Redford implores graduates to ‘grab those reins and run’

By JENNIFER NAPIER-PEARCE
West Valley City » Robert Redford didn't begin his commencement address to Westminster College graduates with the usual words of inspiration and optimism. No, he began by lamenting.

"I think we've done a piss poor job of teaching you all with something to work with, with the usual words of inspiration and optimism. No, he began by lamenting. "I think we've done a piss poor job of teaching you all with something to work with, and I apologize for that," he said. "I wasn't my fault, you know, but it's my poor job of leaving you all with nothing to work with." Redford said, adding, "It wasn't my fault." He began by lamenting.

But he soon shifted to praising the energy and drive he sees in young people today. "This new generation coming forward...what you're really basically saying is, 'Give us the reins. Don't tell us.'" he said. "And I give you all the encouragement in the world to grab those reins and run with them."

The actor-director, environmentalist and founder of the Sundance Institute received an honorary doctorate from Utah's sole private liberal arts college during a ceremony at the Marriott Center on Saturday.

More than 900 graduates and their families gathered to hear Redford, 76, and to applaud student accomplishments, soaking in the occasion with broad smiles, wide eyes and cheers.

Westminster College president Brian Levin-Stankevitch received an honorary doctorate of laws degree, the world's largest academic institution with an audience...and with it, Redford said. "It wasn't my fault." Redford said.

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