

# Do some good; go make money

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

I always leave my calendar open this time of year, just in case I'm asked to deliver a commencement address to a university's graduating class. I'm not surprised that another year has passed with no invitation. My message isn't one that college administrations want their graduates to hear. For the most part, commencement addresses are reserved for communists, socialists and fascists. Conservatives and libertarians are rarely welcome.

A survey of commencement speakers at graduation ceremonies found that Democrats outnumber Republicans by a 2-to-1 margin. I would wager that, even among those Republicans, self-indulgent appeals to pursue careers in public service will predominate.

The poisonous implication is that those who enter the private sector and use their newly acquired skills to earn great wads of money are somehow morally inferior to those who seek careers in government. Nothing could be further from the truth.

With a few notable exceptions, those who acquire wealth in a capitalist system do so by providing goods or services that society desires. Capitalism does have its remora-like parasites who enrich themselves by leeching off the productivity of the host, but even they are dependent upon the success of the capitalist system.

For example, the car you drive was designed by highly educated engineers and assembled by working-class laborers. Both are rewarded with a portion of the profits gained from the sale of that car. But neither would earn a dime if pension funds and wealthy Americans did not place their wealth at risk by investing in the company.

The same applies to all of the vendors who supply parts and materials. Steel, aluminum, paint, tires, electronic circuitry and more are all created by other companies with the same layers of investors, highly skilled chemists, metallurgists, engineers and laborers.

Seattle's Bill Gates has accumulated more than \$50 billion. But the wealth he has accrued represents only a small fraction of the wealth he has created. His Microsoft Corp. has created many other multibillionaires as well as a great many millionaires, and many more comfortable middle-class and upper middle-class families.

But even that doesn't begin to tally up all the good that Microsoft has done for the world. Microsoft's software has greatly increased efficiency and productivity around the world. The wealth accrued by Gates, Microsoft and its employees are the rewards that a capitalist system grants to those who serve mankind. Microsoft's wealth results from society voluntarily rewarding Microsoft in the form of purchases for all that the company has provided to society.

The same goes for Jeff Bezos of [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), Larry Ellison of Oracle, Larry Page of Google and the Koch brothers, along with many others.

The economy that "public servants" favor involves the involuntary transfer of wealth to those who create nothing that Americans choose to purchase. This represents the parasite economy.

The windmills that blight the landscape these days would never exist if Americans were given the choice of purchasing electricity from those sources. The electricity they generate is far more expensive than that from traditional Northwest sources, such as hydroelectric. But you are forced to buy them. And that destroys wealth.

And whether you choose to buy one or not, public servants force you to pay for electric cars. Each electric car is underwritten by thousands of taxpayer dollars. In the case of Tesla electric sports cars, the subsidies exceed \$40,000 per car.

This parasitic economy can only exist as long as the host economy creates surpluses of wealth that the public servants can redistribute. To distill the concept of public service down to its essence, what we have are those who have no experience producing anything regulating and parasitizing those who produce everything. Capitalism, for all of its alleged faults, is the purest and most moral of all economic systems, because it provides tangible rewards to those who contribute to the society they live in.

So my advice to each of you is to forgo "public service" and head straight for the private sector. Get to work creating wealth for yourself and others.

Sadly, many of you were seduced into pursuing courses of education that have left you bereft of marketable skills. And sadly, such people are fit only for public service as defined by the parasitic politicians. For that I would like to apologize.

And so I speak next to future freshman classes. Choose a major that will reward yourself and your fellow Americans.

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