The importance of our connections with each other, of community to community, of nation to nation, was a recurring theme of the University’s 45th annual Commencement ceremony on Sunday, May 19.

University President Walter Harrison set the tone as he greeted the 1,200 members of the Class of 2002 and their friends and family members to a “magnificent Commencement morning.”

“I will always consider myself a member of your class,” said Harrison, who arrived at the University in 1998, as did most of those who were graduating.

“Thanks for allowing me to tag along on your sometimes wild ride through the University of Hartford,” he said, evoking cheers from the graduates. “This class has brought a whole new spirit to the University.”

The importance of the connecting spirit resounded in remarks by all three honorary degree recipients.

“In all of our endeavors, we must remember the connections we have with each other. This is continued on next page
the heart of the connecting spirit, and it binds me to you just as it binds community to community and nation to nation," said Swraj Paul, The Lord Paul of Marylebone, a member of Great Britain’s House of Lords and founder of Britain’s largest family-owned business.

Lord Paul, who was presented with an honorary Doctor of Commercial Science, is a highly successful businessman, politician, humanitarian, and author. A native of India, Lord Paul is founder and chairman of the manufacturing company, Caparo Group, which employs 4,000 people in four countries. He said he was deeply thankful for the honor bestowed on him by "this exceptional institution, one grounded in a commitment to education that dates back to Hartford’s first YMCA courses in the 1870s, and one created out of a desire to unite, and thus improve, the educational opportunities for all."

He recalled his time in New England, 50 years ago, when he received his bachelor’s and master’s in mechanical engineering from MIT, an exciting time to be in the field, he said, with breakthroughs “bringing car travel into common use, bringing air travel into the mainstream, and bringing the possibility of space travel even closer.”

Seeing this “potential for machines to connect town-to-town, country-to-country, and even planet-to-planet” was inspiring to mechanical engineers of the time. “No doubt it was also this connecting spirit,” Lord Paul said, “that had joined the nations of the world together against the enemy of Nazism only a few years before.

“Unfortunately, the emerging Cold War ushered in an era when bright engineers became concerned not with creating technology to connect people and places, but rather with designing tools for division. And two nations that had fought on the same side in World War II, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., brought the world to the brink of ultimate disconnection with the Cuban missile crisis.”

Now, as the U.S., Russia, and all other nations of the world confront the new enemy of terrorism, “we must reclaim the connecting spirit that inspired a generation of young people, like me, to study engineering; and that inspired nations across the globe to work together in World War II,” Lord Paul said.

The two chief passions of nationalism and internationalism that motivate peoples and nations today have both strengths and weaknesses, he asserted. Nationalism, especially in this time of war for the U.S., can be galvanizing and uniting. “Yet these strengths, when allowed to flourish unchecked, form the weakness of nationalism” and can “lead a nation into blind obedience to a misguided cause, no matter how well intentioned,” he said, citing Nazism as an example of the most malevolent case of nationalism that history has witnessed.

“Internationalism—advocating cooperation among nations and promotion of world-wide goods—again, seems entirely positive. After all, it is the spirit of internationalism that helped bring together the coalition against terrorism last September, after the devastating attacks against the U.S. It is this spirit that rules the discussions of the U.N., and this spirit that opens dialogues all over the world on issues such as pollution, landmines, and animal welfare.”

This deliberative quality that is internationalism’s strength, is also its weakness, according to Lord Paul. “It lies in the fact that deliberation, on its own, may not move us anywhere. We see sad examples of this in the Middle East, where there has been no shortage of deliberation, but also no visible progress.

“Thus, both nationalism and internationalism are weak when they act alone.”

It is the “connecting spirit,” he maintained, that “will move us forward toward a better world. It gives internationalism force, and it gives nationalism prudence. We all need each other to meet our own goals. No person, school, or nation can go it alone and achieve every aim.

“If we want to be successful in accomplishing our global aim of ending terrorism, and in achieving our own personal aims,” Lord Paul said, “we must always be driven by the connecting spirit.”

LEAVING FOOTPRINTS
Morton Handel, chairman of Marvel Enterprises, the entertainment, publishing and toy company, and Eunice Groark, Connecticut’s first female lieutenant governor, were also presented with honorary degrees.

“Start thinking about how you can leave footprints. There’s a world in dire need of people who can give of themselves,” said Handel, who was given an honorary Doctor of Humanities. “If you keep thinking that the greatest satisfactions in life come from knowing that in some way you’ve made a difference, you’ll smile a little bit more.”

Handel and his wife, Irma, have been sponsors of Say Yes to Education (SYTE), a program to help Hartford youngsters achieve their dream of a college education. He has been a member of the University’s Board of Regents since 1991 and was vice chairman of the board from 1995 to 2000.

