



**BOSTON COLLEGE**  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

BOSTON COLLEGE  
8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL VETERAN'S ALUMNI RECEPTION  
SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 2018  
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM  
BAPST LAWN

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Michael J. Lochhead, Class of 1993

Good morning. I would like to thank the Alumni Association, and in particular, Jean Chisser for the invitation to deliver this year's keynote address for the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Boston College Veteran's Alumni Reception. Jean approached me over a year ago, recognizing that it was my 25<sup>th</sup> reunion year, to deliver this address. At first I thought she was mistaken as there didn't seem there was any way that I could possibly have graduated from BC 25 years ago. She was, in fact, correct...so, hence here I am. Thank you, Jean!

I'd also like to recognize quickly a few people with whom I've had the privilege to meet and get to know in the BC veteran community. George Harrington (Class of 1980) and Dan Arkins (Class of 1981), Co-Chairs of the BC Veteran's Alumni Network. Their passion for and commitment to the BC veteran community, including our current student veterans, is so evident and apparent from their investment of time and energy in developing the network and relationships among fellow veterans. When I was interviewing for the EVP role, one common theme I heard was how important "relationships" were at BC. I've come to learn how true this is and just how appreciative I am for people like Jean, George, and Dan who've sought to bring me deeper into relationships with fellow BC alums and veterans.

I'd also like to acknowledge Fr. Bob Keane of the Society of Jesus (BC Class of 1971) whom I followed from Holy Cross to Boston College. I remember well both the day that Fr. Keane was announced as arriving at Holy Cross and, more poignantly, the day it was announced that he was leaving Mt. St. James bound for The Heights of Boston College. I have the greatest respect for Fr. Keane and was so gratified when I realized that I would be once again working with him upon arriving back at BC in 2015.

I'd also like to quickly acknowledge Captain Shermer, who is working hard to develop BC's ROTC cadets into future leaders who will carry with them a world view that is very much informed by their Boston College experience and a mission-informed focus of using their educations for the benefit of others...first and foremost...for the young men and women who will be entrusted to their care when they assume their first assignments and duty posts. These are

special people within the BC undergraduate community and they have my utmost respect for their enduring commitments to Boston College and to serving our country.

Special thanks to Meyer Chambers, for his beautiful rendition of the National Anthem and what I know will be a moving rendition of God Bless America to close out today's ceremony. Thank you to the BC alums, spouses, friends, and family members who are here today and participating this reunion weekend reuniting with friends and classmates and recalling fondly their experiences here at Boston College.

And finally, a big thanks to my daughters Riley, Caitlin, and Dylan who are here today and to my wife, Chris and my daughter Mia who couldn't be here today due to other commitments. Any success I've had in this life has been enabled by the love and support I receive from them. If you ask my wife, she'd say that the four areas of my life that I most identify with and value are that of husband, father, veteran, and BC alum. All things that increase in importance the older I get. It is such an honor to be here today, at Boston College, in the presence of my family and fellow veterans and alumni. So, thank you!

In thinking about what to talk about today, I was drawn to the idea of "formation". Not religious formation as many will immediately be drawn to think about, but the Jesuit notion of formation, which seeks to integrate the intellectual, spiritual, and social lives of people so that they can become fully formed, more fully human people living lives of meaning and purpose. The idea, has been around certainly since the time St. Ignatius formed the Jesuit Order in 1540 and founded its first school for lay students in 1547. At Boston College, it is an idea that has been front and center of our student development efforts in both Student Affairs and led by Fr. Jack Butler and his team in Mission and Ministry.

BC's efforts to renew its core curriculum, with continued focus on the liberal arts being led by teams of teachers from different disciplines with embedded reflection opportunities, is another example of the ways in which the University is trying to enhance the integration of students' intellectual development. These classes, many of which are focused on complex problems and enduring questions, allow students to learn in an integrated and expansive way, from faculty members with vastly different expertise. It is increasingly clear that society will need future leaders who can draw upon multiple disciplines and perspectives in addressing things like climate change, healthcare, and poverty.

It is an idea that BC has embraced with such intentionality and has propelled the University into a leadership position among our secular college and university peers (certainly) but also within the world of Jesuit and Catholic colleges and universities. It is not something that I, nor my wife Chris (Class of 1992), experienced as intentionally when we came through Boston College as undergraduates and will no doubt (in addition to the expansion of this beautiful campus) be one of the great hallmarks of Fr. Leahy's presidency. But...and this is a big but...I can tell you that it is something that our daughter, Riley (BC Class of 2021), has been able to experience first-hand and in very meaningful ways.

The University embraces this idea that we do things differently, intentionally, with purpose and meaning. I can tell you-- both as a senior administrator and parent of an undergraduate student--

that the University is “delivering” on its promise. In addition to being able to explore her interests in psychology, theology and in athletic participation...my daughter has also had an opportunity to engage in some interdisciplinary coursework outside of her comfort zone through the core renewal program. Her experience in taking one of the core renewal classes on Moby Dick, co-taught by Provost David Quiqley and Professor Michael Martin, allowed her to engage in a much more meaningful way with both the historical as well as literary contexts of the novel, including a Saturday site visit to the whaling museum in New Bedford, with her professors. We’ve been able to witness her growth spiritually and an evolving maturity that is helping her to find her voice and the way she wants to live her life. In fact, Riley has declared herself a theology major and is very excited about the coursework in front of her to fulfill her major requirements. We are nothing short of thrilled that she chose BC and that the University is having such a positive impact on her life.

