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25th Anniversary Convocation, delivered at GVSC on April 26, 1985

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25th Anniversary Convocation – April 26, 1985

We are gathered in academic convocation to mark the 25th anniversary of Grand Valley State College. This is a time for gratitude and expression of appreciation to those who have been here and who are here now. Fourteen thousand graduates have gone forth. Over ten thousand people a year engage in classes and other academic activities at our college. For our alumni and other former students and students now enrolled, we are grateful.

For the present faculty and for those former faculty who contributed positively to the life of the college, all of us, alumni, co-workers, students, and friends of Grand Valley offer appreciation in the knowledge that you perform those tasks from which emanates the essence of the institution.

To present and past Board members, to members of the staff, to friends and contributors who have been with us from the beginning, or who have joined with us more recently, there is gratitude in abundance. To legislators and government executives, present and past, who have helped us make this a fine college for the citizens of the state, we say thank you.
Those who have helped build our college and deserve recognition are like a galaxy, yet today in this convocation we focus on a single star: Bill Seidman.

On this campus the Seidman name is prominent. It first appeared as the Seidman House, the first of three student centers constructed at Grand Valley, and now the home of the Admissions, Financial Aid, and Records Departments. It appeared again as the Seidman School of Business, a relatively new Business School on the American scene, but one that is becoming recognized for its high standards and the fine quality of its graduates. Both of these bearers of the Seidman name honor F. E. Seidman, a founder of the international accounting firm, Seidman and Seidman, and a leader in west Michigan.

After 25 years of existence, for Grand Valley the time is at hand for all of us - the faculty, the staff, the students, the Board of Control, the alumni, the friends - to express in a permanent way the gratitude we have for F. E. Seidman's son, Bill Seidman, for having the vision and the drive to provide
the citizens of Michigan an excellent college in a beautiful setting.

The Board of Control authorized the establishment of the L. William Seidman Chair of Accountancy in the F. E. Seidman School of Business to recognize Bill Seidman's contributions to Grand Valley State College from the day he first conceived the idea for a state college in west Michigan to the present time. At a subsequent meeting of the Board a distinguished Professor of Accountancy will be appointed to fill the L. William Seidman Chair. The Professor who holds the chair will be provided added financial assistance to achieve his or her professional goals.

L. William Seidman, Counsellor to a President of the United States, Managing Partner of an international accounting firm, corporate executive, Dean of a University Business School, lawyer, entrepreneur, author, Chairman designate of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and premier founder of our college, we see in you qualities of leadership that engage others in the noble projects you pursue. We see the effect of your incisive intelligence in the success of your enterprises. We observe your
genuine interest in the welfare of others which brings humanity to all your endeavors. Through these personal attributes you have given this college a heritage, a heritage that binds us to you and you to us. Few institutions have claimed so much of a person who never attended, graduated from or was employed by as Grand Valley has laid claim to you. Your response to the college's needs for direction, counsel, action, and money has always been generous. As founders go, you are a model.

As time passes there are always "those in the land who know not Joseph." Because this is so we strive to link our past with the present and the future. By honoring those who have contributed most and best by fixing their names in perpetuity we call continual attention to the qualities that they brought to the building of the college. In establishing a chair to do that honor, a name is affixed to continuing academic achievement. We believe we can best express our appreciation for you and pay you our highest honor in a way that will be pleasing to you, and academically important to us by naming a Professorship in Accounting the L. William Seidman Chair in Accountancy. By the authority vested
in me by the Board of Control and on behalf of the Faculty of Grand Valley State College, I declare the chair established this 26th day of April 1985 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the granting of a charter to Grand Valley State College.

-- and as a visible symbol of this action I present you this real chair. I suggest when you are thinking accounting thoughts you sit in it.
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