

Message to grads

Alma College graduates told to focus on integrity and honor

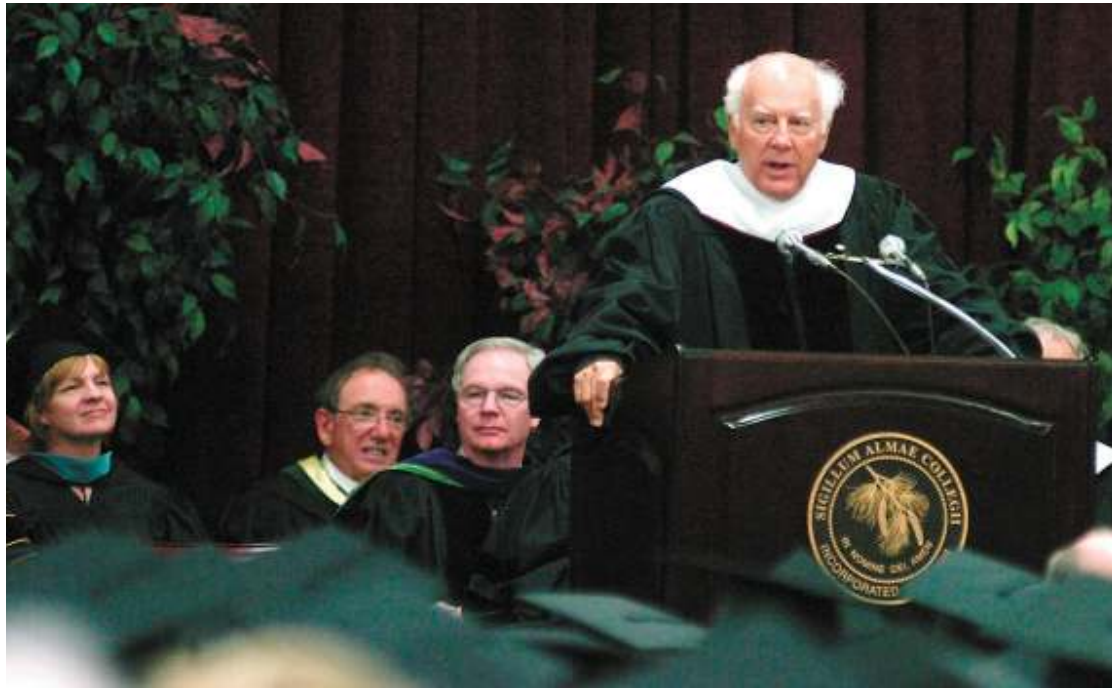
By LINDA GITTLEMAN
Gratiot Managing Editor

Two years ago Michael Muckleroy spoke at Alma College's Center for Responsible Leadership and he was back by popular demand Saturday for the commencement address.

The former Enron executive and one of the developers of the proposed Great Lakes Energy and Research Park in Alma kept his remarks short.

Duty, honor and country were his themes, and he said he didn't mean necessarily participating in the military. But the former Navy Seal did urge the class to "focus on what you can do for your own country."

He also suggested that they get into politics, not necessarily as a career, he said, "but there are things you can do."



Michael Muckleroy speaks to a packed house during Alma College's commencement ceremony Saturday.

Honor, he said, is to be able to "look into the mirror and honor the person that's looking back at you. Tell the truth even if it hurts."

He told the truth at Enron and was, in his words, run out of the company. He called it the greatest honor he had ever received besides the honor the college was granting him, he said.

But he also had explicit directions for the class.

He said he had seen hugs throughout the day, but also saw students pass by other groups.

"From now on, you're going to be nice to everyone you meet."

Even if gearing up for a fight, he said, smile. 'It'll throw them off.'

It's also important to use common sense and to write a letter of thanks to parents.

"And that doesn't mean e-

mail," he admonished.

If you can make people laugh or smile, he said, "you can do business, you can get them to vote for you, you can conquer the world."

Muckleroy received a honorary Doctor of Letters, presented by Dr. Mel Nyman, Alma mayor. F. Martin Johnson, a long serving trustee from Grand Haven and former CEO and president

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Sun photograph by LISA YANICK

