

Lock Haven University

Official Release

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Release Date: 19 September 2011

Be prepared for the unexpected:
Lock Haven University Founder's Day Convocation emphasizes preparedness



University Marshals Sharon E. Taylor and Dr. Mark D. Cloud lead the academic procession to Price Performance Center for Lock Haven University's 2011 Founder's Day Convocation.

It was standing-room only on September 14 as the Lock Haven University community gathered in Price Performance Center for the 2011 Founder's Day Convocation. This annual event honors Albert Newton Raub, who founded the institution in 1870, and marks the official opening of the university's academic year.

In his welcoming remarks, President Michael Fiorentino, Jr. told the students, many of whom are in their first year of college, "Being prepared for the future is an important piece of the college experience." He introduced the program's featured speaker, Ms. Julie Fisher of Center Rock, Inc., whose story is "a true example of how teamwork really works with a 'Plan B' and a 'try, try again' attitude."



*L: Dr. David White congratulates Ms. Julie Fisher on her exciting and inspiring presentation.
R: President Michael Fiorentino, Jr. welcomed guests to a reception outside Price Performance Center following the convocation ceremony.*

In her presentation, Ms. Fisher provided a first-hand description of the drilling operation that rescued 33 Chilean miners in October, 2010. The miners were trapped over 2000 feet below the surface, and it was Center Rock, Inc., the company founded by Julie Fisher's husband, Brandon, that supplied the drills, technology and expertise that resulted in the successful rescue of every one of the miners.

Ms. Fisher described seeing a TV news broadcast about the miners. She and her husband were getting ready to go to church when they saw the news of the miners, trapped deep in the San Jose Mine near Copiapo, Chile. The cave-in had occurred on August 5, 2010 and the rescue workers were hoping to save the miners "by Christmas." Brandon Fisher reacted immediately. "We can do it faster," he said.

As the world watched, three separate drilling operations, dubbed Plan A, Plan B and Plan C, worked around the clock, week after week, trying to get to the miners. The drills had to go through rock more than twice as hard as granite. Center Rock specializes in hard rock drilling, and Brandon Fisher had designed a specialized drill designed for super-hard rock.

The Center Rock team, Plan B, was "considered the underdog," but on October 9, it was Plan B that broke through to the miners. Julie and Brandon Fisher returned home to be with their family, whom they had not seen in over a month. "We did our job," Ms. Fisher said. They arrived home just in time to watch the first miner emerge from the rescue shaft that their company had drilled. One of their team commented, "For a small company, we have proved that we can achieve big things." These words were echoed by President Barack Obama when he recognized Brandon and Julie Fisher in his State of the Union address.

Following Ms. Fisher's presentation, Dr. David L. White, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs, echoed the messages given by President Fiorentino and Ms. Fisher. "When the unexpected comes, as it inevitably will," he said, "it pays to be prepared with the right tools." These include "every bit of our knowledge, skills, experience and creativity." Dr. White quoted Louis Pasteur's saying that "Fortune favors the prepared mind" and, on behalf of the entire university, wished the students success and good fortune in all that they do.

Lock Haven University is a member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), the largest provider of higher education in the commonwealth. Its 14 universities offer more than 250 degree and certificate programs in more than 120 areas of study. Nearly 405,000 system alumni live and work in Pennsylvania.

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