact educational practices. Our freshmen are embarking on an exciting new phase of their lives studying at the higher education level away from home. And our faculty and staff are excited to help you develop as people of character prepared to lead and serve others in a global society.

As we start this year, I encourage everyone to take care of you. Often we can let the pace of life overwhelm us and we get unbalanced. It is ok and important to think about maintaining your own wellness. Socially we are healthier when we maintain strong positive relationships with others. Physically we are stronger when we exercise, eat right and get proper rest. Emotionally we are stronger when we talk

with others and find healthy outlets for our emotions; spiritually we are stronger when we seek to know God better through prayer and feel his loving power through serving others.

We have great resources at the Mount to help us be well as individuals. We have our beautiful chapels and grotto, and wonderful programs through our campus ministry. We have Counseling Services that provide **free and confidential** individual counseling to students through our health services office. We have a plethora of really cool activities orchestrated by student life through which you can pursue an individual interest or just knock off some steam and have fun. And of course, you can't beat what campus rec has available here in the ARCC! Besides the workout and pool facilities, they offer great fitness classes. Wednesday night I attended the "gentle yoga" class... they tried to bend me into a pretzel but I survived; although I couldn't do that Dolphin move! So we have it all, ready for you to engage in maintaining a balanced perspective and learning to live well.

So I am excited for this year, and I hope you are too. Together we will succeed and advance this institution into the future while respecting the foundation of values upon which we rest.

We are the Mount!