

Valedictorian Address

Good evening Brother Segvich, Board of Directors, faculty, parents, and the class of 2009. I am David Richards and I would like to say some words of encouragement to my graduating class. Over the years, we have seen a lot of our peers leave Rice. The few who remain are small in number but strong as a unit. We have seen a lot of change throughout Rice. Change is a good thing.

As President, Barack Obama stated, “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

As each of us goes into the future to do our own thing, we must know that nobody is going to hand us anything. We have to work for what we want. If we want to be successful in our own lives, the change must come from within ourselves. When we go off to college, we must make the transition from boyhood to manhood. In life, change is required. Without change, there is no growth or improvement. I am proud of my Rice brothers today because what we have done is now an accomplishment in our lives.

Each of us is unique in our special way, some more than others. As we go out into the real world let us not forget the **R., I., C.,** and **E,** Let’s take care of our **R**esponsibilities, stand up for what we do. Show **I**ntegrity to anyone who doubts us. Have **C**ourage in the face of fear. Give our **E**mpowerment to God so that he may lead us on the right path. Congratulations, my Rice brothers and may God be with us on our journey through life.