

Commencement address by Jack Hanna  
Schottenstein Center  
December 16, 2012

Thank you very much. Thank you very much. What an extreme honor today. Dr. Gee said there would be about three or four thousand people here. On behalf on the Columbus Zoo, I will invite each and every one of you to the Columbus Zoo Light Show tonight. Make sure—I'm serious. I don't know—the CEO of the zoo is here, so he will have to figure out who you are. To you graduates, in all seriousness, if you bring your diploma up in the next two weeks we're open, it will save you \$30 or \$40, you can get in free. Bring your diplomas and get in free at the Columbus Zoo. All you guys. I'm going filming in Africa. Who cares. I hope I can say this, Doctor. You made me nervous about my daughter. I did bring a book. In one story of my life, one story I was hoping to tell, in 1974, I had six chimpanzees at home. They're from the zoo. My wife is breast feeding my daughter, my chimp wouldn't eat, and I looked at her and she said, no way, Jack. I hope you don't mind. I was getting nervous you would find out in my book and ruin my entire speech. If you never have me back here, I'll understand.

In all seriousness, everybody, you might win Emmys, you might travel the world, you might meet leaders of the nations, like some of us have. But today is incredible, the highest honor I have ever received, and probably will ever receive. But I must say that I want to thank Dr. Gee, The President of The Ohio State University, the Board of Trustees, the Faculty, the distinguished guests and students and all of your families that are here. Let me say something, that today, you're receiving something that can never be taken away from any of you. You can lose your money, lose your cars, your house, whatever that might be, but this diploma is going to be one of the most valuable possessions of your entire life. You might not understand that right now, but later in life, you sure will. All of you have worked very hard, your family has worked

hard to provide you an education. You gave four years of your life, or more than four years of your life for some of you, that you have not spent goofing off somewhere and having a great time. Now that you have this degree, what is next?

What I must say here folks, is very brief, only three or four pages typed big. By the way, I only have 13 minutes and I have 12 animals. Anyway, something I'm going to say is that I take little books with me all the time. I read things, could be in a tent in Africa or the Amazon, like I was several months ago, or just recently returned from Zimbabwe, Botswana, or Zambia. At nighttime, there's nothing much to do there when the lights go out, unless you want to get your tail eaten outside with the animals, so you sit there in your tents and you read. Some of these things were something that I applied to my daily life over the last 30 years. When I read something, I write it down. Some are my own words and some aren't. But here's something you've heard of, if you don't take anything away today, take this away: If you choose a job you love, you'll never have to work again. If you choose a job you love, you'll never have to work again. You look at Dr. Gee. You look at Coach Urban Meyer. Look at Thad Matta, you look at the Dean of the Vet School, Lonnie King. As any of these people or any of these people sitting up here, and that's what's so incredibly important about the educational system today. Back where I was raised in Tennessee, there were teachers there, yes, and I think they meant to be good teachers. But like in every form of life, 99 percent of the people are good teachers. There are some bad teachers. There are some bad zoo people. The world has some bad people in it. But you always remember the good ones. And this university, everybody: I want a round of applause, because I have not met a single teacher here who does not dedicate their entire life to The Ohio State University. Give a round of applause here.

Every single professor here is incredible. You know, you've heard this before, and that's okay, some of you young people haven't. There is an old saying that says success comes before work in the dictionary. Success only comes only before work in the dictionary. My dad taught me three very important words when I was growing up, and I'll never forget them, on our farm in Tennessee. He said, Jack, yes, you believe in the good Lord, but also, three words. Hard work and enthusiasm. Back then you're 15 or 16 on the farm, hard work? I work hard. Enthusiasm—he saw me running around feeding chickens, cleaning up after cows, and stuff. I just loved doing that. So I think he knew that, those three words. So what's that really mean? People who excel work with enthusiasm. Just look at the people I've just mentioned to you, as well as the people sitting back here. These are the most enthusiastic people you have in the entire country here. These folks excel because they never stop learning, growing, or improving, ever. Do you know what else successful people do? They keep their word. They are reliable. And they can be counted on to do what they say they will do. They also keep a positive attitude. Even under extreme pressure, change, or incredible demands. They don't allow themselves to become negative. One last thing: People who excel do more than expected. You'll never excel only doing what is required. In school, I had a difficult time in school. Even though I worked harder than anyone else in the class, the one thing that kept me going was my love and my passion to help save the animal world. I knew if I worked hard, maintained a positive attitude, and was reliable, I could achieve my first goal in life, and that's to become a zookeeper. A zookeeper.

