



JAMES C. STANLEY, M.D.

Biography

Dr. Stanley is the Handleman Professor of Surgery at the University of Michigan Medical School, where he was the Head of the Vascular Surgery Service from 1976-2004. In the past, he has served as both the Director of Medical Student Education and Director of Resident Education in General Surgery. He was the Vascular Surgery Fellowship Director from 1982 to 2006. In 2003 he was appointed Director of the University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center.

Dr. Stanley was an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, and received his Medical Degree from the University of Michigan Medical School in 1964. After an internship at Philadelphia General Hospital, he served as a medical officer at Brooke Army Medical Center. Subsequently, he completed his surgical residency at the University of Michigan Medical Center. He was an NIH trainee in Academic Surgery in 1969 and 1970. After completing his Chief Residency in 1972, he joined the University of Michigan faculty as an Instructor in Surgery, rising to the rank of Professor in 1980.

Dr. Stanley has an extensive clinical practice in vascular surgery with a major focus on complex aortic disease, renovascular hypertension, splanchnic aneurysms, and pediatric arterial diseases. He maintains an ongoing interest in biomedical research. He was the Director of the Jobst Vascular Research Laboratories at the University of Michigan from 1989 to 2004. His principal interests are arterial wall biology, genetic modifications of the vessel wall, mesenteric vascular disease, and

renovascular hypertension. He received \$3,186,000 from the NIH as an investigator or co-investigator for laboratory investigations conducted at the University of Michigan from 1974-1998. In 1993 he received an NIH Vascular Disease Academic Award, which provided the impetus for a multi-disciplinary vascular medicine program and the establishment of the University's Cardiovascular Center.

Dr. Stanley was the recipient of the first Conrad Jobst Award for Research in Vascular Surgery in 1972, the University of Michigan Distinguished Service Award in 1976, and the Michigan Medical Center Alumni Society Distinguished Achievement Award in 2000. He became an Honorary Fellow in the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, in 1992, an Honorary Member of the National Academy of Medicine of Columbia in 1994, and an Honorary Member of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Section of Vascular Surgery, in 1995. He is a member of 30 scientific societies. He served as President of the Society for Vascular Surgery in 1996-1997.

He is the author of more than 325 scientific articles and 180 chapters in surgical textbooks. He served as Editor of the *Journal of Vascular Surgery* from 1991-1996. Dr. Stanley has edited ten books, including two on renovascular hypertension, one on biologic and synthetic vascular prostheses, one on clinical ischemic syndromes, one on aortic surgery, one on practice cardiology, and four editions of *Current Therapy in Vascular Surgery*. He has contributed to numerous medical conferences, both in the United States and abroad.

Dr. Stanley has enjoyed the life of being an avid lepidopterist, enthusiastic Snipe sailor, novice marathon runner, and a classic and jazz music aficionado.

Commencement Speech

RELEVANCE and RESPONSIBILITY

James C Stanley

University of Toledo Winter Commencement Address, December 18, 2010

My congratulations to each and every one of you on this day of your graduation...On your being among a select few of humankind to have even ever had the opportunity to learn of the world and yourselves by attending a University.

For just one moment think about the others on this globe who have not been as fortunate as you. Realize how special your journey has been. And be aware that the opportunities which will unfold

in your future will outnumber by far those of preceding generations, including those of mine and your teachers at the University of Toledo.

After today your paths are likely to be quite diverse...That's a given. But tomorrow two questions will begin surfacing for all of you: First, what's the real value of your education? And second, will you use your new found knowledge meaningfully?

The answer depends on your inner self...That's where your core values reside...It's your relevant side. And your outer self...That's what you do...That's what others see...It's your responsible side.

Two simple concepts...What your inner self is...And what your outer self does.

Let's talk about you...For years many of you've had family, friends and teachers lead and push you to succeed...They set boundaries from your childhood to today. Most were protective. They kept you on time, kept you healthy, and many kept you safe. Almost all were focused inward, centered on you and your behavior.

In contrast, the most important boundaries you will face after today will beg you to look outward. They are not about you. They are where tomorrow's frontiers exist...And they are likely to be a long way from the security of those that have supported you in the past.

Many of these boundaries will be beyond your comfort zone...But you will be the better for finding and exploring them. Getting beyond those boundaries is where you will grow. It's where discovery occurs of both yourself and the world.

It is there that you will find the new, expected or not. Such may take a toll on your emotional and physical energy, but clearly, getting across these boundaries will be less burdensome if you know where you came from and where you're going. It is then, that what you have learned and know becomes singularly important...And that's what your education has been all about. That's no surprise, especially today.

As you approach certain boundaries you may find yourself on your own with choices...And you must choose wisely. My advice, just for a moment, is to stop listening to those who helped you get to today and listen to your self. Some of you have been pursuing the goals of others for years, and you've been making choices not always of your own making. It may have gotten you this far, but pleasing others at the expense of being relevant to your own self carries risks. You need to claim your own inner self. Sort out the real and imagined future you desire. It belongs to no one else.

So on a heady day like today, take time to decide who you are and what you really believe in. Simply define your own values. And don't forget to be honest with yourself and authentic to others. Clearly, having an uncertain persona is better than a false one. And remember, having a persona thrust on you by others will not last...For soon they will not be there. You and you alone will determine your inner self...Your core values.

You have been well prepared for this by your teachers at the University of Toledo. They have tried to connect you to the real world...And for the most part they've succeeded...Your Diploma speaks to that. But tomorrow they will no longer serve as your intermediaries and you will find yourself alone with the joys and sufferings of the world.

