

2001

## **Spring Commencement Address, Hayes Jones, April 29, 2001**

Eastern Michigan University

**HAYES JONES**  
**COMMENCEMENT SPEECH**  
**APRIL 29, 2001**  
**10:30 A.M. AND 2 P.M.**

THANK YOU PRESIDENT KIRKPATRICK. TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, PRESIDENT KIRKPATRICK, FACULTY,  
STAFF, HONORED GUESTS, FAMILY, FRIENDS AND MOST  
IMPORTANT OF ALL, THE GRADUATE OF THE CLASS OF 2001.  
FOR 40 YEARS I HAVE WAITED TO RETURN TO MY ALMA  
MATER, AND TO PASS ON A FEW WORDS OF WISDOM. AS YOU  
RELAX FROM YOUR LAST FEW HOURS ON CAMPUS AND AWAIT  
THESE WORKS WITH BATED BREATH, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE  
THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXTEND A HEART FELT THANKS TO  
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY FOR CONFERRING UPON ME  
AN HONORARY DOCTORAL DEGREE.

I AM EXTREMELY GRATEFUL!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN SAID, "I LIKE TO SEE A MAN PROUD OF THE  
PLACE IN WHICH HE LIVES. I LIKE TO SEE A MAN SO LIVE THAT  
HIS PLACE WILL BE PROUD OF HIM."

NOT ONLY AM I PROUD TO ACKNOWLEDGE MY HOMETOWN,  
PONTIAC, MICHIGAN, WHERE I RECEIVED MY BASIC  
FOUNDATION, I AM ALSO PLEASED TO INCLUDE EASTERN  
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, WHO PREPARED ME FOR THE JOURNEY  
INTO THE WORLD.

AT AN EARLY AGE, GROWING UP IN PONTIAC, MICHIGAN, I  
LEARNED THAT I HAD THE ABILITY TO RUN FAST, JUMP HIGH  
AND FAR. MORE IMPORTANTLY, MY ABILITIES WERE  
RECOGNIZED BY THOSE IN THE COMMUNITY WHO WERE  
GENUINELY INTERESTED IN HELPING AND WORKING WITH  
YOUNG PEOPLE. I WAS TOLD THAT I HAD A GIFT THAT SHOULD  
BE DEVELOPED. I WAS ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE  
RECREATION AND SPORT ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY THE CITY  
AND THE SCHOOLS I ATTENDED.

AT THE TIME, I HAD NO CONCEPT OF THE REAL MEANING OF  
THIS GIFT AND HOW IT WOULD IMPACT MY LIFE AND THE  
COMMUNITY IN WHICH I LIVE . . . ALL I KNEW WAS I TRULY  
ENJOYED BEATING ALL THE GUYS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL I ARRIVED ON THE CAMPUS OF EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY AND STARTED RECEIVING MY TRAINING FROM COACH GEORGE MARSHALL THAT I BEGAN TO SHARPEN MY6 FIGT. IF DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR ME TO REALIZE I WAS BLESSED WITH SOMETHING SPECIAL. THE MORE I TRAINED, THE MORE I IMPROVED. TO THE EXTENT, THAT I WAS FORTUNATE TO QUALIFY AND REPRESENT MY COUNTRY IN THE 1960 OLYMPIC GAMES.

IN THE 1960 GAMES, I FAILED SHORT OF MY EXPECTATION. CONSEQUENTLY, I BEGAN TO TRAIN FOR THE 1964 GAMES, WHILE I WAS TRAINING FOR THE TPOKYO GAMES, I BEAGN TO REALIZE THAT THIS GIFT WAS NOT FOR MY BENEFIT ALONG, BUT TO BE SHARED WITH OTHERS.

WHEN I RETURNED HOME FROM THE GAMES, I DONATED THE GOLD MEDAL TO THE YOUTH OF PONTIAC, IT WAS MY DESIRE THAT THE MEDAL WOULD INSPIRE THEM TO REACH THEIR

DREAMS. THE GOLD MEDAL REMAINS ON DISPLAY IN THE LOBBY AT OUR CITY HALL.

IT IS MY DESIRE THAT THIS WAS THE CASE WITH TWO OF EASTERN'S TOP TRACK ATHLETES, GERALD RAHSOOL AND JALEO MAYO, BOTH RECEIVED THEIR EARLY TRAINING IN PONTIAC.

EACH OF YOU WERE BLESSED WITH AT LEAST ONE GIFT, SOME RECEIVED MORE THAN ONE, LIKE I, YOU CHOOSE EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY TO SHARPEN THIS GIFT. YOU HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED YOUR COURSE WORK, AND TODAY, YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR DIPLOMA, WITH THE EXPECTATION OF RETURNING HOME, OR RELOCATE TO A NEW COMMUNITY TO SPREAD YOUR KNOWLEDGE TO OTHERS.

