

Delta State University Convocation 2022

Remarks by Dr. E.E. Caston

August 11, 2022

Welcome to students, faculty, staff, administration, and members of the community. Summers are great until sun, heat, humidity, and mosquitos take control. But the fall is near with cooler temps and yes, football. Are you ready for some football? Delta State has many exciting events, musical productions, athletic match-ups, and much more planned for the year, and I encourage you to pay careful attention to the calendar of events coming up and to participate in as many as possible.

My wish is that all of you have had an enjoyable summer and feel rested and ready for an eventful semester and year at DSU! I know I certainly am.

Students...We have been so busy getting ready for you — campus grounds, classroom buildings, cafeteria and union buildings, dorms, and

the administration building are all ready for your arrival.

Let's talk about Delta State University. The primary mission of Delta State is teaching and learning. The central focus of faculty, administration, and staff is meeting student needs — academic, personal, and social needs.

This university has a long, successful history of student success with graduates worldwide making contributions to benefit others in such respected career areas as medical, government, athletics, the arts, education, business, health, religion, finance, and the sciences. So, you are finding yourselves in a good place.

While today's facilities are much better than those of 1963 when I arrived here as an 18 year old, the reception that you students are receiving has the same warmth and professionalism as I experienced. DSU personnel are committed to your success.

Now, more about student success. For those students who arrive

with adequate-to-successful records of success, you can expect success here. But, listen carefully — if you bring a strong work ethic to the classroom, that means meeting deadlines, high attendance, and good citizenship in the classroom and on campus.

You will see DSU faculty, staff, and administration exemplify professional ethical behavior to all others. You can expect a warm atmosphere characteristic of an institution of higher learning. But, understand the teaching/learning concept is based on merit. Student performance is evaluated and rated by professors with the utmost integrity. Academic help is available for students on a meritorious basis. For those who demonstrate observed effort, assistance is likely available.

Delta State is a small, student-centered university. Classrooms are almost always small. Faculty reach out to students who show effort and commitment. But, let me caution you...those students with poor attendance records generally are unsuccessful.

And, finally about the place. DSU personnel love achievers, and you will see colleagues (faculty and staff) enjoying close working relationships with one another. That modeling should be an example for you to follow.

This place is a microcosm of the larger system you see in this country: housing, food sources, recreation and leisure, entertainment, government, health, law enforcement, a judiciary, social sororities and fraternities. Please participate and access all as you wish.

To all of you here today...students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the community...Delta State has operated for nearly a century as a special place that is focused on the care and welfare of others. We have prided ourselves through the years on our close relationships with one another in our daily lives, in times of need, worship, celebration, and sadness.

We are living in significantly changing times with challenges that are unprecedented. And, it is up to all of us to stand for the

foundations of this university and this community.

Let's all consider an action plan that encourages all members of Delta State and the local community to focus on a goal to impact team building, relationship strengthening, goal setting, success recognition, and highlighted recognition of individual successes. We all must support positive sounds.

Let's be the best we can be, and that will put us in a good place. My commitment to you as Interim President is to promote the unity and good for all members of the Delta State community and our local community, and I ask you to do the same.

In closing, may you have a wonderful year and use your time wisely.