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Senior Class President Remarks

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Good Afternoon. On behalf of our class, I would like to welcome our family and friends and thank you for celebrating this milestone with us today. Your endless support, both emotional and of course financial, reminds us that someone, no matter what, believes in our future. Your love and encouragement has helped us meet and overcome the challenges a college education has given us. Thank you for confidence in us.

To our administration, staff, trustees and guests: welcome. Your commitment to this university and its students can be seen through our success here today, whether it be from funding the construction of beautiful new facilities, or from simply offering us free food and caffeine in the middle of the night, during finals, at the exact time we need a little peanut butter and jelly break.

Finally, to our professors, thank you for challenging us to work harder, question conventions and develop our skills and passions. Each of you has directly impacted and touched our lives. Thank you for sharing your knowledge, wisdom, and experiences with us.

Today I have the honor of representing our class; although, I must admit, I asked for help on what to say here today, and from who better, but each of you. Throughout our years here, we have supported and cheered each other to victories not only on the court, but even in the classroom, on the stage and in the recital hall. Aristotle once said, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." This quote, given to

me by Monica Rose, not only suggests a way of life for the future, but more importantly, shows our past accomplishments here at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Excellence is something this school has demanded from us upon arriving for the first day of class freshman year. Each semester our professors have handed out seemingly impossible final exams and essays, our coaches have demanded drill after drill during practice, and our conductors have selected even more complex pieces than we think we have time to learn.

However, our presence here today indicates that we have not only accepted these challenges, but surpassed them, time and time again. The quest for excellence is then, not the quest for perfection, but rather the quest for achievement and merit. “We are what we repeatedly do.” Therefore, the excellence that we have attained for eight semesters now, is a meaningful and realistic measure for our future.

Commencement is not only a time to look to the future but also, to recall our experiences here at Illinois Wesleyan University. As a light-hearted look over our past four years, Alyssa Stone wrote the following:

there once was a class of oh-six
the kids in this class, what a mix!
we worked really hard

for that diploma card

I'm really going to miss pokey stix.

Alyssa's poem reminds us that not only will we remember how hard we've worked for our successes, but also the close friendships we've formed and the unique college experiences we've shared. From the first time we ever saw our freshman year roommates, to the late night pizza parties and daily greetings by Dave at lunch and dinner, these simple social memories are testaments of the indelible mark our time here together has left with each of us.

Besides sharing our achievements and memories, we have witnessed a tumultuous time in Illinois Wesleyan University's history and in our own lives. At our first class convocation, President Minor Myers greeted us with the fundamentally simple question "What's your passion?" With these words he challenged us to not only discover but also pursue our passions proudly throughout our college career and beyond. Although we are the last class inducted by President Myers, his wisdom will impact not only our class, but also those we encounter in our future by openly living his words.

As a proud member of the class of 2006, I am pleased to be one of the first to congratulate you today. Many of you suggested that I end with the following quote, and I am honored to do so:

"Go forth and do well, but more importantly, go forth and do good."
~President Minor Myers