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Goon Squad Training

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Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud
Delivered on Tuesday, August 19, 2014
Location: Hendricks Chapel
Remarks: Goon Squad Training

The Chancellor was introduced by Director of First Year and Transfer Programs, Carrie Abbott

Good evening Goon Squad!

Thank you to Carrie, Samantha, Matt, and the students and staff of the Office of First-Year and Transfer Programs for inviting me here tonight.

Most importantly, I want to thank you for volunteering to help us welcome over 3,800 new students starting tomorrow. Many of you have left summer jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities as well as sacrificed time at home with family and friends to come back to campus early and take part in our orientation program.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Goon Squad on our campus.

In 1944 then presidents of the Traditions commission, Jim Fardy and Buzz Gibson, founded the Goon Squad as a group of students charged with ensuring first-year students wore their beanies, indicating their freshman status. The Good Squad quickly evolved into a welcoming team for our first-year students.

For decades, the Goon Squad has helped greet students and help them move into their residence halls, just as you will do starting tomorrow. Thousands of alumni across the globe are still proud to call themselves Goons. This seemingly odd term is one that unites us as students and alumni to the roots of our institution.

Tonight I'm so happy to see key leaders of so many of our student organizations here together to continue this important tradition.

I'll ask you for a moment to consider your first day at Syracuse University and all the things you were worried about as you arrived. Will I do well in my classes? Will I make new friends? Will I fit in? Will I be homesick?

As you remember those first few moments, remember how welcoming it felt to have all these orange-shirted students greet you as you arrived. Just as your goons did for you, the greeting you will provide new students tomorrow goes well beyond the simple 'hello' and 'welcome'.

Your 'hello' and 'welcome' helps ease the worry and makes that first day just a little bit easier. Also, as the key student leaders that you are, you have the opportunity to help new students create a pathway to their own success here at our great University.

I ask you to partner with me and help teach our new students about all the opportunities Syracuse University has to offer.

Encourage our new students to dive into their academic pursuits with excitement and rigor.

Encourage them to get to know our faculty and not be afraid to ask questions in the classroom.

Encourage them to join one of the many student organizations represented in this room tonight.

Encourage them to be courageous enough to ask for help.

While I may not be a Syracuse student or alum, I hope you will allow me the honor of joining the dedicated Goon Squad team.

I look forward to seeing you during move-in tomorrow and throughout the academic year and working with you as we invest in the academic, residential, and co-curricular success of each of our students.

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