Groark, who received an honorary Doctor of Laws, told the graduates, “It is individuals who make this world a better place. It’s not corporations, it’s the people within them. It’s not governments, it’s the people within them.

“Remember, wherever you go, whatever you do, that it is we who create our world, it is we who define it.”

Groark, who was elected Connecticut’s first female lieutenant governor in 1990, is currently president of the Connecticut chapter of the Nature Conservancy and an active supporter of environmental and conservation issues.

Education Prof. S. Edward Weinswig, who has helped shape generations of education professionals in Greater Hartford and who is leaving full-time teaching after 40 years at the University, was presented with the University Medal for Distinguished Service.

Former Hartford College for Women Dean Sue Blanshan, speaking at the HCW ceremony that afternoon, advised graduates to embrace change and urged them to be aware of what they enjoy doing. Graduates may find that their true passion lies in a job that is not directly related to their field of study, and they should be open to that possibility, she said. “Your major is not a rigid predictor of your future.”

HCW presented its Pioneer Woman Award to Rosanne Haggerty, a well-known advocate for affordable housing. Haggerty is the founder and executive director of Common Ground, a nonprofit housing development and management organization dedicated to creating innovative solutions to homelessness in New York City.
Today’s Commitment
Excerpted from the Charge to the Graduating Class of 2002 by R. Owen Morgan ’02

It has been said that there are two days of the week … about which we should feel no worry, apprehension, or doubt. It is a remarkable and liberating thought that there should be two whole days which should be anxiety-free. Those two days are Yesterday, and Tomorrow.

We should not concern ourselves with the events, successes, and failures of Yesterday, since they have passed forever beyond the realm of our control. We must not feel anxious about the prospects of Tomorrow, since much of what will comprise it is unknown and unalterable by us. Yesterday and Tomorrow are abstract patchwork concepts comprised of memory, hope, anger, happiness, fear, and uncertainty. As such they are wholly unworthy of our extended consideration.

However, there are probably very few moments in life when what has been and what will be stand in such close proximity as they do today. We have come here to mark an undeniable turning point in our lives, and considering this, a bit of introspection is certainly warranted.

Indeed, our lives have changed drastically over the course of our college career, especially in the past year. I do not wish to focus my remarks on the tragic events of September, but those senseless acts of terror and violence serve to remind us that our time here has meant more than a diploma and lengthened resume. It is no coincidence that unrestricted expression, unregulated existence, and unimpeded education—all of which are the targets of repression, are also the foundations of the betterment of society.

This is the legacy of our time at the University of Hartford. We have emerged stronger by what we have learned. We have grown more compassionate by those we have loved, and more tolerant by those we have hurt. We must take the sum of our Yesterdays, extract what lessons they may teach us, and apply it to the improvement of our
world—locally and globally.

I know that Tomorrow is a subject which at present probably weighs quite heavily on all our minds. Like Yesterday, it is something we have no effect over. Instead then, let us focus on the one day of which we possess any control: Today.

Today is all we have. Often, we tend to pine for what we do not possess, and neglect our responsibilities for what we do have. Today is a commitment. It is a commitment not to view our lives as a series of prior successes and unfulfilled dreams. It is a commitment to conduct ourselves as if each day and moment were ripe with opportunity.

Opportunity to love openly and live fearlessly, apologize appropriately and forgive freely.

To believe by faith, but also to rage, challenge and question, and never blindly accept dogma.

To end each day happier than when we began it, wiser in the evening than in the morning and stronger at dusk than at dawn.

We will do this by being open to experience, which may temper and teach us, and to education, which may empower, impassion, and enlighten us.

We must never forget our potential to improve, and never lessen our resolve for that potential's fulfillment.

We will not view today's ceremony as an end, but as a renewal of our vows to greater knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.

By being thus committed, we will better ourselves and each other. We will reconcile who we were, who we are, and who we will be. We will not forget the joys, sorrows, and lessons of the past, nor will we be wholly dismissive of the future. However, we will cherish and celebrate the here and now, with all its opportunity and possibility. We will concentrate on Today, and we will live with resolve by one common creed:

I will hold no regret for my life thus far, and I will impose no limitations on my life to come.

To the Class of 2002, I wish you the best of Todays for years to come. It has been a joy knowing you, and an honor to be able to call you my friends.