Let me tell you something: Two weeks before graduation, Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio—I'm from Tennessee. My wife said not to say this, but it's public knowledge. I was rejected at every college I applied to. But I worked harder than anyone. And I know when I say that, I know what I'm saying. Today, I don't know what you would call that. Some people

would say, I'm being serious, it's dyslexia. Back then they called me dumb, probably. And that's fine. But you know something? The President of Muskingum College—the President—took me aside two weeks before graduation, I had 2.2 average, and I worked my tail off just to get that. A 2.2 average. They said the President—Dr. Miller wants to see you, Jack. Two weeks before graduation. I thought for sure he would say I couldn't graduate. I knew he couldn't because I had the grades. He looked across the table and said, young man, I looked at everybody graduating today—at Muskingum, we had maybe 200 graduating. He said, why would you want to work with smelly animals in a smelly zoo after spending this money coming to college and working your tail off? Because I know you work hard. Why would you want to do this? Dead serious in my face. I said, Dr. Miller, when I was 11 years old, I worked for a veterinarian cleaning cages until I was 16 every summer. I loved every minute of it. I went and saw the Old Knoxville Zoo back then when I was about 17. I said some day I'm going to be a zookeeper. I told myself this. I never wavered from my dream. Being a zookeeper? No one wanted to be a zookeeper back then. It's not because it was for money. I did it because it was my love. And you know, I went ahead and did that. I don't go through history because I haven't got that much time to tell what happened to me as I became a zookeeper, drafted in the Vietnam War, and that kind of thing. But I came back, became a zookeeper in Knoxville, went to Florida, had six employees. Went to Columbus, Ohio, in 1978 when I started here. This has been the most incredible experience of my entire life.

So over the last 45 years, I've never wavered from my dream to help animals. From zookeeper, to TV show host, to Director Emeritus of the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, to spokesperson for the animal world. When I came to Columbus 35 years ago, as Dr. Gee said, the zoo was rated next to the last, over 200 zoos in America. Atlanta was last, us, and then New

Orleans. And now, all three of those zoos are in the top ten but thanks to the wonderful people of Columbus, Ohio, and this great university, we are now rated number one. My goal was to turn the zoo around. I told my team of people, just like this team here that runs Ohio State University, it would be great and it would be a great zoo, and they, they could make it happen. Can you imagine a world without animals? Can you? Some of you are sitting there saying, well, where's Jack's animals? So don't imagine a world without them, because right now, what I'm going to show everyone is an animal that was declared extinct in the wild in July. I hope none of you get to see this again. This animal in the zoo world is doing fairly well. This animal in July was declared extinct throughout the entire world. And in Siberia- this is a Siberian Lynx here. And if it bites him, he's going to be extinct. In all seriousness, I don't know what camera you're seeing up there, but look very closely. Now those of you that might not realize this, this is not a Canadian Lynx. Where I live up in Northwestern Montana—he's pretty stressed up. I'm up here shaking and this thing's sleeping. Anyway, this is a Siberian Lynx. Our Canadian is half as small. I want you to notice he's getting bigger now. He is about a year and a half old. He will get a big mane like the African lion. But look at one thing. I know the camera, Brian, is that way. But I want to show you something unlike any cat in the world has. See the back foot up on the screen there? That's his head. Anyway—I'm just kidding. Anyway, look how long and flat the back foot is. That cat, when it runs to catch a rabbit or deer or whatever it is, or a Canadian Lynx, they run on the back part of the foot, not the pad. So Mother Nature, the good Lord invented the show shoe way before we had snow shoes thousands of years ago. This cat would sink in the snow. He would die instantly, because he couldn't catch anything. Therefore, if you watch him run, it is interesting. They run the whole back part of the foot. What took this animal out? Back in the 1920s, 30s, 40s, this cat was slaughtered for its fur. I wish each and every one of you could

