

‘Famous Dave’ Anderson to be Homecoming speaker

Thursday, Sept. 29

Dave Anderson, founder of the Famous Dave’s barbeque restaurants, will be the featured speaker and grand marshal at MSU's Homecoming celebration Sept. 26 through Oct. 1.

Dave Anderson, founder of the Famous Dave's barbeque restaurants, will be the featured speaker and grand marshal at Minnesota State University, Mankato's Homecoming celebration Sept. 26 through Oct. 1.

Anderson will meet with students, speak to members of the campus community and serve as grand marshal of the Homecoming Parade.

He will discuss "Famous Dave's Life Skills for Success" in a talk on Thursday, Sept. 29 (7 p.m., Bresnan Arena of Taylor Center). The event is free to MSU students, faculty and staff; community members may purchase tickets for \$5 starting August 29 in Centennial Student Union 173 (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.). He will ride in the Homecoming Parade on Friday, Sept. 30 (starting at 4 p.m.). In the last 20 years Anderson helped found three publicly traded companies, creating more than 18,000 jobs. He was awarded a Bush Leadership Fellowship, received a master's degree from Harvard University, and was recognized as the "Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year" in Minnesota and the Dakotas by Ernst & Young, NASDAQ and USA Today.

He is an enrolled member of the Chippewa and Choctaw tribes and has served on numerous federal boards under Presidents Carter, Reagan and Bush. In 2003 President Bush appointed him to the President's Board of Advisors on Tribal Colleges and Universities. In 2004 the President appointed him assistant secretary for the Department of Interior-Indian Affairs.

He started his first business at age 18. It failed, but he persevered, starting another business - a floral wholesaling enterprise in Chicago - a year later.

That business also failed, but in 1994 Anderson opened his first Famous Dave's BBQ Shack in Hayward, Wis. The restaurant, featuring slow-smoked ribs, was an instant success, and in 1995 it was awarded the Blue Ribbon for "Best BBQ Sauce in America" at the American Royal International Barbecue Contest.

In 1996 Famous Dave's of America, Inc. stock was listed on the NASDAQ after an initial public offering. The company was described as "one of the hottest restaurant concepts in America" by Nation's Restaurant News.

Since then Anderson's food has earned numerous awards; his recipe books have been highly praised; and his marketing efforts and business leadership skills have been lauded for creativity and originality.

Anderson recently stepped down as chairman of Famous Dave's, now devoting his time and energy to community service and improving the lives of others. He provided \$1.4 million to found the [LifeSkills Center for Leadership](#), a program for disadvantaged Native American children. Oprah Winfrey's Angel Network recognized his work with at-risk youth, and he received the Odyssey Award from Big Brothers-Big Sisters for significant professional and community contributions.