

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT E. BURTON

Stars that Illuminate the Night

*Photo by Joyce Benna*

ROBERT E. BURTON

Editor's note: This is the text of the speech delivered by Dr. Philip R. Day, Jr., Chancellor of City College of San Francisco at CCSF's graduation ceremony exercises held Friday, May 11, 2001 at Masonic Auditorium, San Francisco.

By Dr. Philip R. Day, Jr.,
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None of the accomplishments of **Bob Burton** and his family were achieved by virtue of heritage or good fortune. They had to work hard to achieve. They had to make do with scarcity. They had to overcome adversity. They had to deal with intimidation and prejudice. They had to cross the line and make their way in a strange land. Bob Burton and his family are lights for our path. They show us that we too can make our way and become what we can be, no matter how ordinary or how challenging our circumstance. Sometimes it is hard for us to imagine ourselves doing what the "great ones" manage to do, but when we see them as "ordinary ones" doing well and doing good, our path is lightened and our destination made more clear.

We were privileged to have Bob Burton among us at City College for all of those years. He was not content just to serve on the board once a month. He came to the campuses

almost every day, had coffee with us once, twice, or three times in the morning, made his rounds among friends, went off to his work day elsewhere, then returned for evening functions, special events, celebrations and graduation. Bob was one of us. He cared for us. And we loved him dearly.

That is why we are dedicating this graduation to his memory. He was one of those stars that illuminate the night. And it could be said of him what **Juliet** said of **Romeo**:

*When he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven
so fine
That all the world will be in love with
night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.*

Friends, family, and admirers of Bob Burton, when you look up at night and see the stars, remember him and consider that you too can make the face of heaven so fine that all the world will be in love with night.