

BELINDA STRONACH

'Just go for it,' Stronach tells grads

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The University of Windsor's 100,000th graduate will cross the stage during this spring's convocation.

More than 650 graduates were honoured during the first session of the school's 95th convocation Wednesday afternoon.

"We would not have reached that number had we not first reached number one, number 8,006, number 62,000 and so on," university president Alan Wildeman told the crowd at the St. Denis Centre.

"Those 100,000 students represent far more than 100,000 parents and families who have sat in the audience and watched.

"While the University of Windsor has reached a milestone this week, so have each of you."

Along with the hundreds of prospective teaching candidates who received their degrees, former MP and businesswoman Belinda Stronach received an honorary doctor of laws degree from the university.

Stronach, who has also received honorary degrees from McMaster and Brock universities, said the key to success is dreaming big. "You may have 100 people tell you your nuts, but if you believe in it and you're passionate about it then don't be afraid to go for that dream," Stronach said.

"All the successful people that I've met along the way had a dream and while they may not have had everything worked out perfectly, they figured it out, worked hard and stuck with it. Just go for it."

Stronach is a former Conservative and Liberal member of Parliament and is co-founder of Spread the Net with Rick Mercer. Operated by UNICEF, Spread the Net distributes mosquito-repelling bed nets in African countries to combat malaria.

Meanwhile at St. Clair College's Centre for the Arts, nearly 200 students from the school of engineering technology received certificates, diplomas and degrees.

Echoing Stronach's comments, guest speaker and St. Clair College alumni Gerry Lesa told students at the Chrysler Centre to choose their goals and "go for it."

"You're ideas will come true if you believe in them and if you write them down and go for it," said Lesa, who has owned and operated G.M. Lesa Associates, Phoenix Log and SWT Specialty Products group in Tecumseh.