**EDUCATIONAL SPEECH**

**FOR**

**GREG EDINGER**

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, and family, graduates, colleagues and distinguished guests, it is with great pride that I welcome all of you to join us tonight in the celebration of the **FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY** of Vanguard Sentinel. (**If there are particular dignitaries you’d like to introduce, please do that here**). I’d like to take a moment to extend special greetings to some people who have taken time out of their busy schedules to be here. To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, it’s an honor to have you join us as we acknowledge the very special work and contribution that Vanguard has made to our surrounding communities.... and **beyond**.

The world renowned architect and theorist, Buckminster Fuller, came into popularity around the time that Vanguard Sentinel was being born... and formed. Fuller’s contribution to the advancement of design, technology, and modern culture is enormous, so let’s see what he had to say... one of his bits of wisdom was, “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” Buckie, as he was known, was a brilliant thinker and creator, but not even he would have been able to fully theorize and construct his visions without the input and contribution of dedicated people in all sorts of trades. The team that created and brought Vanguard Sentinel to life` fifty years ago, knew this innately. And while it’s important to have all sorts of educational options ready and viable to young people .... and adults that plan on career and life changes, it is **VITAL** to have comprehensive programs that really teach and prepare people for vocational and technical careers.

On September 9, 1968 the doors of Vanguard Sentinel opened to over 500+ high school students and adults.  The school was the first vocational institution in the area and it was envisioned and built by the same initiating board that created the local community college.  The opening happened because of the determination and collaboration with local school districts and local leaders who all realized that workforce training could be better if everyone pooled their resources together and students were trained in one central location.  At the time of inception, back in 1968, the district passed an operating levy to open the venue and begin operations, and have not asked for any additional funds since. The school has trained over 20,000 students with up to date and modern equipment in state of the art facilities without any new additional funds to the tax payer.

Of course this is a relatively small group, and I want to make sure that we’re all “friends” because there’s something I want to say... This school district is the **best kept secret** in the area... it offers much needed comprehensive and practical programs teaching essential skills to its students. Vanguard Sentinel uses its resources and tax dollars to the fullest potential while meeting and exceeding the demands of eager students and accommodating, enthusiastic local business and industry workforce requirements.  It is very gratifying to know that we are the go-to training entity for a large variety of businesses and applications.

I’m also proud to say that we have won awards and grants, and if you remember, in 2016, Vanguard Sentinel was awarded what was described at the time as “the biggest state grant in the school’s history.” That award was dedicated to supporting us in expanding our welding, machining, and electrical curriculum, and it is acknowledgements like this one that add to the rich history of dedication and commitment to the work that we do to insure that our local businesses, students, and all members of our community thrive. While anyone would be thrilled to accept such a generous grant, we view it as an opportunity to strengthen our core and continue to build on our positive, vital, fifty year history.

 Ultimately, partnership is the “secret sauce” that really contributes to our success and staying power. We respect our students, faculty, industry and commercial partners, and in turn we know that we provide much needed, quality human assets. I think all of you would agree that we are the best resource to meet workforce demands and we aim to provide the highest caliber of trained, enthusiastic, knowledgeable workers.   Student success and the excellent results speak for themselves.  (**You can add your data regarding students earning industry credentials, college credit, apprenticeships, and job placement while also receiving the soft skills needed to be successful**).

Buckminster Fuller also said, “The earth is like a spaceship that didn’t come with an operating manual.” Fortunately, thanks to the vision of its founders and the dedication of our staff and faculty, Vanguard Sentinel works to teach and train bright, interested students to find the manuals in order to keep all... or most... aspects of our increasingly complicated lives functioning. It’s no secret that the way we live and the tools needed to keep up are rapidly changing and now, more than ever, we need to address the issues and provide people with the skills to accept, address, and flourish in the conditions and demands of the future.

I want to thank everyone for your support and enthusiasm as we celebrate and know that as we grow and adapt, we will continue to examine and respond to the needs and requirements of each new era we enter. Thank you all!!