On good days you may have a litany of opportunities...Too many to take on...All at once...And you'll wish your teachers were at your side to help you make the right choice. On other days the issues may not be of your making...But they may affect you never-the-less. Some will be daunting: hunger, illiteracy, illness, poverty, unsustainable consumption of precious goods, societal violence, and on and on and on. There are no guarantees that your path will be easy.

As you mend your way, the technology and industry of your generation will provide many tools that can make a difference...Tools unavailable to earlier generations. But use them wisely. In that regard, I fervently hope you will be contributors to a better world, not simply be consumers of our earth's shrinking resources. I believe how you confront the problems and opportunities of the next half century will spell out your success and will define the future of your community.

There will be many changes....And you will experience them for better or worse. You may object to some changes...But don't waste too much time objecting...You're better off finding those that fit your inner and outer self... And spend your energies embracing them.

With the right changes you will transform yourself and you will likely transform the community in which you reside. At times it may be difficult ...economic challenges, political battles, unresponsive people to help you...So be it. But your share of the difficulties will not be so heavy if you possess the agility and imagination that has seen you to this day. In fact, the breadth of the education you have received at the University will serve you well in this regard.

I have deep roots in Ohio and Toledo. My father was born and grew up in Southern Ohio and my mother was born in Toledo and attended Scott High, just a few miles from Campus. I love this community and have the greatest admiration for the faculty and staff who have guided you through the past few years. The University of Toledo is a gem of an institution of higher learning. Many of its noteworthy alumni and esteemed academic leaders are my dear friends.

In thinking of the circumstances of today, I seriously pondered what I might want to hear if I were in your seats. In my days, parents and teachers frequently said "get a job and work hard". If I were in your seats today, that would go in one ear and out the other...And it certainly wouldn't challenge me...At least not in a way I might wish.

Now remember, I told you how important I thought it was for you to define yourself... To separate yourself for a moment from the expectations of others... You know people like me...And listen to yourself. So, in some regards, I'm not too sure you should listen too intently to me...But you know I may be a little more objective than the others. After all until today I had no vested interest in placing my own expectations on your table.

When I was your age I had many expectations for myself...And most have stuck with me through the years. Most were pretty ethereal, but I believe they enabled my life to have meaning. With a half-century of being married to my college sweetheart, three wonderful and productive children, more academic accolades than I deserved, and a lot of gratitude from those I've served...My own expectations may be of value on your table.

Let me paint a scenario of what I might ask of you before you reach my age. I want you to discover your place in the human condition. If you revel in the flatness of our world; create something on your own; learn to live with the difficult; and grow with others, you will have found that place.

None of this is too much to expect of University graduates, and it's not too much for me to ask of you. So here are my expectations. There are eight of them.

First...Be adventurous. Don't hesitate to venture beyond boundaries that are likely to disclose new wonders...Especially those that awaken your intellect and humanity. Somewhere along the way consider your role in serving and helping others. That's an important element of a learned society. And that is the society to which you have entered today with your graduation.

Second...Be Tolerant. Embrace the colors and sounds of human diversity for they are the essence of life. Your journey will be brighter for the experience and the world will make more sense along the way. And keep your moral compass in plain sight. I admonish you to abhor anyone carrying an ill-founded bias against another human being. Understanding the value that lies in differences among people across cultures and societies is requisite to building a better world. You need to be part of that and you will, but only if you allow yourself to see the true value of diversity.

Third...Don't be silent. I've seen the damning effects of silence. I have witnessed the unwillingness of some to see the loss of dignity and purpose in individuals they are at ease in ignoring. It's painful to observe them, and I often find myself struggling to call them out. But I don't believe in remaining silent. A certain degree of personal integrity exists in speaking up at a moment which is more important than you are. There are always excuses to being silent...The point of your education is to give you the ability to speak clearly and be heard.

Fourth...Reject mediocrity. The unimportance of being average is staggering. Just getting by in your life's work doesn't make sense and is not what your education has prepared you for. I view the wasting of one's potential as a perennial scourge. Unfortunately, not giving your all is commonplace and seems to be a ubiquitous contributor to mediocrity. Don't allow your inner or outer self to be part of this. You don't have to be the best at anything, but don't settle for being average.

Fifth...Be patient with those about you. The fact is that the slow and less well informed will always outnumber you. Many will be loud and callous and you can't avoid them...Try as you may. My advice...Be patient, for at day's end the loud will be silent, and perhaps the next morning's light will find them in a different place. And when you can, offer the slow and uninformed help to attain what you now have. Be humble, but be helpful.

Sixth...Be creative. Leave something behind you that will outlive you. A story, a painting, a song, an idea...Something of your own doing, not bought or borrowed from another...Something for future generations. Lasting creativity with your hands, voice and mind is a blessing we don't share with lesser life on this planet...It's a human gift. And don't stifle creativity... It's too valuable to defer to one's waning days...For waiting may come too late.

Seventh...Find contentment. Seek peace within your daily existence. It may come from faith or a simple appreciation of life's complexities, from our DNA beginnings to our cultural breath. You needn't feign away from your beliefs...In fact your beliefs will shape your life as much as your life's circumstances will mold your beliefs. Whichever it is, I hope it will bring contentment within the chaos of life.

Eighth, and last...Seek happiness. Most importantly, share yourself with others without conditions or design. You will receive much more in return...Without asking. Avoid being insular and accept

human contact, even when you are vulnerable. Indeed, happiness born of friendship will enrich your life far more than all your other accomplishments.

Again, congratulations on your achievement today. I share in your pride.

And remember...Keep your inner self relevant and your outer self responsible. It is my deepest hope that with those underpinnings you will continue to grow and better humankind.

Godspeed.