

21<sup>st</sup> Annual Boston College  
Wall Street Council Tribute Dinner  
Thursday, April 23, 2009

John, thank you so much for the wonderful introduction. I want to thank you and Kathleen and the entire Wall Street Council for all the work that you do. I also want to recognize Tim Connors, Bob Devlin and Mario Gabelli who first introduced me to the Council and its work.

At a time when the two words “Wall Street” invoke such a negative connotation, this council is just one of many examples of the great work, the passionate work, and the important work done by the companies and individuals who work in the financial sector.

It is one of many examples of the important interdependence and linkage of Wall Street and Main Street. We must all be there for each other and not allow the media and others to create a separation and division among us as people.

Father Leahy, thank you for awarding this Presidential medal to me this evening. There are so many fabulous individuals and families in the Boston College Community and it is truly a meaningful honor to be singled out. You are a wonderful leader of this great university and a tremendous steward of the Boston College brand. As parents, my wife, Peggy and I thank you for all you do.

I also want to thank and recognize Renee LeBlanc, Susan Thurmond and the other staff in the fantastic University Advancement team who do such wonderful work on behalf of the college and really made this dinner happen.

In terms of thank yous, I would be remiss not to thank all of the generous people who stepped up to support this dinner. Last Saturday night our friends and great BC parents, Denise and John Mara were honored at a dinner for the School of the Holy Child in Rye, NY and John talked about the fear of agreeing to be an honoree in this crazy economic time and I totally agree. And that dinner and this one turned out very well because of loyal family members, loyal friends, loyal colleagues, and loyal supporters.

Thank you for being out in force tonight. When it is easy to have an excuse to hide, you did not and we appreciate it. By the way, our friend John Mara is stepping up yet again and this year will host a new fundraising golf outing for Boston College called the “Plaxico Shootout”.

Life is not a straight road. It is full of twists and turns and sometimes blind corners and forks. As a parent, often your children become the cause of a new fork in the road and often that fork opens you up to new experiences and new relationships. When our oldest son, Al decided that he wanted to attend Boston College, we were introduced to a new fork in the road of life.

I had never been on the BC campus or known that much about the university but we have learned much in the last four plus years. And, what a positive experience it has been for our family.

Al amazingly graduates in six weeks. Al, it is amazing because of how quickly the time has flown by; not because your mother and I had any doubts about your ability to be successful.

Our daughter, Kaitlin is finishing her sophomore year at BC after transferring from a Catholic University in the Midwest that has the initials ND and is known these days for its fencing team. And our daughter Maggie who graduates from high school in eight weeks or so, will be attending Boston College in the fall.

And, who knows, there are two more Kelly children, Jack who is a freshman in high school and our wonderful five year old caboose, Elizabeth behind Maggie.

I have three quick messages:

- One to the Presidential Scholars
- One to the other BC students who graduate on May 18; and
- One to the members of the Boston College community

To the Presidential Scholars, I say WOW!!

You are a distinguished group because you are an impressive set of individuals who have done so much in your short lives to date. You are the reason we are all here tonight – to acknowledge and celebrate your success to date. You are obviously people of great intelligence but also and, very importantly, people of commitment and character. I hope this Presidential Scholars program was an enabler for you. And, while you have done great things in your time at Boston College, I hope this program is a jumping off point to the next chapter of your life. I hope this program has made you a person that will dream big, will take action, will ably lead others.

The people in this room tonite and people from past dinners have given you a gift and we have all been more than happy to do it and all we ask in return is to move forward and do well and do good. And, based on your track record to date, you will continue to make us so proud.



I know tonight that there are other students who will be graduating from Boston College on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

My son, Al brought 11 friends down from Boston tonight and I have met others who are here as well. I read somewhere that June is when a graduate goes out to set the world on fire. And, July is when she or he starts to wonder if maybe their matches are wet.

In this environment, one could be left to wonder if your matches are soaked. We are in a terrible economic cycle and I know that it would be easy to get depressed about the job market. My advice is to be patient. Life is a marathon; not a sprint. Cycles come and go.

My advice is to stay busy if you cannot find a full-time position – allow your mind to think about all the possibilities.

--- Consider government service for a few years

--- Look at part-time possibilities that might be able to become full-time

--- Take a course or two at a local college to continue to add to your knowledge

--- Consider working for a non-profit organization.

--- Volunteer your time to help others who are not as fortunate as you

--- Keep meeting with people and talking to people

As we exit this terrible economic time – and we will – the job market will come back and you will have possibilities but it will be important to have a good answer to “what have you done since graduation”?

Beyond that advice, I encourage you to always keep perspective in your lives. It is critical to understand what is important versus what is urgent. If you are not careful and thoughtful about managing those distinctions, urgent will win out over important.

And, you cannot let that happen. A meeting, a deadline, a problem seeking a solution, an opportunity that needs to be implemented can all be urgent. But what matters most – what is important – is family, God, friends and wellness. You need to make sure that you keep that perspective and don't let the urgent win all the time.

To the greater Boston College community, I must tell you that we are so impressed with the brand that you have created and so much of that is about the people who work at Boston College and the people that help Boston College. A week after I dropped my son Al off in September of 2005, my first new Boston College friend visited my office. Gene DeFilippo came in to say hello, to offer help, and to tell me about his love for BC. Gene was terrific and left a new parent feeling incredibly reinforced in the wisdom of having their first born in the hands of this wonderful school. Soon after that I met Jim Husson who is another special representative of the school. Jim is such a genuine person who Peggy and I have really enjoyed getting to know.

And Jim and Gene introduced us to Father Leahy who is a wonderful man, a motivating leader and a great Jesuit priest. Along the way we have met so many other wonderful BC people – way too many to single out tonight and not have this dinner run into breakfast.

I am a big believer in brands. A brand is special – it is a word or set of words that has both rationale and emotional aspects to it. A brand is a precious asset. It is a powerful differentiator. Boston College is without doubt a brand and very formidable one. That said, like all brands, it is not an entitlement. It must be enhanced and protected every day in every classroom, in every meeting, in every activity, in every event, in every conversation and in every decision.

I have been most impressed that Boston College gets that and seemingly works very hard to keep it brand special.

My hope for Boston College is that its brand continues to be enhanced. That Boston College continues to be a beacon of light and hope in the world. That Boston College continues to be a community of men and women for others. That Boston College continues to prepare students to go set the world aflame.

Thank you so much.