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Groundbreaking Ceremony Welcome

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Governors State University

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GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY
GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY
June 12, 1971

William E. Engbretson, President, Governors State University

Governor Ogilvie, Chairman Stipes, distinguished guests, staff, students, ladies and gentlemen --- Friends of Governors State University, we welcome all of you to the campus for this auspicious (and we hope joyous, though damp) occasion. Our nearest higher education neighbor is Tolentine College, an Augustinian Seminary and liberal arts college at Olympia Fields. The Reverend Father David L. Brecht, Academic Dean has kindly consented to deliver our Invocation which will be followed by our National Anthem.

Will you please rise?

Reverend Brecht

Thank you.

Will you join us in singing the National Anthem please?

I would like to thank Mr. Don Kramer and his excellent Thornton Community College Jazz Band for their fine services this morning. I hope we can eventually recruit some of these talented musicians to GSU's currently non-existent musical organizations in the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Groundbreaking ceremonies have become common in this, our growing country. These formal ceremonies always carry a note of informality usually due to the conditions surrounding the beginning of any new institution or new building. Ours is no exception (rain, mud, equipment, etc.) On the other hand, such ceremonies are also marked by a degree of solemn formality for they offer a limited opportunity to render recognition to at least some of those persons who have brought us to this fruitful moment...the beginning of a new university...one which we all will strive to make a model higher education institution which will render distinguished service to its students and the people of the state of Illinois for the next several centuries. We are here for but a fleeting moment of that time but it is an important instant because your labors and this soil now give birth to a university which will make its mark in mankind's history.

Thousands of years ago, following the ice age, a glacial lake developed over that swale held back by an ice dam. When the dam broke, the Thorn Creek system evolved, and a series of peat bog "kettles" developed here on our site. This gently undulating prairie site of 753 acres has been owned by more than a hundred persons since the Stuenkels came from Europe and built their log cabin to the north of us near the Will County/Cook County line. The great state of Illinois purchased this land from the Sztubas, the Hantacks, the Ruders, the Krabbes, the Vicks, the Village of Park Forest and a generous gift was made by the Manilows. Will these people please rise? Here, where these people and their predecessors raised cattle, corn and soy beans, the prairie will now yield highly educated citizens, artists, and accountants, teachers and nurses, scientists and musicians, business managers, ecologists, social workers public officials and community service agents.

The University is committed to making its four goals of 1.) Job Efficiency; 2.) Functional Citizenship; 3.) Healthy Intra and Inter Personal Relationships; and 4.) Cultural Expansion meaningful to its students and the communities we all serve.

In a very real sense Governors State University is the product of literally thousands of people.

In 1967 a citizens committee reported to the Board of Higher Education on the need for this institution and in 1968 the Report on New Senior Institutions was approved. A South Cook County-North Will County Citizens Committee under the able chairmanship of Mr. James Patterson and with the tireless devotion of time, energy and personal finance of Mr. Karl Treen was successful in locating Governors State University in the southern metropolitan area. Will Mr. Patterson, Mr. Treen, their committee, past and present members of the Board of Higher Education and Board of Higher Education executives and staff please rise and be recognized?

In 1969 House Bill 666 was passed and signed by Governor Ogilvie. This bill, which founded GSU was sponsored by Rep. Robert Blair who is now Speaker of the House, and Representatives Houlihan, Walker, Thompson and Scariano. Rep. Blair who spoke at the groundbreaking of our interim facility just north of Monee several months ago, has had to keep the House in session today because of its crowded calendar hence our Representatives are unable to be with us.

Since 1969 we have profited immensely from the advice and counsel of our Junior College Advisory Committee, our four Community Collegial Councils, and our Ministerial Council. I would like to request that all the members of these Councils and all Junior/Community College Presidents and personnel please rise and be recognized.

Our own GSU staff and incoming students have engaged themselves in curricular planning, architectural planning and community service projects of a wide variety of kinds. I'd like to ask all members of our GSU family,...staff, students, wives and husbands to join our Board staff, our architects, including Doctors McKelvey and Morton, engineers, planners, consultants and contractors in rising for recognition.

Governors State University has already realized a modicum of fame. The College of Human Learning and Development, the College of Environmental and Applied Sciences, the College of Cultural Studies, and the College of Business and Public Service have studied society's needs and have planned programs that are responsive to those needs. These programs are characterized by a high order of individualization and self-direction, a wide variety of instructional modes and strategies, and the wise use of instructional resources such as the utilization of area business, industry, governmental offices and agencies, schools, hospitals and the like in cooperative education programs. Our learning modules or classes are designed to help students achieve performance objectives in a flexible self-paced manner within the calendar of our unique terms or sessions which will last two months each resulting in six sessions per year.

