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## From the President's Desk

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# From the President's Desk

*A quarterly letter to our readers from IWU President Eric Jensen*



Each of these letters mark stages of the academic calendar. As I write this, in August, we are racing to finish construction projects on campus. Stevenson Hall is undergoing a major renovation. A dumpster appeared the day after classes ended, and work is scheduled to be complete by the time classes start. Nursing students will have a state-of-the-art facility, with modern simulations used to train our students. Fort Natatorium is getting a new roof and an improved air-handling system. Many other buildings on campus are getting some attention. We owe an indirect thank you to the “Brexit” vote in Great Britain, as it had the effect of making all of this work very affordable for us.

Elizabeth and I have been visiting Alumni Connections since our arrival. We sensibly enough visited warm, sunny places in the winter, and more northerly locations in the spring and summer. Those first visits will continue through the fall. It’s been great getting to meet people at these events, but we’re very much looking forward to return visits as the year progresses. As we get past that brand-new stage, we’ll have a better chance to get to know people. At Connections, as you may know firsthand, I talk

about the wonderful traditions of this place. I talk about the committed faculty and staff who today continue the mission of educating students so very successfully. And I always talk about the great future that IWU can ensure.

That future will rely in some part on the beautiful campus we’ve been working so hard on, this summer and over the years. There’s of course much more to the story. As great as they are, what makes us really special is not just the buildings and grounds, but what we do with them. Just as it was for graduates, what we do now is a reflection of the people who make up our community. On campus, it’s about students interacting with faculty, staff and each other (often in those great buildings or on the wonderful grounds). Off campus, it’s all about you — the talented and supportive IWU alumni network.

In today’s competitive higher education landscape, it’s important that students understand why liberal arts and science institutions in general, and Illinois Wesleyan in particular, are special. While many people understand the long-term advantage our graduates enjoy, one also hears fairly pointed questions about employability. So we are working hard on exciting, collaboratively engaged innovations that take our liberal arts and sciences soul into the world. Our goal is to allow each student who matriculates from Illinois Wesleyan to be able to show the world just what he or she is capable of. As an old economics professor, I can attest that there are few things more satisfying to a faculty member than that moment when a student does that. It’s an exciting time. Watch these pages for updates!

Go Titans,