touch this cat's fur. This cat sees something up there. Anyway, if you could touch his fur, you would see it is like silk. If you touch a lion or tiger, which I hope you never have, if you do that, though, it is very bristly, hard like a broom. This cat's coat was one of the most sought-after coats in the world. That's what happened back in those days. That's not the problem today. They were coming back pretty good. With overpopulation, these cats were pushed up into the mountains. Therefore, up in the mountains, the prey the animal hunts is not there, so they starved to death. Plus, they're a solitary cat. Which means when she cycles, the male can't find them. So therefore, that's what happened to this cat last July. I want to thank Brian—we won't clap, if he could, he may not like clapping, so we will wait a second here. Thank you, Brian. Go ahead and clap for him. What the heck. It's just a small cat. Oh, my gosh. He's going to graduate today. I did this, everyone, just for this animal.

I want to give this penguin his diploma. Anyway, that's Punky the penguin. Those that saw Happy Feet with Robin Williams, this penguin was flown to Los Angeles and got to walk down the red carpet. He's so famous, he's too cocky to accept his diploma. Anyway, this is a black-footed penguin. If you ever do a game show, if you get this answer right, I will take \$100. How many species are there? 17? 12, you're close. But there's 17 of them. Out of 17, they're going to ask you, how many live in cold weather? Most people say all of them. Only five out of 17 live in the Antarctic. Only five of them. This penguin is from South Africa, called the black-footed penguin, or also the jackass penguin, because it brays like a donkey. This animal is listed on the endangered species list. A year ago last June, over a year and a half ago. Now why is that? No one eats the penguin, everybody. When I go to Antarctica, you sit there and go my gosh, when early men came over in ships from England and around the world, in Antarctica, they shouldn't starve because there's millions of penguins down there, right? But I think it was

Shackleton, I'm not an historian. Shackleton or whatever his name that came over from England in the late 1800s, his ship got stuck down there. They were there over the winter, alright? I'm sorry to say that several men ate the penguin. Got violently- I think one or two died. The terrible thing about the story is they had to consume their dogs. However, the only time in history they all lived, except for the ones that ate the penguin. So therefore, that spread around the world. And now no one eats the penguin. They collect the eggs and feathers in the South Africa, on the beach there. So that's what happened to the penguin, the black footed penguin. Remember, penguins are in Australia, Galapagos Islands, South Africa, several parts of the world. They have more feathers per square inch than any bird in the world. They do not fly, obviously. They go about 20 miles an hour in the water. And leopard seals, man, killer whales are the ones that are their enemies. Their predators. This does not- this eats fish, not krill. Krill is the one- the penguins in the Antarctic when they go there, they eat the krill. Thank you so- give him his little degree to him and you can take him back. Thank you Beth, so much for bringing our beautiful penguin.

By the way, I would like for Tom Stout to come out here, if you would, Tom, please. I want Tom to come up here. He said he wasn't going to do it but he better do it. If you can stand right there, Tom. Come over here, Tom. We are very proud, everybody, The Columbus Zoo is a huge company. Not the budget you have here, but a \$60 million operation, versus 1978, \$600,000. Tom is our new CEO of the zoo, acting CEO, will be appointed new CEO I hope very shortly. But I want to welcome you, Tom, to Columbus, Ohio. Just got here about a year and a half ago. Thank you so much for taking over the zoo. You can take him back. Put him on the ground. This one here wants to run around. Anyway, what we have here, what Brandi has – that's my daughter, Julie, by the way, who works at the zoo. Brandi has an animal, everyone, you