The Phase I building this ceremony today commemorates is, in itself unique. The four hundred thousand square foot "educational street" running along this ridge line utilizes an open design, flexible classrooms and laboratories, internal spaces which permit multiple uses, a strong and economically

efficient modular structure, a repetitive lighting grid and many other carefully planned features. I would like to cite but two examples; first, the exterior steel "skin" of the building will be bolted on so the panels can be removed and reused when the building expands during Phase II construction; secondly, the decision of what systems of heating, ventilating and cooling would be used was made on the basis of an eleven hour computer analysis of the building's characteristics and an hourly weather history of this area for a period of ten years back. In current dollars we estimate we will save \$80,000 per year in fuel costs by selecting the most efficient combined system. Evans Associates, Caudill Rowlett and Scott and Johnson, Johnson and Roy have brought our educational constructs into distinguished site and architectural solutions.

Time does not permit further explication. The people of the State of Illinois will have a University of the Future here in the present, due to the creative and efficient efforts of all.

The planning process that has brought GSU into being has been intensive and demanding. The best of our thought has been put forth, our creative talents have been challenged, our energies consumed. A very real human price has been paid to see this university into being. We are accountable to the people of the State of Illinois for what we have all set into motion.

The Administration, the legislature, our two Boards and the more than 600 citizens and students who set our goals and purposes have challenged us to create an open, innovative, humane, flexible, economically efficient, future-oriented, community service-minded instructional institution which will produce future societal leaders primarily from among the low and middle income and minority students we serve.

Together, we have accepted this challenge and together, with our students and your help, we'll start Governors State University on the road to success that it must inevitably achieve. I thank you.

PAUSE

As you know GSU is a part of the new model city of Park Forest South. With us today representing not only the village but the more than forty municipalities in our commuting range is the Village President, Mr. Kenneth Koenig.

Ken -
Thank you.

As I mentioned earlier the House is in session today. Representative John Houlihan has invited his son Bill to read his remarks. Bill is President of the Senior class at Crete/Monee High School.

Bill -
Thanks.

Our next speaker has had a distinguished career both as a legislator and as a municipal legal specialist. One of the sponsors of GSU's originating bill, former speaker of the House, currently a State Senator sponsoring legislation vital to GSU, Senator Jack E. Walker.

Senator -
Thank you.

Our next speaker is Dr. Geraldine Williams, Director of Academic Development in the College of Business and Public Service. Dr. Williams came to us from the Chicago City College system where she had held many positions including that of Director of Adult and Continuing Education. She is the elected faculty representative to the Board of Governors Council of Faculties.

Geraldine -
Thank you.

Many persons do not realize the nature of students who come to Senior Division University Universities from junior colleges. In general, they are older, (GSU's initial student body has an average age of 28), more mature, practical, and utilitarian. They are generally job and credential-oriented, upwardly mobile in many ways and are usually quite independent and self-directive.

Next we will hear from two of our students.

Both have served as student consultants on the Planning Task Force on Student Affairs at Governors State University.

Mrs. Louise J. Bigott of Aroma Park, Illinois a graduate of Kankakee Community College. She is registered in the College of Human Learning and Development in the field of Urban Teacher Education. Louise was a straight "A" student at Kankakee Community College.

Samuel E. DeBose of Harvey, Illinois is 22 years old and a graduate of Thornton Community College. He won a Ford Foundation Scholarship and is enrolled in the College of Cultural Studies for the first session at GSU. His program is Ethnic Studies. Samuel is the former President of Student Government at Thornton Community College.

Mrs. Bigott -
Thank you.

Mr. DeBose -
Thank you.

It has been my personal privilege to serve these two years under the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities. These distinguished Board members are here today and I would like to request them to rise after I read their names and be recognized along with any past board members and other college and university presidents who are present:

Vice Chairman: Mr. Howard Phalin
Mrs. Marion Lamet
Mr. Charles Davis
Mr. Joseph Hale
Mr. Keith Parsons
Mr. Louise Schuette
Mr. E. Leland Webber

and representing the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction,

Dr. Donald Fouts

Our next speaker who will also introduce the Governor is the distinguished Chairman of our Board - Mr. Royal A. Stipes, Jr. He has rendered over 19 years of service to the Board and all of our institutions have profited from his capable leadership. In fact, GSU could not have progressed as it has without his aid and support. We owe you a great debt, Rooney.

Thank you Governor for your insightful and challenging address.

Before we witness the official groundbreaking I wish to thank the Program Committee and all their helpers for the arrangements today. They deserve a round of applause.

After the official ceremony here in front of the platform we hope you will share a box luncheon with us. Information for prospective students is at the GSU Women's Hospitality table at the rear of the tent. In addition, we have arranged to take Polaroid pictures of any individual or group who wishes to symbolically break ground with us and take home the picture as a memento of this day. It will please us if you will use this service. The photographer is located over there.

Now, Governor and guests, we can descend.

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