R. Owen Morgan '02 graduated summa cum laude with degrees from the College of Arts and Sciences and The Hartt School. This fall, he will enter Hertford College of Oxford University as the University of Hartford's John G. Martin Scholar.
STUDENT AWARDS

R. OWEN MORGAN, the University’s 16th John G. Martin Scholar, graduated with a dual degree—a bachelor’s in music composition, with a minor in music education, and a bachelor’s in politics and government. This fall, he will enter Hertford College of Oxford University. Through the Martin Foundation, Morgan will receive two years of study at Oxford, enabling him to work toward a third bachelor’s degree, in philosophy, politics, and economics (PPE). The award covers two years of study, room, board, supplies, and other expenses. For the future, Morgan is currently considering public administration, the foreign service, or law. The PPE degree program is the one under which President Clinton entered Oxford. At Hartford, Morgan has been president of the Hartt Student Council, a leader in the Student Government Association, and a student representative on the University’s Board of Regents.

ERIK PORSE is this year’s recipient of the Belle K. Ribicoff Prize, awarded for academic excellence, leadership, and participation in campus and community activities. A student in both the College of Engineering and The Hartt School, Porse achieved a grade point average of nearly 3.8 while carrying 19 credit hours a semester. Of his skill in acoustics, Dean Alan Hadad of the College of Engineering said, “Acoustics allows outstanding minds to synthesize two disciplines….Eric flourishes in this unification of separate but related concepts.” A member of Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society, he served as chapter vice president, treasurer and national voting delegate. He was a member of the University of Hartford Judicial Board and a Kaplan teacher, coaching in test-taking skills. As president of the Newman Club, he directed the club’s community involvement and arranged weekly service events. Porse was co-president and co-captain of the Hartford club volleyball team and successfully ran the 1999 Marine Corps Marathon.

KAITLIN M. WALSH is committed to community service, one of two criteria for receiving the John G. Lee Medal. The other is academic achievement. Walsh received a degree in modern languages and cultures and a second degree in communication. On the Dean’s List and President’s List every semester, she achieved a grade point average of 3.82. Walsh is the oldest of five children, two of whom have special needs. She has coordinated holiday and cultural events for special-needs students and designed a web page for the Special Education Parent Teacher Association in Windsor, her hometown, and participated in CIGNA’s United Way community campaign. Her interest in advertising led her to enter several advertising competitions with the University’s student chapter of the American Advertising Federation, of which she was president in 2002. She presented several papers at the Undergraduate Research Colloquium and last year won third prize in the English department’s Melvin Goldstein Awards and a Humanities Center seminar student fellowship.
Faculty Awards

A. Richard Brayer, associate professor of psychology, received the Roy E. Larsen Award for Excellence in Teaching. During his 41 years at the University, Brayer taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses in psychology, with an emphasis on research methodology and statistical analysis, for which he developed innovative teaching tools to help students master complex concepts. He developed the University’s master’s degree program in general experimental psychology and has served as the program’s director since 1969.

Brayer, who is retiring, has stayed in touch with hundreds of former students, many of whom credit him with influencing their careers and their lives. His colleagues and former students say that his passion for teaching and his dedication to his students have been extraordinary. “Dick has, for 40 years, been a humble, intelligent, energetic, and extremely hardworking student advocate and mentor,” says Associate Professor Jack Powell, chairman of the psychology department.

Nancy McClellan Davis, a 1995 graduate of the general experimental psychology program, says that “without a doubt, Dr. Brayer gave me the best gift a teacher can give a student, confidence. I have never forgotten it.”

Stephen M. Gryc, professor of composition and theory at The Hartt School, was presented the James E. and Frances W. Bent Award for Scholarly and/or Artistic Creativity. His music has been commissioned and performed by major ensembles and soloists, has been published by some of the world’s leading publishing houses, and is recorded on five different commercial labels. He has received numerous awards from national organizations and was recently honored for his work at the KidSing 2001 Festival in Omaha, Neb. Gryc says it has given him special pleasure to help give local churches, schools and the University of Hartford “their own musical identities.” He composed the University’s alma mater and fight song, “Fly High,” both of which were performed at the Commencement ceremony. Through private lessons and a series of new courses, Gryc says, “I seek to help my students achieve a high level of technical skill, though always stressing that technique is the servant rather than the master.”

Catherine Barnes Stevenson, associate professor of English and drama, received the Oscar and Shoshana Trachtenberg Award for Service to the University. For more than two decades, she has worked to enhance life at the University for students and faculty. She served as founding director of the University’s Humanities Center. After developing and serving as director of an honors program for gifted undergraduates in the College of Arts and Sciences, she spearheaded the development of a University-wide Honors Program. As coordinator of the program, Stevenson instituted the Undergraduate Research Colloquium. Stevenson founded and teaches in the A&S Women’s Studies Program. She chaired the A&S Women’s Task Force and is a corporator of the Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame. She has served as dean of the faculty and played a key role in the development of the University’s nationally recognized First-Year Interest Groups (FIGs) for freshmen. In addition to teaching, Stevenson currently serves as director of international studies, working closely with all international students to address their concerns and to make sure they feel supported and valued by the University community, especially since the tragic events of September 11, 2001.