HOWEVER, AS SURE AS I AM STANDING HERE, SOME OF YOU WILL LEAVE HERE TODAY AND BEGIN TO PURSUE THE ROAD OF MICROSOFT GIANT, BILL GATES, BY DEVOTING ALL OF YOUR ENERGY AND TIME REACHING FOR THAT POT OF GOLD!

IF YOU PURSUE THIS PATH, TAKE HEED TO WHAT ABIGAIL ADAMS TOLD HER SON JOHN QUINCY. “GREAT LEARNING AND SUPERIOR ABILITIES, SHOULD YOU EVER POSSESS THEM, WILL BE OF LITTLE VALUE, AND SMALL ESTIMATION UNLESS VIRTUE, HONOR, TRUTH, AND INTEGRITY ARE ADDED TO THEM.”

FORMER SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, WILLIAM J. BENNETT SAID, “EDUCATION IN AMERICA WAS TO BE THE BEST SECURITY AGAINST CRAFTY AND DANGEROUS ENROACHMENTS ON THE PUBLIC LIBERTY.”

NEITHER YOU, NOR I, FOR THAT FACT, HAD ANY CHOICE, WHAT GIFTS EACH OF US SHOULD HAVE. WE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO USE AND SHARPEN OUR GIFTS, BUT WE SHOULDN'T TAKE CREDIT FOR WHAT HAS BEEN FREELY GIVEN TO US.

OUR FIGTS SHOULD BE COMPARED TO A HUMAN BODY. EACH PART HAS A SPECIFIC FUNCTION THAT IS NECESSARY TO THE

BODY AS A WHOLE. THE PARTS ARE DIFFERENT FOR A PURPOSE, AND IN THEIR DIFFERENCES THEY MUST WORK TOGETHER.

INSTEAD OF COMPARING OURSELVES TO ONE ANOTHER, WE MUST USE OUR DIFFERENT GIFTS, TOGETHER, AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO USE THEIRS. IF WE DON'T, THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE WILL BE LESS EFFECTIVE.

WE MUST AVOID TWO COMMON ERRORS:

- 1) BEING TOO PROUD OF YOUR ABILITIES AND
- 2) THINKING YOU HAVE NOTHING MEANINGFUL TO GIVE OR SHARE WITH OTHERS.

I KNOW THAT I AM ONE OF THE RICHEST MEN IN MY COMMUNITY. I DO NOT MEAN IN MATERIAL WEALTH THAT, BY TODAY'S STANDARDS, I AM ALMOST A PAUPER. MY RICHES ARE IN THE PURE JOY AND SATISFACTION GAINED FROM PUBLIC SERVICE – DOING FOR OTHERS.



IN MY BATHROOM HANGS A PLAQUE ON WHICH ARE  
INSCRIBED A FEW WORDS WRITTEN BY HENRI FREDERIC  
AMIEL, "IT IS NOT WHAT HE HAS WHICH DIRECTLY EXPRESSES  
THE WORTH OF A MAN, BUT WHAT HE IS."

IF I LEAVE NOTHING ELSE WITH YOU TODAY, I WANT YOU TO  
REMEMBER THIS:

"YOUR GIFTS OR ABILITIES ARE NOT FOR YOUR OWN SELF-  
ADVANCEMENT. THEY WERE GIVE TO YOU FREELY FOR  
SERVING AND ENHANCING THE GROWTH OF OTHER AND YOUR  
COMMUNITY."

IF YOU FOLLOW THIS BASIC PRINCIPLE, YOUR REWARD WILL  
BE GREATER THAN YOU EVER IMAGINED.

I AM A LIVING EXAMPLE.

THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN MY LIFE WAS STANDING ON THE TOP SPOT OF THE VICTORY STAND AT THE TOKYO OLYMPIC GAMES. AND AS THE AMERICAN FLAG WAS BEING RAISED AND THE NATIONAL ANTHEM PLAYING IN MY HONOR, I COULD NOT HELP BUT FLASH BACK TO THE DAYS AS A YOUTH IN PONTIAC, WHERE THE PEOPLE ENCOURAGE ME AND EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY HELPED ME TO IDENTIFY WHO I AM TODAY.

I ONLY WANT THAT SAME FOR YOU!

CONGRATULATIONS . . .AND MAY GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU IN YOUR JOURNEY.



## EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **OLYMPIAN, EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY GRAD HAYES JONES TO SPEAK AT COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES APRIL 29**

**YPSILANTI** - Olympian and Eastern Michigan University graduate Hayes W. Jones will deliver the keynote speech when EMU hosts graduation ceremonies for more than 2,300 students Sunday, April 29, at the Convocation Center.

Jones, 62, will speak at both the 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. ceremonies.

