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Chancellor's Remarks at the 2014 Phi Beta Kappa Luncheon

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SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud

Delivered on May 7, 2014

Location: Chancellor's House

Remarks: Chancellor's Remarks at the 2014 Phi Beta Kappa Luncheon

*The Chancellor was introduced by Eric Holzwarth,
President, Phi Beta Kappa Chapter.*

Thank you, Eric. Thanks also to you and to Jean Brooks, director of operations and special events for the residence, and Syracuse University Catering Services for your work on this luncheon.

Welcome, everyone. Ruth and I are delighted to host this luncheon here at the Chancellor's House to celebrate your upcoming induction into the Syracuse chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

As the oldest and most prestigious honorary society for students of the liberal arts and sciences, Phi Beta Kappa represents an extraordinary achievement. It is a very special honor, and as a Phi Beta Kappa myself, I can assure you it is one that you will take great pride in long after you leave here.

It puts you in the company of 17 U.S. presidents, as far back as John Quincy Adams and as recent as President Clinton; 39 Supreme Court justices; and more than a hundred Nobel Laureates.

With your induction, you perpetuate and become a permanent part of that legacy of excellence.

While Friday's induction ceremony recognizes your hard work and dedication to scholarship here at Syracuse, it really stands for much more. In fact, the meaning behind the Greek letters—Phi Beta Kappa—really signifies what I believe to be the secret to a happy and successful life: "Love of learning is the guide of life."

In my first year of law school, I had a professor, Allan Smith, who was 66 years old and yet the “youngest” person I had ever met. He constantly embraced new ideas and new discoveries, and his passion for learning made him seem like the youngest person in the world.

You are in the thick of your “formal” education right now. But I hope your love of learning continues to guide your life long after you leave Syracuse. I promise you—it will keep you young and keep life constantly interesting.

Congratulations to all of you on this wonderful achievement. I know your parents, friends, and teachers are very proud of you, and so am I.

To those of you who are seniors—Ruth and I wish you the best of luck in your next chapter. To those of you returning to Syracuse as seniors this fall—keep up the great work!

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