

Congressman John E. Fogarty
New York Medical College
June 6, 1962

It is indeed an honor and privilege for me to accept President Snyder's invitation to join the Right Honorable Robert Briscoe, Lord Mayor of Dublin, in sharing this happy occasion with you -- the faculty, students, and friends of the New York Medical School.

It is also with a great deal of humility and appreciation that I accept this most distinguished honor that you have bestowed upon me today. The Trustees and Faculty of this Medical College have paid me a great personal tribute by awarding this honorary degree to me, and I accept it with the humble realization that it was made possible because of my good fortune to have served for the past fifteen years as chairman or ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee for health matters and related activities. It is in this capacity that I have been privileged to do my part in assuring proper levels of Federal support in cooperation with state, local and private institutions for the advancement of medical education and research. I also hope that in this capacity I have been able to help foster at least some educational principles such as those which guide this institution they deserve quotation: "to develop young men and women who will become not only skillful, wise, thoughtful and sympathetic physicians, but also who will possess broad cultural and social concepts which will enable them to lead useful lives in our contemporary world."

This philosophy of education has been constant through the years at the New York Medical College and has been paralleled by equally aggressive leadership in the over-all scientific education of its students. This is vividly pointed out by the fact that yours was one of the first medical colleges to make extensive use of teaching at the patient's bedside, one of the first to develop a three year graded and scheduled curriculum, one of the first to encourage undergraduate students to conduct research projects, and one of the first to adopt a three-year systematic curriculum leading to graduate degrees in the clinical specialties and the basic medical sciences.

The merits of this educational approach will be demonstrated by the professional accomplishments of this group of young people to whom we are paying special tribute this evening.

During the more than one hundred years of existence of this progressive institution, you have sent into the world an increasing number of graduates in medical science, dentistry, public health, medical technology and nursing. You young people gathered here this evening are the latest products of the New York Medical College's educational system, and I know that your alma mater has imparted to each of you professional knowledge that will enable you to enhance the prestige of its name as you go about your work of alleviating the suffering of mankind.

I am confident that, in the years to come, the lives and accomplishments of these men and women, who tonight are taking another important step toward entering into their highly rewarding professional careers, will reflect with high esteem the ethical principles that this institution has instilled over the past four years.

Most of you, henceforth, will measure your professional lives in terms of service to man -- the contributions that you can make to the knowledge of basic medical science, the number of patients you are privileged to care for and the quality of care you can give them. There is no more noble work to which you might dedicate yourselves.

However, you also have to fulfill your responsibilities as citizens. This role has especially pertinent implications for this graduating class. This country desperately needs more physicians. It must have new medical schools, if they are to be provided. We must increase the number of professional researchers -- almost doubling it by 1970, if our magnificent research effort is not to falter. We must expand our training efforts far beyond our present capacities. All these things we must do, if we are to preserve the health of the American people.

You must do more than fulfill yourselves through the practice of medicine. You must be aware and informed upon the public issues and implications of your profession. Day by day, you will work with the health problems of our population. Perhaps more than any other group, you can see their crying needs.

Those of us in Congress will do all we can to meet these needs. But always you and we must remember that our actions are taken in response to the demands of an informed public -- we are the means by which the will of the people is expressed in such vital matters as health and welfare.

I have the great privilege to serve the people of Rhode Island and the entire American people, and you have paid me a great compliment by awarding me this honorary degree in recognition of my service.

In the months and years to come, I will try never to forget that this award should serve as an incentive -- an incentive to me to make even greater efforts in behalf of medical education, research and health.