

"Some of you may have doubts about whether or not you are good enough to overcome the challenges you will face. That is normal. But let me remind you that I chose you." He went on to say "The only obstacle between you and success is your own discipline and desire. Some days will be good. Other days will be challenging. I assure you that everyday you will have to work harder than you have ever worked before. The level of excellence that got you here today is not good enough to get you through the next four years of the Naval Academy. You will experience failure, maybe for the first time in your life. But we will teach you to face and overcome your failures as a team. Look to your right and to your left. This morning these people were strangers. Tonight they are your classmates. You will learn quickly that you can not make it through the Naval Academy alone. To succeed you must depend on each other, in the process you will forge life long bonds. We will develop your strengths to levels you have never before achieved. When you receive your commissions as officers in the Navy and Marine Corps 4 years from now, you will stand in front of your sailors and marines, and you will be selfless, inspirational, proficient, innovative, articulate, adaptable, professional leaders, ready to serve a nation at war. A grateful nation applauds your dedication and commitment to serve others before yourself. Welcome aboard shipmates!"