College of Science Graduation Featured Two Distinguished Alums

Hundreds of parents, some who traveled from as far away as Australia, Japan and Lebanon, joined their students for the College of Science’s May graduation. The capacity crowd heard addresses by two alumni: Dr. Donald Jernigan and Dr. Maxwell Scarlett.

In June 1967, Dr. Jernigan received the first-ever diploma awarded after the school’s name changed from Arlington State College to The University of Texas at Arlington. Dr. Jernigan, president and CEO of Adventist Health System, the largest not-for-profit protestant hospital system in the country, said his remarks would be brief, “because I am not the President of the United States and not one person came here today to hear what I had to say.”

Here’s what he said:

• As much as humanly possible, seek out a work environment where people share your values.
• Be a problem-solver. Good problems solvers will find that the world will beat their door down.
• Never quit growing: intellectually and emotionally.
• Be flexible. Life has a way of throwing unexpected curves.
• Recognize that this is the best possible time to pursue a career in disciplines like robotics, medicine, photonics or genetics.

“Once we get through the next year or so and the economy begins to turn around, we will be moving to the high-knowledge economy that we need to solve global problems, he said.

Dr. Scarlett, the first African-American graduate of this institution in 1996 (then named Arlington State College), spoke on the value of maintaining close ties to the University. He is president and chief executive officer of Lekar Emergency Medical Associates in Killeen. Dr. Scarlett and his wife, Vivian, recently established the Biology Department's first endowed professorship and the first such endowment established by an alumnus.

Dr. Scarlett, addressing the graduates as “Mighty Mavericks,” said that graduation did not mean they were finished with UT Arlington.

“We share a common bond that makes us one,” he said, encouraging the new graduates to come back to the campus, mentor and help provide internships for students, attend
athletic and arts events, become active in the Alumni Association and to “never underestimate the collective effect of working together.”