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**KEYNOTE**  
**Graduate Welcome Address**  
28 August 2003

- I am most honored to be here with you all today, President Vest, Dean Colbert, and the MIT entering graduate students of 2003. I would like to thank Erich Caulfield (GSC President), Mike Folkert (GSC VP) and the entire Graduate Student Council for inviting me to be a part of your Orientation Activities. This is truly a celebration – a celebration of YOU, YOU the MIT entering graduate students of 2003!
- On this day, August 28th, 2003, we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s legendary “I Have a Dream” speech delivered at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, I am most humbled to be speaking and welcoming you all to MIT this afternoon. Dr. King said, (I quote) “We cannot walk alone. And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.” (end quote) This moment in American history gives us a prime example of people peacefully petitioning their government for change, Dr. King was a motivational voice and his concept of “somebodiness,” symbolizes for me the celebration of human worth. His work for equality for all gave people hope, respect, and a sense of dignity.
- I believe that there is no better time or place in the world to consider today the notion of Celebrating Human Worth (the time is now and the place is MIT). We are here today to think about How You Can Make the Most of Your MIT Graduate Career.
- To make the most your MIT experience – I would like to briefly discuss 4 words. **Learn, Act, Discover and You**

## You came to MIT to **LEARN**

- You will **learn** the excitement, rigors, and challenges of your chosen fields through research, lectures, self-study, peers and faculty. I think that you will be surprised at the level of expertise that you will gain. My first semester here at MIT as a graduate student, was well...interesting, challenging, and a BIG transition from a liberal arts & engineering background, a university with a top ranked football program and a National Championship women's basketball title...to MIT, a research Institute... it all worked out. I **learned** enough in a few years of my MIT graduate education to travel to NASA and deliver a talk as the Principal Investigator of a flight experiment that was soon to fly on the Space Shuttle. Who would of dreamed... (I thought to myself), they're calling me **THE** expert on space human factors. You will all **LEARN** to be **THE** experts, which carries with it pride and responsibility. Be proud of the excellence you have already achieved and march confidently through your MIT academic path. We will learn as much from each other as possible, to enhance "sombodiness", to celebrate human dignity. I think that you are here because you **LOVE TO LEARN**. I am.
- I challenge you all to **ACT**. Act? Yes, to **PERFORM**: in any or all dimensions that you can **ACT**. I hope that you bring 100% of your enthusiasm for life to our MIT community and beyond. Before one can **ACT**, we usually need to **LISTEN**. After **LISTENING**, I recommend **THINKING**. After listening and thinking, I recommend **ACTING**. You can act to make the MIT community a better place for us all to call home. You can take action and teach kids and adults in Cambridge or Boston to enhance their lives. You can become the next President of the Graduate Student Council. You can become an **ACTIVIST** and discuss your convictions and beliefs. Paraphrasing a thought from Aristotle, (quote) "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then is not solely an act, but a habit." (end quote) I urge you to make your habits here at MIT, in Cambridge, and throughout Boston habits that include learning and rigor in the classroom and laboratories, but more importantly, habits that include **ACTIONS** to better yourself and your community. I think MIT, Boston, and the intellectual horsepower of our surrounding environment calls us all to **ACTION**. Don't be **PASSIVE**. **CREATE**, create something... a club, a sports team, music, art. One of my most memorable experiences from my MIT graduate education was helping to create something that still exists: the

International Space University. What is ISU? Well it started as a big idea by a group of MIT graduate students to create a university for space studies, that would include: Law, Policy, Engineering, Science, Architecture, Business, all disciplines to bring together students from all over the world to learn and act as future leaders to explore space... peacefully, globally, and together as humanity. Let us all **ACT** with compassion!

- **Discover.** Learn. Act. And Discover. Discover everything you can about yourself, your studies, your allies and opposition, and Nature. Be **CREATIVE**. Take time for yourself and for observation. Observe the wonders of Nature around you – the Atlantic Ocean...the rhythmic sea that we just sailed, completing our circumnavigation...what a majestic, blue, fluid, desert,...Enjoy the Mountains of New England, the Sky with Mars shining so brilliantly. The essential Nature of matter lies not in objects, but in interconnections. How are you connected to the things that really inspire you? ... A musical chord... the basics of harmony. The single notes carry none of that feeling, the essence of the chord lies in its relationships, and the relationship of time and pitch = makes melody. Relationships make Nature. Relationships make music. Music of the spheres (as Kepler said, and Shakespeare before him and Pythagoras before him). This vision of a Universe arranged in harmonies of sounds and relations is no new discovery.

- **DISCOVER** your **PASSION**. Discover new Passions. Discover the Boston Ballet, listen to the Symphony, Discover the Isabella Stuart Gardner museum or the Boston Athenæum. Go to a Red Sox, Celtics, Patriots, Breakers or Revolution game. Discover happiness and smile. We're all incredibly fortunate to be here.

- **YOU.** (y'all, I taught down in Texas for a bit) This brings me the last of my 4 thoughts: Learn, Act, Discover, and **YOU**. All of you sitting here are **STARS**, as brilliant as Mars. You are the best and never forget that, rather, give yourself a pat on the back everyday (or more appropriately as you leave the lab in the middle of the night). You are extraordinary, the things that you have already achieved are astonishing. That's why **YOU** are here. We don't make mistakes in graduate admissions. You all belong here and have the potential to thrive here at MIT.

MIT is a great place to be because of all of you, the students. We are here to Celebrate YOU. I'd like to introduce you to a current graduate student working with me Mr. Philip Ferguson, just like you, he is a star. Phil is a professional piper who makes the most of his MIT experience working on our MICRO-G flight experiment soon to fly to the Int'l. Space Station, AND as a pipe sergeant, playing bagpipes coast-to-coast, all across Canada and the US. In his MIT debut, lets celebrate with him to the tune of *Clumsy Lover*.

- Phil plays Clumsy Lover and walks throughout Kresge from top to bottom. -

Phil, would you like to mention how you make the most of your MIT graduate experience?

In closing, You are all "somebodies", somebody extremely special and we're here to welcome you and celebrate with you. I wish you the best in your MIT graduate careers. I believe that YOU are the MIT generation to open our hearts and minds, to stir our very souls, through your LEARNING, ACTING, and DISCOVERING.

Thank you.