

Cambridge College Graduates 450 students in Savannah, GA

By Kimberly Dunbar

Cambridge College graduated 450 students at its annual Commencement on Sunday, February 10th at the Johnny Mercer Theater in the Savannah Civic Center. The ceremony showcased several graduates who delivered messages of encouragement and inspiration to their fellow classmates.

Cambridge College took a different approach to their 2008 Commencement ceremonies in Savannah. Rather than featuring a traditional keynote speaker, this year's ceremony was designed to focus on an exchange of ideas from a student from each of the College's programs.

Each of the graduate speakers discussed the impact and the lessons that their educational journeys had on and taught them about their lives. Savannah native and teacher Utaff Gordon (M.Ed.) said that during his journey there were so many individuals who left footprints in his sand that he had trouble finding his own. "This is more than I could ever have imagined," said Gordon.

L. Kraig Hawkins (M.Ed.) reminded his classmates that it is the middle of a journey that is the most important part. "It is the most overlooked part, but it is the defining moment because of the challenges and difficulties that every student must face," said Hawkins. "This journey has not been easy, but I have come to the conclusion that if achieving anything of value was easy, it would not be worth much." He also mentioned that the 2008 presidential election has shown him, and should remind everyone, of the importance of education.

Timeka Lamback Cline (Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies) expressed her appreciation to those classmates who became part of her family during her journey. "We did not just get a degree, we gained a family," she said. "Our work here is never done. I encourage you to continue your quest for knowledge –we should all be lifelong learners."

Cassandra Gordon Scott (B.A.) said that her dream of completing her Bachelor's degree has come to fruition. "I was challenged to think outside the box. I have never experienced creative freedom as I did in this program," said Scott, who is beginning Cambridge College's Master's program this summer. "I won't stop until I hear 'Hello, Dr. Scott.'"

The ceremony also featured student participation when Cassandra Wilson (M.Ed.) and Teia Grayned (M.Ed.) delivered the Invocation and Benediction, respectively. Graduate Venicia Richardson performed "When You Believe," setting a backdrop for the inspirational student reflections.

Cambridge College Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Joseph Crawford Reed delivered the Charge to the Graduates. "Go forth and build pathways that lead to success," he said. "You as teachers must build these pathways. Everything you need to be successful is in you. Your work begins now."

Cambridge College Dean of the School of Education Dr. Anthony DeMatteo welcomed the students to their graduation on behalf of the College's Board of Trustees and Chancellor Eileen Moran Brown. Savannah Mayor Otis Johnson was on hand to welcome the graduates and their families to the City of Savannah despite undergoing heart surgery on Friday.