

Dr. Charles E. Crutchfield III

RECEIVES MINNEHAHA'S DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Dr. Charles E. Crutchfield III is the Medical Director of Crutchfield Dermatology and the Associate Professor of Dermatology at the University of Minnesota Medical School. He received a master's degree in molecular biology from the Mayo Clinic and his doctorate from the Mayo Clinic in 1994.

He was voted "Top Doctor" by the Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine, and he was designated as one of the "Top 5 Dermatologists for Women in Minnesota" by Minnesota Monthly. He is a member of the AOA Medical Honors Society, and he received the Karis Humanitarian Award from the Mayo Clinic.

He was chosen as one of the "Best Doctors in America," an honor bestowed on only 4% of all practicing physicians, has written over 100 scientific and dermatology articles and co-authored a textbook on dermatology.

Dr. Crutchfield is a 1978 graduate of Minnehaha Academy and was voted most likely to succeed by his classmates. He and his wife Laurie are the proud parents of two children, Olivia and Charles IV, and they are expecting a third child later this year.

On the afternoon of the 2006 commencement exercises, Dr. Crutchfield was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award and in addition, was the guest speaker, giving an address he titled "The Secret of Success" to the class of 2006.

Dr. Crutchfield glided through his twelve-minute speech filled with photos and humorous stories of his experience at Minnehaha, examples of his work, and some very important advice for the graduating class.

As a result of his occasional insomnia, Dr. Crutchfield oftentimes finds himself watching "crazy, crazy infomercials" in the wee hours of the morning. He laughed and told the class that their offers to help you get rich quick are simply not true. There is a secret.

As a child, his mother had a box in their home. Inscribed on the lid of the box were the words, "The Secret of Success." You would have to open the box to find the secret. At

the edge of the stage in the Benson Great Hall stood a table, on top of which was stacked 124 boxes—one box was for each graduate—with the same inscription on the lid.

"Success is for everyone, not just for those who know the secret," Charles advised. "Success is a journey, not a destination. It is something you do. You are happy, you are pursuing things, you are developing your self-respect, your self-esteem. You are working on your family, your career, your church, your faith. You enjoy what you do. You cannot improve your surrounding until you improve yourself." He likened this thought to that of an old tortoise, "You must be constant, deliberate, and determined."

His message emphasized the importance of

continuing to develop your intellectual self, your physical self, and your spiritual self. “Always try to get better. If you are satisfied with what you did yesterday, you are not working hard enough today.”

“Live everyday like this might be your last - and eventually you will be right!”

Joking aside, Dr. Crutchfield suggested with the authority of any caring physician, that the graduates take the opportunity to tell their families that evening what they might if it were their last day on earth.

“Strengthen your faith, your relationships, and your involvement with your church. As we are told in Luke 6:31, ‘Do to others as you would have them do to you.’ If you are ever trying to decide what the right thing to do is, turn the tables, and see how your decision would look from the other side.”

Dr. Crutchfield also described a personal experience he had following medical school, the procedure a doctor goes through to obtain a residency. This is an arrangement referred to as “a match.” He did not get a match immediately. He felt alone, hurt and unwanted. After considerable prayer, he received a phone call from his medical school dean inviting him to speak with a physician at a clinic in Lacrosse, Wisconsin. He did. He spoke for over an hour on the phone and the result was an invitation to work at this clinic, which Dr. Crutchfield referred to as “the best year of his medical school training.”

“Sometimes you ask for a gift and the answer is ‘no’. Often you receive something that does not look like a gift, but it truly is. Every adverse situation is a seed of equal or greater benefit. I learned this that year after I was not immediately matched.”

Upon reading Dr. Crutchfield’s bio or resume, you would surely say that he has

found the secret to success. If you tell that to him, he is apt to disagree as he, even today, continues to develop his self, his family, his career and his faith.

“The secret, Dr. Crutchfield announced, “the secret inside the box is simple. It’s WORK.” Good old-fashioned hard work. Success does not come as easy as the infomercials want you to believe, it does not happen overnight. You must WORK. The audience, full of parents no doubt, voiced their agreement with incredible applause.

