

CON-GRAD-ULATIONS!

This air-filled centerpiece stands tall at nearly 4 feet, so it will be the center of attention at any celebration.

Materials:

- 5 260Q black balloons
- 4 260Q white balloons
- 6 11" black and white marble agate balloons
- 6 5" white latex balloons
- 6 5" black latex balloons
- 2 Mortar board/paper graduation caps — 1 black/1 white
- 3 Small squares black foil paper
- 2 Large cups and sticks
- 3 Small cups and sticks
- 2 6" Geo Blossoms (optional)
- Plastic megaphone
- Black and white curling ribbon
- Glue dots
- Hot glue
- White duct tape
- 10" diameter wooden base (with hole for dowel)
- 1/4" 3-foot dowel
- 18" white latex balloon, doily, ribbon or paint

Instructions:

- Cover the base and dowel with your choice of material (18" white latex balloon, doily, ribbon or paint). Hot-glue the dowel into the base.
- Air inflate four 11" marble agates to 9 inches. Twist these into a cluster and wrap around base of dowel.
- Air inflate two white and two black 5" latex to about 4.5". Twist these into a cluster and wrap the cluster around the dowel, off-centered over the agate cluster.
- Pull megaphone down over dowel, inserting into the middle of the 5" cluster.
- Air inflate two agates to 8 inches. Glue dot one graduation cap to the top of each agate
- Put capped agates on large cup and stick.
- Inflate one black and one white 260 to 5-6 inches. Form into a ring, tie ends together and finish with a pinch twist (Or inflate the optional 6" Geo Blossoms).
- Glue dot each 260 ring to the bottom of the capped agate as a collar. (Or, attach the Geo Blossoms).
- Air inflate remaining 5" latex balloons to 4 inches. Twist into two clusters of four, each consisting of two white and two black balloons. Attach under 260 collar or Geo Blossoms.
- Rest top agate balloon on top of dowel and tape length



Estimated cost: About \$15
 Labor: About 35 minutes
 Suggested retail price: \$65-\$85

- of stick to dowel.
- Slide stick from second agate into megaphone and tape the bottom of the stick to the bottom of the exposed dowel.
- Coil remaining 260s. Tie the nozzle end of one black 260 into the 5" cluster under top agate, wrap around dowel, and secure its other end with a glue dot to the inside of the megaphone.
- Insert two black and two white 260s into opening in base (between agates), alternating the colors. Secure with glue dot.
- Insert remaining black and white 260 into megaphone and secure with glue dots.
- Cut six lengths of black and white curling ribbon. Knot together, curl and attach to underside of top 5" cluster. Feed through the 260 to cover dowel.
- Attach three squares of black foil paper onto small cups and sticks, and slide these into megaphone to finish the design off and hide your mechanics.

This design comes from Nancy Brown of Nancyfangles' "Whimsical Creations." She is an award-winning centerpiece designer who has been creating works of art from balloons since 1983. Nancy wishes to thank Bonnie at The Party Shop in E. Ellijay, Ga., and invites you to visit her Web site, www.nancyfangles.com.