

OFFICE OF MAYOR DAVID

CITY OF BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

Mayor David's Swearing-In Speech

January 1, 2014

Happy New Year everyone. Welcome, and thank you all so much for joining me as we together usher in a new chapter in Binghamton's history.

I can't begin to tell you how eager and excited I am to get to work. I want to thank Judge Cawley for swearing me in, the members of City Council for attending and the many elected officials from neighboring communities as well as our partners at the County and State level, City employees, residents and friends. Welcome to you all.

I want to start off by thanking the residents of Binghamton for giving me the opportunity to serve as our City's 50th Mayor. I recognize that what you've given me is an opportunity and it is now up to me to make the most of that opportunity and make our vision of a better Binghamton come to life.

Thank you also to the people who gave their time, talent and energy to the campaign. I did not get here by myself and would not be here without the efforts of volunteers, supporters, and friends. Thank you all for your efforts.

I have a number of family members who have traveled across the northeast to be here today. I want to thank them for taking the time to be here and for all you have done for me. What many of you don't know is that my family all played a central role in the overall effort, making phone calls from as far away as Rochester, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. I can't tell you how many times someone stopped me or I knocked on a door and someone said they got a phone call from my mother or other family member. Now that is dedication, support and encouragement, and I am eternally grateful. Thank you.

You learn a great deal when you spend a summer knocking on thousands of doors. When you sit with residents on their front porches, sidewalks, lawns and living rooms you hear what's on the minds of City residents. Both the pride they have in their neighborhood and the concerns they have about the future.

A common theme that I heard is that you want a change in leadership. You want someone who offers a new vision and direction for Binghamton. You are concerned by the fact that recent years in Binghamton have been marred in party politics, in-fighting, and personal agendas have gotten in the way of doing what's in the best interest of the residents.

I want you to know that I have heard you and your comments will guide my decisions as Mayor. I am standing here today because many of you crossed party lines because you believed in me and felt strongly that Binghamton issues must come first and I will always remember that. I am not here to pursue an ideological or political agenda and I don't plan on using the Mayor's Office as a pulpit for causes. I'm here to manage the day to day operations of the City. I'm here to focus on City business and core services that impact all residents and

work to improve the quality of life for all of us. I'm not the Mayor of the Republican Party or just the people who voted for me. As Mayor I represent and will be an advocate for all City residents.

I am excited to start with a clean slate and have partners that I can work with at the State and County level to get things done on behalf of the residents. I have already spoken with Senator Libous, Assemblywoman Lupardo, Assemblyman Crouch and County Executive Preston about working together and each echoes the sentiment that we are all in this together.

The same is true of the members of City Council. I feel a responsibility to take the lead in developing a good working relationship and very much look at my role as bringing us together. I appreciate the fact that each of you made time to meet with me individually after the election so we could talk about how we will achieve our common goals. We're on the same side now and we are all accountable to the residents.

The challenges Binghamton faces are real and they are significant. In the past 10 days alone, while many of us were celebrating the Holiday's with friends and families, there was a rash of serious crimes across our City. This year and in future years protecting our residents and making Binghamton safer will be among my top priorities.

Starting tomorrow I will initiate the process to fill the three new police officer positions that were added to the 2014 budget which I pushed heavily for on the campaign trail. I will also advance my pledge to add more police officers gradually each year and work with the Police Chief to implement my public safety plan so we can get crime under control. Binghamton can't be a great City until we are a safe City.

There are challenges that I believe are urgent and will be the focus of my administration. They are simple to list, but will take time to achieve and can only be realized by hard work and a concentrated effort: enhancing public safety, stimulating job creation, repairing infrastructure, stabilizing our finances and tax base, improving our parks and neighborhoods and providing opportunities for our children.

Downtown has seen new life thanks to the presence of Binghamton University which started about 10 years ago and I look forward to working with President Stenger as partner in growing not only the University, but community. We must also not neglect our neighborhoods, which deserve the same attention as the Center City.

I'm not afraid to put these challenges front and center and acknowledge that this will not be easy. Results will only be achieved by working smarter, thinking outside the box, breaking with tradition, and making tough decisions. This community is no stranger to tough times, and our success will be achieved because people no longer want or can afford the status quo.

There are very serious issues also under discussion at the State level that will impact Binghamton in the near future. Soon we may have a decision from New York State on the future of Fracking. This year we should also learn the location of a casino in the Southern Tier. We must have a plan in place and be prepared to maximize these opportunities if they come to fruition.

I've learned a lot as a property and small business owner. Controlling costs, reducing overhead, working smarter -- all of these things can make any organization more productive and efficient. Binghamton must do the same.

These last weeks have been spent beginning to assemble a team of professional administrators. I have already hired some professional experts and will continue to build the team over the next few months.

So many of you have written to me, e-mailed me and stopped me to say how excited you are for me and the City. How there is a renewed sense of optimism and how desperate change was needed. I want to thank you for that that sentiment, for the well wishes and the warm welcome. To the members of the business community, business owners, investors and entrepreneurs who have encountered challenges at City Hall and have reached out to me in recent weeks I want you to know you too have an advocate and City Hall is now open for business.

To Mayor Ryan I'd like to say that I know the job of Mayor isn't an easy one. While there are issues we do not agree on I respect the Office of Mayor and the men and women who have earned the right to serve there. I wish you luck in your future pursuits.

Problems and challenges will always arise and dealing with them can be tough. The work might go slowly. People may be frustrated, at times. But we need to recognize that together, we will make the city even better. We will do more than just push back on the problems that confront us. Together, we will push ahead. If we can channel our collective energy for the common good, there is no problem we can't solve, no opportunity we cannot seize, no stopping us.

Thank you again for electing me as your Mayor! I will do my very best to live up to the honor and high calling of serving the City of Binghamton.