

A New Generation of Heroes

Dr Keating, Dr Hafner, Capt Benke, Capt Sarra, Col Arkins, distinguished guests, classmates, fellow veterans, families and friends, it is an honor to speak to you today.

First, let me begin by saying that these remarks are mine and mine alone. They do not represent the Department of Defense, the Massachusetts National Guard or Boston College.

This annual Veterans Day event is the result of on-going efforts of the Boston College Veterans' Alumni Network, Army ROTC, Campus Ministry and the University

safety, these young men and women stood up to be measured. They became a part of the other 1%; those who have served this great nation.

As we here today know, it takes a profound strength to wear this Nation's uniforms. To serve in the United States Armed Forces takes a commitment to service above self. It takes strength of character to sublimate your personal comfort, your rights and your safety to a concept such as national interest. The bonds that are forged through shared dangers and long tours of duty far from home transcend and supplant the ties of polite society. The experiences of unity of effort and shared purpose can never be un-learned.

This remarkable cohort of young people came of age during a unique time in our history and answered the call of their nation. Knowing they would be sent into harm's way, they volunteered to serve.

We are now in the process of wrapping up this decade. It takes strength of character to do so.



You can encourage businesses to hire these Veterans, and remind them that Veterans make exceptional employees in any organization because in serving their country they have acquired invaluable skills, including:

- Decision-making skills primed by quick, clear thinking.
- Proven leadership skills, honed in the most challenging operational environments.
- The knowledge and experience needed to be sophisticated team-builders and natural team-players.
- A work ethic that demonstrates an unwavering commitment to excellence.

See the strength of our Veterans and look for ways help them. Just remember as we go forth today our Veterans are strong and resilient, creative and determined. “Once a Marine, Always a Marine.” “Once a Soldier, a Soldier for Life.” These are not mere words. They are a continuing call to action. We must heed this call to action and support today’s Veterans, and this generation will join the remarkable generations of men and women who wore this uniform and left an enduring mark on this nation.

Doctrine tells us to meet the enemy with the smallest possible force. In my world this is a point-man. The vanguard for the fire team, squad, platoon, company, He or She is the single point through which the might of a Nation is channeled to defeat our enemies. Somewhere in the world, right now, far from home, and in harm’s way, an American son or daughter is on point. He or she cannot worry about the future. He or she is laser focused on the current mission and counts on the Soldiers on the left and right to cover the flanks.

We must have their backs.

Thank you,