

6-15-2006

Richard DeVos Introduction Speech, delivered on June 15, 2006

Arend D. Lubbers
Grand Valley State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/presidential_speeches



Part of the [Archival Science Commons](#), [Education Commons](#), and the [History Commons](#)

ScholarWorks Citation

Lubbers, Arend D., "Richard DeVos Introduction Speech, delivered on June 15, 2006" (2006). *Presidential Speeches*. 251.

https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/presidential_speeches/251

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the University Archives at ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Presidential Speeches by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

There is no layman better qualified to discuss health care than Richard DeVos. He has received it in its most advanced form. He has provided it by giving his resources and raising funds to build hospitals and health care and education centers. And he has guided it by serving on local Boards and national commissions. We who are gathered here to celebrate the accomplishments of Hackly Hospital and those associated with our enterprise are fortunate to have a noted speaker who shares our commitment to, and passion for the health of our communities.

My first memory of Richard DeVos is a call I made on him in the early 1970's to ask him for a contribution. What I remember from the interview is that he told me Amway had \$160 million dollars in sales that year. At the time both of us thought well of that figure. But it is in retrospect that this figure has importance. From 160 million to over seven billion in less than thirty years is sensational. It is one of twentieth century America's greatest success stories. Often such wealth defines the person who comes by it, but fortunately for him, for his wife Helen and for millions of people it is how he invests it, gives it to charitable causes that defines him. He was born to do what he does and he was called to give what he gives.

All of this has not happened by luck alone. When Rich served on the Grand Valley Board I had the opportunity to observe and the good fortune to benefit from his astuteness. His friendliness and generosity of spirit are so compelling that one forget how smart he is until engaged with him in problem analysis and solving.

The buildings that bear the DeVos name are public testimonial to his stewardship as are his contributions to Christian and civic causes throughout the country. But we will never know the full story of help he and Helen give here and there to the least of the brothers and sisters. What we do know is that he is loyal to the West Michigan Community. He has not cut off his roots; he has let them grow deeper. In Michigan, he joined with many of you to build Grand Valley's Annis Water Resources Center.

Rich celebrated recently his 80th birthday. At 80 one might ask why he remains so involved, involved to the extent he will make speeches. Of course, his active mind requires stimulation, but more than that he will never surrender to responsibility he feels called to; arousing people to make their communities and lives better.