think the animal I brought out here went extinct. Guess how many of these are left in the wild? Less than a thousand. This is called the Clouded Leopard from Malaysia. We filmed there a year and a half ago. This animal, no one has ever seen the animal in the last year and a half except for two people I know of. But this is a youngster. This cat will only get to be, everyone, about 30 or 40 pounds. The cat resembles a dog when it is full grown with its nose and nostrils. If you also look, you cannot tell now, but you see its legs? His legs will grow no more in his lifetime. They will be this long. He looks abnormal. Why is that? Because he lives 90 percent of his life in trees. 90 percent. Now you look at that coat there. This coat, about two years ago, in Europe, they found a man selling these coats from about 15 years ago. Guess what one coat was? \$80,000. This cat is called a cat that hunts in silence. You would never know you were in his stomach. Now he's not going to kill you. He eats monkeys and birds, this little one does. I wish you could see this cat full grown. The claws on that animal are spectacular. And again, this animal has basically just a little cry. He cannot growl or scream like most cats, like cougars or mountain lions in this country or in Africa. So look at him closely because you won't see that other than zoological parks. Very few zoos have them. This cat, by the way, has a computer chip located in his back spine. He could end up in a zoo in Australia, Europe, wherever it could be. We monitor the gene pool of these cats all over the world. That way they will have a great gene pool for many of your great-great grandkids for years to come. But that's not what we want. Some day we hope they'll be back out in the wild. Thank you so much, Brandi, for bringing that from the Columbus Zoo.

Everyone, if you would, in all seriousness, be real quiet, if you would. If you have to go to the bathroom, unless you go at 75 miles an hour, don't get out of your chair. This is going to be a cheetah, all right, the world's fastest land mammal. Now, we want to show you this.



Sometimes it works and sometimes it may not work. You can take your pictures but don't clap or anything until after the animal leaves. I want you to see this. Because everyone, this is another cat that has a tremendous problem. Picture when you go home today, and you're going 70 miles an hour on the interstate, because you are allowed to go 65 or 70, right? Think of a cheetah passing you. When we film this animal in the wild, we film with three cameras, not one. Half of the time, we never get there. The animal can go from zero to 50 miles in less than four seconds. This animal's eyes – if he shows you his eyes up there on the screen, I want you to see something. You talk about Mother Nature, look at the dark- see the dark marks under his eyes? Mother Nature gave him those because this is the only cat in the world that hunts in the heat of the day. The only one. 100 degrees outside, when he has to hunt. This cat is not powerful, everybody. This cat cannot take even a human down hardly. They can hit you at 70 miles an hour, and stun their prey. They stun their prey is what they do. If you look at the foot of the cat, if we can see it. I don't know whether we can see it or not. Beautiful shot, not many people can see this anywhere in the world. The only cat in the world – terrific shot, you must be from national geographic or something – anyway, those claws, they are the only nonretractable claws of any cat in the world. Your housecat retracts his claws. When I track them in Africa I have to have a guide, or I never would know that that's a cheetah. The speed – again, look at how he's built like a greyhound. The tail – you don't need to necessarily see it – the tail is like a sail on a sailboat. When he goes 50 or 60, he turns his tail and it will turn his body. When he hits his animal, he goes like this- he turns to surprise the animal, grabs it, and 60 percent of the time – 60 percent of the time – his prey will get away. What happens? The cheetah has to rest for three days or four days and try to hunt again. By the way, cubs stay with their mom up to four years.

Longer than almost any cat. Why is that? She has to teach how to hunt. So mother cheetah will place a cub over here, a cub there and a cub there.

Let's say the zebra and the antelope are out there eating, right? Just having a good time. And they see the cheetah, it is the heat of the day. They're not hunted because they think at nighttime. All of the sudden, this zebra goes, oh, they're just baby cheetahs, not knowing she is sitting over here. Once she explodes and when she does hit right, she grabs the neck. She has to grab the neck, and has to hold on to it for five to ten minutes. At that point, the animal succumbs and she starts eating.