Of course, there is also another form of “formation” that happens with young people within the same basic age groups of our undergraduates (18-22) who choose to serve their country. It’s a process by which, a person subordinates themselves to service of a larger ideal. Like a calling, it propels young people to endure hardship, discomfort, lost time with loved ones...for the honor of wearing the uniform of a United States Soldier, Marine, Sailor, or Airman, or Coast Guardsman and representing their country both at home and abroad. It’s an awesome responsibility and incredible honor and one that requires people of strong character, gritty resolve, and an ethical bearing point. Through basic and advanced training, deployments, and duty assignments, the military has a unique process that offers people a formative experience that forms common bonds that last well beyond their time in service. Although the formative processes that the military and Boston College follow are different, there are undoubtedly some similarities, including:

- Shared learning outcomes
- Physical, mental and social preparedness
- Focus on service to broader society
- Lifetime membership in a community of people with common interests and care for one another

My decision to enlist in the Army’s delayed entry program when I was a senior in high school, at the age of 17, was a bit of a surprise (to my parents, anyway). It’s not as if I had long thought about being a soldier or even serving my Country. Growing up as a Catholic in Utah, I had always been patriotic, but the enlistment option only became a reality when my recruiter, Sgt. Chang Anderson, happened to catch me at home one day working in the yard. He asked me what my plans were after high school and if I had ever considered the military as an option. I told him that I hadn’t and that I wanted to go to college, but didn’t know how I was going to be able to make that happen given my parents’ limited financial means (and quite honestly, their limited guidance in the areas of college planning). He described the benefits of the GI Bill and the Army College Fund (which I didn’t end up qualifying for due to my self-selection into the military intelligence field). It took a few meetings, but all of a sudden, Sgt. Anderson had helped me to see something that my parents were not able to... a path forward for myself that was markedly different from that of my parents and certainly very different from the paths my five older sisters and 1 older brother had taken, all of whom essentially entered the workforce and forewent college.

Although I did find myself wavering on my decision as I completed my senior year of high school, I stuck with it and arrived at Ft. Dix in July of 1986. To this day, it is one of the decisions of which I'm most proud and the one which I believe gave me the self-confidence and an enduring self-reliance on my ability to make important decisions. My military experience, however, gave me so much more:

- Grit
- Perseverance
- Discipline
- Ability to work as part of a team and follow orders
- Confidence
- Pride
- Camaraderie
- Maturity
- Independence
- Leadership
- Accountability

As I mentioned, my undergraduate experience at BC was quite different from that of my daughter, Riley, and really from most of my undergraduate peers at that time. I came to BC after enlisting in and spending 4 years with the U.S. Army. I was older than my undergraduate counterparts, had already experienced being away from home and living in community, was a commuter, and was working between 24-32 hours a week. At the time I matriculated to BC, the University did not offer housing nor financial aid to transfer students, so student loans and concurrent work were the only viable option I had to make BC "work". The GI Bill was certainly helpful in helping to make ends meet (essentially covering my car payment, insurance, and gas).

The real difference maker for me, however, was the generosity of my then-girlfriend, now-wife's grandparents, who were willing to take a chance on me by providing me room and board...in exchange for shoveling their walks, mowing their lawns, and generally helping around their house. Chris's grandfather, Walter, was a World War II veteran who saw significant action as a tail gunner on a dive bomber in the Pacific Theater. Not knowing my own grandfather, he and I bonded quickly and quite deeply over the years no doubt in large part to our mutual respect for one another's service to Country and commitment to family. He was a great man and there is no doubt in my mind that my success was enabled by their unwavering support for my wife and I during our college years and our early years of becoming professionally established.

With the advantage of being able to look back and reflect on what military service meant for me personally, it does inform how I think about my role as a father in raising four daughters, and in my role as EVP and educator at Boston College. Many of these same attributes, which many argue appear to be lacking in many adolescents and young adults today, don't happen automatically. They are the result of intentional focus on formative processes and experiences that seek to integrate intellectual, spiritual, social, and physical growth. They are the same attributes we want to see in our children and grandchildren who will need to make their way in a

world that is different from the one I encountered in 1986 when I struck out on my own. A world that appears much more polarized, much more intolerant, and much more impatient. It's a world that, quite honestly, needs more people who are willing to help, serve and engage others and who are willing to shoulder the burden of making society more loving and more just. The world needs America to continue to be a beacon of hope and for its institutions, like Boston College and the US Military, to educate and form ethical leaders who are willing to shoulder these burdens in service to something much larger than themselves.

With the launch of its new strategic plan in 2017, Ever to Excel: Advancing Boston College's Mission, the University is doubling down on its commitment to liberal arts education and efforts to improve the student formational experience. From expansion of the core renewal program, to the exploration of new programs that seek to integrate student's intellectual, spiritual, and social experiences, to the significant investment in integrated science, to the leveraging of strengths in our undergraduate schools, Boston College is well positioned to continue to educate and form young men and women who, with their BC degrees, will make significant positive contributions to the world. The very kind of leaders the world will need to address some of the perplexing complex problems and enduring questions. It will no doubt take leadership and time to see the benefits of Ever to Excel be realized. It will also take resources and the continued support of our wonderful alumni community. It's an investment worth making. The world needs Boston College now more than ever and Boston College needs all of you to be partners in helping BC...to steal a phrase from some older US Army recruitment commercials... "Be all that it can be".

Thank you all for coming to reunion weekend and thank you for or your continued support of this great university. May God bless you, your families, our deployed service members, Boston College, and these great United States of America.