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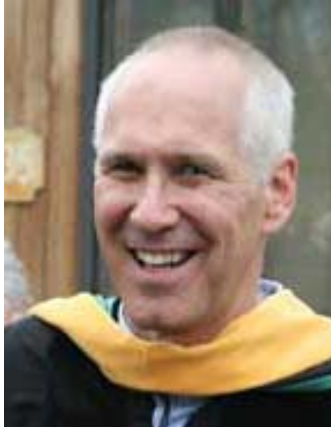
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**Tedd Benson, Maverick Builder, Addresses Grads at Unity:
America's Environmental College**

Tedd Benson delivers commencement speech at Unity College, Unity, ME.

- www.bensonwood.com -



Unity, ME – Nothing we purchase in our lifetimes uses up more resources than the houses we build. It is noteworthy, then, when a leading, national homebuilder is given the honor of addressing grads at America's premier environmental college, Unity College, in Unity, Maine. This distinction has been given to master builder and author, Tedd Benson, the visionary founder and company steward of Bensonwood Homes in New Hampshire. He was chosen by Unity president, Mitch Thomashow, precisely for his stewardship of the Earth's resources, his sense of community, and his innovative, Open-Built® approach to sustainable homebuilding. Within weeks after the graduation caps go flying, Bensonwood's pre-fabricated, Open-Built® modules and assemblies will be flown into position to become Unity House, a futuristic presidents' home and living classroom for Unity

College.

Benson addressed the next generation of environmental stewards: graduates charged with the epic task of reversing trends that have led to global warming and climate change. For the last three decades, Mr. Benson has worked passionately to refocus the American building industry by making the mass-production of custom, environmentally-friendly homes, a reality. Indeed, it was Benson's passion for building that led to his views on sustainability – not the other way around. By invoking passion as the ultimate renewable resource, Benson expanded on the meaning of sustainability.

Unity College awarded Benson an honorary doctorate in environmental studies.

Since 1974, Tedd Benson and Bensonwood have built over 700 timberframe structures throughout the country and overseas. Both Benson and Bensonwood have been featured on a number of shows in the PBS series, *This Old House*, as well as *Good Morning America*, and the *Today Show*. Articles have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *This Old House Magazine*, *Architectural Digest*, *Home*, *Builder Magazine*, *Fine Homebuilding*, the *Boston Globe*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and numerous other regional newspapers local to specific projects. This fall, *This Old House* will feature the first new house ever on *This Old House*: a Bensonwood, super-efficient, barn style home, to be assembled in Weston, Massachusetts.

Tedd has also authored three books on timberframing, the first of which, *Building the Timber Frame House*, (Scribner's Sons, 1980, Simon & Schuster, 1995) was instrumental in the revival of the centuries-old form of building with timber. His second book, *The Timber-Frame Home: Design, Construction, Finishing* (Taunton Press, 1988), provided a comprehensive guide to the building of a timberframe house. This book was substantially rewritten in 1997. Revised and Updated, *The Timber-Frame Home* remains a respected reference for builders and designers of timberframe homes. With the release of Tedd's fourth book, *Timberframe, The Art and Craft of the Post-and-Beam Home*, (Taunton Press, 1999), there is perhaps the best visual reference yet for this venerable form of construction. He is currently working on his fifth book.

As a sought after speaker on the lecture circuit, Tedd has championed high-performance homes and sustainable homebuilding – with an emphasis on innovation, quality, and social responsibility. Unity House is the latest example of this life-long quest. “When architects, builders, and suppliers begin adopting Open-Built® technologies, homes will become disentangled, enabling the industry to create a series of standardized systems and processes that increase efficiency and reduce costs, without sacrificing creativity,” says Benson.

“We are America’s environmental college,” says President Thomashow, “and with Unity House we are proud to be a part of an effort to reframe America’s building industry, making the mass-production of custom, environmentally-friendly homes a reality.” Saturday’s graduation ceremonies are being called, “The greenest ever in our college’s 43-year history,” by Unity College.

In the largest graduating class in school history, Unity presented 128 students with two and four-year degrees. In hosting its most environmentally-friendly graduation to date, 60 percent of the food served at the senior banquet was provided by local producers and growers who use sustainable practices, in addition to many other eco-minded practices, according to Mark Tardif, college spokesman.

In speaking before the Unity graduating class of 2008, Benson sought to reinforce the principles of Unity College, including environmental leadership, sustainability, and collaborative, experiential learning.

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About Tedd Benson: Tedd Benson, the founder of Bensonwood Homes and acclaimed author, is nationally recognized for revitalizing and modernizing the timberframe industry three decades ago. In 1984, Tedd was instrumental in forming the Timber Framers Guild of North America and has been active in Habitat for Humanity. Over the past decade, Tedd’s unwavering search for a new and better way to build has resulted in an exclusive design and building system called Open-Built®. Equally rooted

in the craft culture of the past and the technological advances of the twenty-first century, Open-Built® acknowledges what actually happens in the building process and seeks to eliminate inefficiencies and waste. But its first principle is that homes should be as unique and adaptable as the people who inhabit them.

About Bensonwood: For more than thirty years, Bensonwood has delivered uncompromising quality and innovation in timberframe, hybrid, and high performance building. Winner of PATH's 2006 *Innovative Small Builder of the Year* award, Bensonwood is a nationally recognized designer/builder of residential and commercial structures. Through its unique Open-Built® system, Bensonwood has been incorporating advanced technologies and environmentally responsible practices in all of its buildings. For more information, go to www.bensonwood.com.

About Unity College: Known as "America's Environmental College," Unity College is a small private college in rural Maine that provides dedicated, engaged students with a liberal arts education that emphasizes the environment and natural resources. Unity College graduates are prepared to be environmental stewards, effective leaders, and responsible citizens through active learning experiences within a supportive community. For more information, go to www.unity.edu.

About Unity House: Designed for Net-Zero energy use, the 1,930 square foot presidents' home for Unity College will achieve LEED Platinum standards (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), feature a photovoltaic (PV) solar panel array, and be a living classroom for college students. Because of these attributes and its advanced prefabrication techniques, Unity House will be featured on an upcoming episode of *This Old House*, the PBS television home improvement series. For more information, go to www.openprototype.com.