

## **Entrepreneur to address Alfred University's winter graduates**

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Andy Glanzman, who built a multi-million business with a \$500 bank loan and a bright idea, will be the speaker at Alfred University's winter commencement ceremony at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, in McLane Center on the AU campus. Glanzman's address to the graduates and their families is entitled, "Life Is But A Dream." Glanzman is president and chief executive officer of Northern Lights Candles, a candle-manufacturing company headquartered in Wellsville. "We asked Andy Glanzman to deliver our commencement address because he has the kind of entrepreneurial spirit and vision that it takes to succeed today. That is a good message for our graduates to hear," said Dr. Charles M. Edmondson, Alfred University president. Alfred University indirectly drew Glanzman to New York's Southern Tier. Shortly after his graduation from high school in 1971, Glanzman came to Alfred University to visit a friend's brother who was an AU student. He liked the area, and he liked the people, particularly AU student Christina Faregren, a member of the Class of 1974, who later became his wife. The Glanzmans founded the company in 1978 with a \$500 bank loan and the idea of making fanciful collectible candles by hand. Northern Lights was really born of necessity, Glanzman said. Andy, who was trying to build a career as a professional musician, and Tina had gone to New York to further their careers, but returned to Allegany County to live with and care for an elderly farmer, Bill Hand, whom they had befriended. When they moved in, Hand's farmhouse in nearby Andover was without heat, light or running water. Andy and Tina bought a wood stove and a chain saw to provide heat, and kerosene lanterns for light. To supplement the light of the lanterns, they began making candles. Rather than just make utilitarian tapers, Andy and Tina started creating more fanciful candles, including wizards and dragons they loaded into a van and sold at craft shows throughout the Northeast. Soon, they were designing even more candles for their product line and hiring other candle makers to help them out. In addition to craft shows, they began selling their products to retailers. By 1989, Northern Lights was on Inc. Magazine's list of the 500 fastest growing companies in the United States. Today, it continues to be one of Allegany County's largest and best-known employers, selling its diversified product line in all 50 states as well as 30 foreign countries. "We're still babies, just getting started," said Glanzman about his company's future. Now considered one of the leading candle companies in the world, Northern Lights has four divisions: retail, wholesale, internet sales and their new direct selling division, Northern Lights at Home. The company now occupies more than 100,000 square feet of production, design and office space in Wellsville. The Glanzmans live in Wellsville with their two children, Silka and Tony. During its winter commencement ceremonies, the University will confer 28 master's degrees in biomedical materials engineering science, ceramic engineering, materials science and engineering, electrical engineering, education and business administration, and 106 baccalaureate degrees.