

Commencement remarks – President Welty

Good morning and welcome to the 101st Commencement of California State University, Fresno! I am John Welty, President of the university.

Congratulations to all of you: graduating seniors, graduate degree recipients, alumni, distinguished faculty and – very importantly – families and friends who have supported our new graduates throughout their academic careers.

This is an important day for our university and an important day for all of you. It is the culmination of years of hard work, study and sacrifice – and you should be very proud of all that you have accomplished.

It's also an important day for our university because this is the first commencement ceremony of Fresno State's second century. There's something special about being the first graduating class of a new century, and I hope you enjoy the recognition.

Last year, we celebrated the conclusion of Fresno State's first 100 years. Today we celebrate that first century as the cornerstone on which we will build for our second.

As we look back and forward, we celebrate the distinctions that make Fresno State a special place.

We are a hub of research intended to squeeze every drop of water into the greatest possible productivity, while conserving enough for all thirsty people on earth.

We are a center of creative literacy reaching into immigrant and other diverse cultures to inspire their creativity and expand everyone's understanding.

Fresno State's science, mathematics and engineering disciplines will help meet our nation's needs to develop well-trained people to resolve our challenges in technology, medicine and more.

As the region's biggest trainer of teachers, we will continue to educate and inspire future generations of individuals who will lead us.

As the Valley's leader in innovation and entrepreneurship, Fresno State develops the businesses that will open employment opportunities with better earnings potential.

With committed partners in the community, Fresno State is working to find answers to a broad range of challenges to the quality of life and economic well-being of our region.

And finally, we are distinctive because of the community service our campus provides to the neediest in our region.

You have all helped make Fresno State distinctive and I am confident those who follow in your footsteps will learn from your example.

I challenge you – today's 4,835 students receiving bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees to leave this campus and distinguish yourselves in the proud Fresno State tradition.

Your chosen profession will serve you well you if you remain here, or move anywhere else in our ever-shrinking world. Your future will be better because you took advantage of Fresno State's opportunities, applied yourself to your studies and achieved the right to wear a cap and gown today.

I hope that as alumni you will continue to participate in the life of your university by giving back, because there will always be a special bond between Fresno State and you.

Fresno State has accomplished great things and will continue to do so. You represent the best in our university and I know you will go forward from here accomplishing your own great things. All of us, working together, will make a difference.