Commencement Marks an End and a Beginning

For some the UCCS Commencement exercises on May 20, 2011 were the culmination of years of study and hard work, the making of solid friendships, the joy of success, the happiness that comes with the end of a hard task.

For Marina Connor, Rhea Taylor, Jennifer O'Connell, Nicole Leonhard and Carolyn Upchurch started with a ride to the World Arena in a pink limo.

Prior to the pomp and circumstance graduates donned their gowns, peacock hoods, and caps and with nervous energy reflected on their accomplishments. There were laughter, camaraderie, and even tears.

With pride, (back row left to right) Maurice Walsh, Tamika Ford, Nicole Leonhard, Rhea Taylor, Jennifer O’Connell, Meg Scarlett, (center row) Tessa Goodwin, Marina Connor, Carolyn Upchurch (front row) Orlando White, David Arrambide this group of MPA and MCJ graduates gathered before they processed into the auditorium to the applause of family, friends, community members and fellow graduates.
Dr. Jenenne Nelson, Dean of the Graduate School and Dr. Terry Schwartz, Associate Dean of the School of Public Affairs awarded diplomas to recipients the Master of Public Administration degree and Master of Criminal Justice degree. Later in the ceremony, Dr. Schwartz awarded diplomas to the 23 recipients of the Bachelor of Criminal Justice Degree.

In June 1935, President of the University of Colorado George Norlin addressed the graduates:

“You are now certified to the world at large as alumni of the university. She is your kindly mother and you her cherished sons and daughters. .. The university is not the campus, not the buildings on the campus, nor the faculties, nor the students of any one time – note one of these or all of them. The university consists of all who come into and go forth from her halls, who are touched by her influence and who carry on her spirit. Wherever you go, the university goes with you. Wherever you are at work, there is the university at work.”

“What the university purposes to be, what it must always strive to be, is represented on its seal…a lamp in the hands of youth. If its light shines not in you and from you, how great is its darkness. But if it shines in you today, and in the thousands before you, who can measure its power.”

These words continue to ring true.