

'Convocation'

Continued from page 1

world. So, instead of presenting a homogeneous identity I've always said 'It would be awesome to have not just the college minister to give a prayer, but to also have people of different faith traditions to offer that as well.'

"It's a teachable moment," Creasman said, "and everybody can offer some type of blessing. In a world where there is religious conflict and people don't seem to be able to talk to one another it's a great opportunity and space to show that there are three faith traditions that share something and to show that we can stand side by side and that we can offer blessings of peace, prosperity and hope to this community as they begin their year."

"There are a couple of reasons for us to have Convocation," Sheffield said. "It's a tradition and traditions are important. It's the first thing you do here as a student here at the college and students have always done at the college."

"It's about having a gathering, opening ceremony where we actually kick off the year," Sheffield said. "So, as a tradition alone it is important to have the event."

"The other reason for having the event is because it is a welcoming of the new students," Sheffield said. "You get the welcoming card which students have loved since we put it in place four or five years ago and I've had students tell me when they are graduating that they still have the card from when they first got here."

"It is even personal with a staff member," Sheffield said, "because you are personally welcomed on stage by a faculty member, and that's important because we are all about personal relationships here, so, you need to be welcomed personally and it's done in a place where they will hopefully walk across the stage in four years for Baccalaureate. So, it's like a book-in ceremony for where you begin and end at Brevard College."

Sheffield even gave a speech in which he began to rap the song "My Shot" from the famous Broadway musical "Hamilton".

"I try to give students something to think about as they start their college career in my speech," Sheffield said. "It's almost like saying 'Hey, here you are now' and to basically just give them a few things to think about as they go on through the college."

"The main message that I wanted students to take away from my speech was to 'take your shot'," Sheffield said. "It's all about exuberance and determination and you're going to need those things and the world needs people to step up."

"Just like Alexander Hamilton said 'I got a million things I haven't done yet' you need to figure out what those things are and do them and know that even though you have some self-



Photo courtesy of BC Communications
President David Joyce addresses students and faculty at the 2018-2019 Convocation ceremony.

doubt about your ability to do more and do the kinds of things I was talking about which was changing the world," Sheffield said. "Know that here we support you in that and that is a part of our mission to help you figure out what you want to do and do it and we are here to help you do it and we believe in you."

"I tried to give the message in a sort of unique way," Sheffield said, "with a slogan 'I'm going to give it my shot' just to have them realize that this is their shot, this is the beginning of their shot and the need to recognize that and do something about it. Don't be passive, be active, take some chances, figure yourself out, figure out the world around you and make a difference."

"Students seemed to like the ending where I started to rap," Sheffield said, "and I think the message still got across pretty well with it. I added the song because I think the words are powerful and the way it's delivered is powerful and to do it in that way it's lyrical and even speeches in their own way when you listen to them can be lyrical."

"Rap can already be poetic on its own," Sheffield said, "and I enjoy the musical, I'm a historian, and it's history so I like that and I figured it was a way to sort of connect with the students because a lot of them listen to rap in one form or the other. I took a chance and it was risky and it seemed like everybody was into it and I've been getting lots of comments on it and you know you need to change things up and get outside of your comfort zone. I learned that rap is really hard and I had to practice that a lot because I didn't have music as I was doing it which made it even harder so I had to hear the rhythm in my head as I was doing it and it was a little scary because I was taking a lot of chances and hopefully students will get the message to do that too."

Letter from the Editor

Welcome back Brevard College students, faculty and staff. My name is Jeni Welch and I have been working on the Clarion staff for the past two years as a staff writer and creating the layout and design. This year I am the Editor in Chief.

I am looking forward to serving the BC community. As in years past, The Clarion will be providing timely and helpful news.

Please feel free to email clarion@brevard.edu if you have any questions, comments or ideas for articles. We also print letters to the editor and would love to hear from you.

Enjoy the school year,
Jeni

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