Good evening and welcome to Georgia Tech and to Focus '95. We appreciate your joining us and hope you'll enjoy your weekend.

When the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was just 34 years old, he led the march on Washington and delivered his famous "I Have a Dream Speech." More than 30 years later, those words continue to stir millions.

The world lost a great leader when we lost Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The most sweeping social reforms in American history can be directly attributed to this man who won a Nobel Prize in his 34th year of life and who died before his 40th birthday. Dr. King accomplished so much for the world, that it is often forgotten he was also a great scholar who earned a graduate divinity degree from Crozer Seminary and a Ph.D. from Boston University.

Tonight, I'd like to urge you to follow in his footsteps and consider an advanced degree. You have been invited here today because you have excelled as undergraduates. You have begun developing your leadership potential and have earned honors from your respective schools. Graduate school can help you further refine your leadership skills and further explore and discover your potential.

Specifically I'd like to urge you to consider Georgia Tech's graduate programs. In 1994 we were ranked second in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to minority students. In the future, we'd like to be ranked number one. Current number one rankings include being rated first in the country in the total number of engineering degrees awarded to underrepresented minorities, and being ranked first in the number of master's degrees in engineering conferred to African Americans. Georgia Tech can also boast the largest numbers of GEM fellows in the country. In Fall 1994 the number of GEM fellows in the MS Engineering program was 68. Stanford, the school ranked second enrolled less than half that number. Currently there are also 12 Ph.D. GEM fellows enrolled at Georgia Tech.

As Tech's new president, one of my main priorities is increasing Tech's diversity to reflect the diversity of the world around us.

If you decide not to choose Georgia Tech for your graduate study, (although I personally see no reason for you not to choose us), I urge you to still consider graduate study. More African Americans are needed to enter academia, achieve higher degrees, and to represent the African American community in the world of higher education. In that world, we have less African Americans earning graduate degrees today than 5 years ago. And as of 1991, less than 4 percent percent of the total U.S. faculty at various colleges across the United States are African American. Unfortunately, the percentages are even lower when it comes to students and faculty in scientific and technological fields.

Those numbers are simply not acceptable.
I urge you to help bring up those numbers and to be an agent for change -- someone who will help change those numbers and change this world for the better.

Thanks for your attention. We have many activities lined up for you, and I hope you have an enjoyable, useful, and memorable weekend.