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WIP Program Reunion Lunch
Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
Palacio de la Misión, Calle Principal de Provincias, 9
Madrid, Spain
Wednesday, May 17, 2017
1:00 p.m.

Thank you, Kathy (Sideli).

I am really delighted to welcome you to this afternoon's reunion of participants in a study abroad program that is one of the oldest and most successful of its kind.

Indiana University is proud to have been a founding partner with Purdue University of what became—when the University of Wisconsin joined in 1970—the Wisconsin-Indiana-Purdue, or WIP, study abroad program in Madrid. The WIP program, in turn, was instrumental in the development of the *Reunidas* program, whose 50th anniversary we will celebrate this evening.

Indiana University also takes great pride in the fact that the WIP program has endured for more than 50 years as a study abroad program of the highest quality, and that today, students have the opportunity to live independently in Spain, among Spanish speakers, and to gain a deep appreciation and affection for Spanish culture. The distinguished alumni of the program who are here today are a major part of the program's 50-year legacy and a measure of its success.

At Indiana University, we are committed to the principle that student study and service abroad are essential components of 21st Century education meant to prepare students to live and work in a flat world. Increasing the number of IU undergraduates who study abroad has been one of my highest priorities as IU president. Today, IU's Bloomington

campus ranks in the top ten out of about 1,200 universities in the United States in terms of the number of students who study abroad, with over a third of the latest IU Bloomington graduating class having studied abroad. We have substantially increased the amount of financial aid available for this purpose and we have made fundraising for study abroad scholarships a centerpiece of our Bicentennial campaign.

I want to extend my congratulations to the students from Indiana, Purdue, Wisconsin, and Tulane universities who are completing their current semesters here. I greatly look forward to witnessing your graduation ceremony this evening.

I also look forward to hearing from Ambassador Capricia Marshall, who is with us today, and whom Rector Andradas has invited to be the keynote speaker at tonight's celebration. Ambassador Marshall is an alumna of the WIP program, a Purdue alumna, and she served as chief of protocol in the Obama White House for four years. She is an outstanding example of the impact the Complutense has had on our students' lives and careers and is a model for today's graduates of what they might achieve.

The partnership between Indiana, Wisconsin, and Purdue universities and the Complutense University of Madrid is one of the cornerstones of the long and extensive history of international partnership and engagement of all of our universities.

We are grateful to the administrators of the Complutense University of Madrid past and present, the many distinguished faculty from Spain and the United States who taught in the program, and the program's rotating directors and on-site staff—all of whom have contributed enormously to the WIP program's enduring success.

As the program continues into its sixth decade, I offer my very best wishes for many more years of success in fulfilling its mission of providing immersive, high-quality academic study abroad opportunities that foster intercultural understanding and cooperation.

Thank you very much.