EMU President Samuel A. Kirkpatrick will preside over the ceremonies. There will be 1,600 undergraduates and 700 graduate candidates. Two candidates are eligible to receive a doctor of education degree in educational leadership: Ellen Hoffman and Barbara Scheffer.

Commencement ceremonies for the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Technology begin at 10:30 a.m. Doors open at 9 a.m. Commencement ceremonies for graduates of the Colleges of Business, Education, and Health and Human Services begin at 2 p.m. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. Tickets are available through the Convocation Center box office (487-2282). All guests must have a ticket to be admitted.

Handicapped seating is available and there will be a signer to aid those with a hearing impairment.

Currently a senior business development representative for Oakland County, Jones graduated from EMU in 1961.

While at EMU, Jones captured his first national track title as a sophomore in 1958. He went on to win four more USA outdoor titles and the 1959 NCAA Championship.

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Jones won the Olympic gold medal for the 110-meter hurdles during the 1964 Tokyo Games and an Olympic bronze medal in the same event during the 1960 Rome Games. He donated his gold medal to his hometown of Pontiac, to inspire youngsters to achieve their dreams.

A member of the Eastern Michigan University Athletic Hall of Fame, most recently Jones was honored by the University as one of the inaugural inductees into EMU's Education Alumni Hall of Fame (Feb. 23).

Before working for Oakland County, Jones taught high school in Detroit and was appointed to the Youth Employment Project. He also served as the first recreation commissioner for New York City.

Jones will be given an honorary doctorate of public service during the morning ceremony.

Serving as grand marshall for the 10:30 a.m. ceremony will be Dick Goff, professor emeritus of history and philosophy. Normajean Bennett, professor emeritus of allied health professions, will be the grand marshall of the 2 p.m. commencement ceremony.

Faculty marshalls are Daryl Hafter, history and philosophy; David Leopard, business and technology education; Gary Evans, communications and theatre arts; and Dennis Grady, communications and theatre arts.

Music for both ceremonies will be provided by the EMU Wind Symphony, conducted by Max Plank. The Army ROTC will provide the Color Guard.

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## Hayes Wendell Jones

Hayes W. Jones, 62, is senior business development representative for Oakland County, Michigan, and a distinguished alumnus of Eastern Michigan University.

Early in his career, he taught high school in Detroit but left his post when he was appointed to the Youth Employment Project, a program to train high school graduates in employable skills. As a result of Mr. Jones' commitment, hundreds of young adults received job training and placement in local corporations.

Mr. Jones joined American Airlines as a sales representative in 1964. He was granted a leave of absence in 1968 to accept an appointment as New York City's first recreation commissioner. He returned to American Airlines in 1970 as assistant to the senior vice president for marketing and then held several management positions within the company.

He spent seven years with The Stroh Brewery Company, where he served as director of marketing for black and Hispanic consumers. Mr. Jones joined Pro Air Inc. in 1998, where he served as hub station manager and most recently as vice president of community development. He also owned J & J Airport Services at Detroit Metropolitan Airport until March 2001.

Community activism plays an important role in Mr. Jones' life. He serves as chair of the volunteer committee of the Arts League of Michigan and is on the board of directors for Dominican High School and Academy in Detroit. In 1991, he organized a track-and-field program, "The Junior Olympics," for students in Pontiac middle schools. The activity was incorporated into the school district's sports program when middle school sports were reinstated in the district.

He is a former school board member for the Pontiac School District; former board chair of the Pontiac Chamber of Commerce; and former economic development committee chair for the Oakland County Business Roundtable and the Pontiac Area Urban League.

Mr. Jones also has served on the board of trustees for North Oakland Medical Center and the Clinton Valley Boy Scouts and is a former member of the board of directors of First of America Bank--Southeastern Michigan.

While a student athlete at Eastern Michigan University, Mr. Jones captured his first national title in track as a sophomore in 1958. He went on to win four more USA titles outdoors, in addition to the 1959 NCAA crown. From 1959-1964, he ran undefeated in 55 straight indoor hurdle races.

He won the Olympic Gold Medal for the 110-meter hurdles during the 1964 Tokyo Games and an Olympic Bronze Medal in the same event during the 1960 Rome Games. He donated his gold medal to the city of Pontiac, Michigan, to inspire youngsters to achieve their dreams.

The *Detroit Free Press* selected Hayes Jones as one of its favorite 100 Michigan sports figures from the 20th Century. He is a member of the Helms Athletic Hall of Fame in Los Angeles; the Michigan Hall of Fame; the Eastern Michigan University Athletic Hall of Fame; the National Track and Field Hall of Fame; and the Pontiac Central High School Hall of Fame.

A native of Starkville, Mississippi, he grew up in Pontiac. He earned a bachelor of science degree from Eastern Michigan University in 1961 and was among the first group of outstanding alumni inducted into Eastern Michigan's Education Alumni Hall of Fame, Feb. 23, 2001.