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## Senior Class President Remarks

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## Remarks of Class President

### Chris Burrichter

Distinguished guests, faculty, family and friends and finally, my class—the class of 2008—I humbly thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. I would also like to say a special thank you to President Wilson. Some of you may not know that President Wilson entered Illinois Wesleyan with our class, and we will forever regard him as one of our own. It has been a privilege to attend this university under your guidance and support, and I thank you for your hospitality...

Many congratulations to the Class of 2008, my class.

How would you define the Class of 2008? We're a group of independent thinkers, raised on the Internet, we're all connected with Facebook, we're heavily caffeinated, and we have some vague recollection of POGS and Giga Pets, and Gak. And some of us, myself included, probably wear Crocs.

But perhaps, most notably, this class loves a challenge. During our time at Wesleyan we have come to realize that challenges will always exist, it's just the nature of the world in which we live. However, using what we have learned during these past four years, we now know that facing challenges may in fact be our greatest opportunities to define who we are and what we stand for.

When we arrived at Illinois Wesleyan as first-year students, we faced a presidential election, and a country at war, and we were trying to figure out our place in this world. And now, as we leave, we face a presidential election, and a country at war. But we ourselves have been changed. Illinois Wesleyan awakened inside of us an awareness, a sense that the problems and goals of this world are now our problems and goals, but we leave here today better equipped to find solutions.

Illinois Wesleyan taught us to reach for heights we never would have dreamt possible. It has armed us with the chance to achieve, to be truly great individuals, and to do quite well for ourselves. The faculty and staff have developed inside of us the desire to look at the whole picture, to appreciate our individualism while working together to achieve, and most importantly to do our best. Yet, as Minor Myers jr. would have reminded us, our goals should not only be to do well, but more importantly to do good.

If you'll excuse me for being a political science major, Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate goal of good government." I would take that a step further, and suggest that the care of human life and happiness should be our goal as we leave here today. Protecting these rights will be a challenge, but this is a challenge we are ready to face.

At Illinois Wesleyan, we discovered the chance in life to be both extraordinary and impassioned. Here we learned to respect and respectfully analyze a diversity of opinions and ideas. Here we've had our eyes opened to other cultures and some of us have even had the opportunity to study abroad and meet new people that share our mutual dreams. We have explored new ways to help not just the human race, but the Earth itself. We have decided that we will pursue nothing less than a bright future for this world.

We are the class of 2008. In these four years, we have found the footing on our paths in life. Our paths will not always be easy, we will each face great challenges, but it is in our responses to these challenges that we will define ourselves. So as we graduate today, let us remember that God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, and of love, and of sound mind.

Congratulations to the Class of 2008!