What happens in Africa? Buzzards and vultures immediately circle over a kill, no matter where you are, all right? When they circle over, you have lions, and hyenas are sleeping, because they're tired. And they just say, hey, the cheetah's made a kill. They go over and take the food from the cheetah, even lions have been known to eat the cheetah. Now the cheetah is hunted also in certain parts of Africa, because they kill goats and sheep of the Massai and other people there. So when we go there and film, you know what we do now? We're taking – we have over 150 dogs called the Anatolian Shepherds that are this big from Turkey. And what we do, we give the Massai or the tribes or the ranchers, farmers there – we give them these dogs. The Anatolian Shepherd is a big brown dog that I can't describe. And just a growl or bark will make you wet your pants. It scares you to death. But the cheetahs will not go around the cattle then. They don't kill the cheetah, these dogs. So we are supplying dogs now. Isn't it amazing what we've learned over the years? Instead of trapping the animal. We can't trap animals because you have to check the trap every day, and it is 120 degrees over there. And now we've taken the traps away, and now we are using these dogs to help save the cheetah.

But I wanted you to see this, everyone, because I don't know how many times Dr. Gee, you've had a cheetah in a graduation, and I probably won't be coming back. So, probably never again. Have you ever had one here? No, probably not. He's probably saying, oh, my God, what have I got myself into? But I'm almost finished. I had 13 minutes and I'm at about 12 minutes. Sometimes this thing goes to sleep and there won't be a graduation. We'll take our time here, won't we, Suzi?

By the way, these two folks here, my daughter, Brandi, and Beth, these are all folks that work, you talk about what I just said, everyone, with passion. They don't work for the money. You ask them if they love to go to work every day. Columbus Zoo has 1,600 employees now. We had 22 when I got there. If we have an opening in the animal department – by the way, don't get disturbed if you apply for a job, folks, someplace. You know why? You say I've got to be a keeper or veterinarian to work at the Columbus Zoo. You have to. We have 17 careers in our zoo; 17 careers. Marketing, horticulture, it goes on and on. Accounting. I can go on and on with the 17 careers. Always remember wherever you are applying for work, it is not one thing, it is everything. Here's the last thing I will say, everyone. I was told this once by a person. I don't know if I read it or was told it. But I'll never forget it. You can make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give. Thank you.

The Ohio State University will hold a historic virtual commencement on May 3 with Apple CEO Tim Cook delivering the commencement address. Watch WOSU Public Media, The Ohio State University's OSU Spring 2020 Commencement on Livestream.com. The Ohio State University will hold a historic virtual commencement on May 3 with Apple CEO Tim Cook delivering the commencement address. The Ohio State University. 1 hr . The Ohio State University will award a record 12,967 degrees and certificates to its largest-ever graduating class during a historic virtual commencement on Sunday, May 3. The hour-long commencement ceremony will begin at noon. It will be broadca Editor's note: The class size has been updated. The Ohio State University - Technology Commercialization Office (TCO). In 1916, Ohio State became the first university in Ohio to be extended membership into the Association of American Universities, and remains the only public university in Ohio among the organization's 60 members. The Public Ivies: America's Flagship Public Universities (2000) by Howard and Matthew Greene listed Ohio State as one of a select number of public universities offering the highest educational quality. In its 2016 edition, U.S. News & World Report ranked Ohio State as tied for the 16th-best public university in the United States, and tied for 52nd among all national universities.[21]. 67% of incoming freshmen in autumn 2017 were ranked in the top 10% of their high school class. The Ohio State University. Devido a pandemia do coronavirus (Covid-19), recomendamos ligar antes para confirmar horários; e lembre-se do isolamento social. "Campus area during football (futebol americano) season and not answer the cry"(2 dicas). OH! Welcome to THE Ohio State University, founded in 1870, and one of the top globally ranked universities! Known for it's Medical, Business, & Law schools, Ohio State really is the best! Go Bucks! 2012 ohio state commencement columbus . 5/3 @ osu columbus . 53 osu columbus . Thomson, E. (Edward), 1810-1870; Ohio Wesleyan University. Publication date. 1846. Uploaded by ChristinaB on January 6, 2012. SIMILAR ITEMS (based on metadata). Terms of Service (last updated 12/31/2014).