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Trustee Greetings

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George Vinyard '71 - Trustee Greetings

Chair, Board of Trustees

May 5, 2013

"Scientia et Sapientia + Roger Ebert"

Graduates, Parents, Family Members. . . Faculty, Staff, and Friends of Illinois Wesleyan –

I bring greetings from the trustees and alumni. On their behalf I am here to say – Congratulations, Welcome and Thank You.

We **Congratulate** each Graduate for your individual achievements. We **Welcome** you to the fellowship of Illinois Wesleyan alumni. And we **Thank You** for your contributions to the University community.

To parents, family, friends, faculty and staff – we share your pride in the accomplishments of these young men and women, and we join **them** in **Thanking You** for all you have done to help them on their way.

As an institution of higher learning, we strive to help our students develop the curiosity and intellectual and moral capacity to think deeply about the important things in life and to live in a manner that is consistent with the best values as reflected in the our motto – *Scientia et Sapientia* – generally translated, "Knowledge and Wisdom."

Knowledge implies the acquisition of true information and understanding grounded in objective observation and logical reasoning. **Wisdom** has been defined as the capacity to **exercise sound judgment** and to **act rightly** in matters of life and conduct, choosing **proper means** to achieve **good ends**. This requires personal engagement that goes far beyond the search for objective truth and reaches deeper into the realm of what it means to be part of humanity in all its historical, social, esthetic, moral and spiritual dimensions.

It is our fervent hope and confident expectation that you are going forth well prepared, both intellectually and morally, to fulfill all of the aspirations reflected in our motto.

But all of this is rather abstract. The recent passing of the great film critic Roger Ebert reminds us that the specific ways in which we perceive the world and express ourselves in it are vitally important.

In his book, *Life Itself*, Ebert wrote:

"I was born inside the movie of my life. The visuals were before me, the audio surrounded me, the plot unfolded inevitably but not necessarily. I don't remember how I got into the movie, but it continues to entertain me."

And he also said this:

"Kindness covers all of my political beliefs... if, at the end, according to our abilities, we have done something to make others a little happier, and something to make ourselves a little happier, that is about the best we can do... We must try to contribute joy to the world."

May each of you not only be the principal actor in the movie of your life, but also have the good fortune to be the writer and director, with total creative control. And may you be blessed with joyous audiences and kind critics.

And as you create your own movie and play a supporting role in the life movies of countless others, we ask that you remember and honor your University and your fellow alumni. We hope that you will always think of us as your family and this campus as your home. We invite you to return often. You will always be welcome here – and wherever Titans gather.