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Office of International Services 75th Anniversary Celebration
Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
Presidents Hall
Friday, September 7, 2018
4:00 p.m.
Program at 4:45 p.m.

1. A GREAT TRADITION OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Thank you, Hannah.

It is a great pleasure to be here to help celebrate the 75th anniversary of Indiana University's Office of International Services, and to highlight how much we value all of our international students, past and present, as members of the IU community—and to highlight, as well, the enormously positive impact that international students have had over many, many years on IU, the city of Bloomington, the state of Indiana, and the entire nation.

Important milestones like this one also serve to underscore Indiana University's long history of global engagement. As a great research university, we believe in embracing and understanding the world in all its diversity, and not shunning it or closing it off.

We teach more languages than any other university in the United States—around 70 languages each year on average—and over the last five years, we have taught nearly 90 languages.

We have recently established four Global Gateway Offices in China, India, Germany, and Mexico, and next year we will establish our fifth in Bangkok. These offices serve as focal points for IU's activities in these important parts of the world.

We are a national leader in study abroad. Over the last 10 years we have nearly doubled the number of our students who study overseas. Around 40 percent of all undergraduate students who graduated on this campus in May studied overseas before they graduated. In fact, IU Bloomington now ranks seventh in the nation (out of about 1,200 universities) in terms of the number of students who study abroad.

And we are a national leader in the enrollment of international students. IU Bloomington ranks 19th in the country (again, out of about 1,200 universities) in terms of the number of international students enrolled.

2. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY

As you may know, Indiana University will celebrate its Bicentennial in 2020. IU was founded in 1820 at a time when the Bloomington landscape was dominated by farmland and only a few log cabins. Within a few years, the growing university attracted IU's earliest international students, who came from Canada and England in the mid 1800s.

They were soon joined by students from other parts of the world, including:

- IU's first Japanese graduate, Takekuma Okada, who earned a master's degree at IU in 1891,
- Showin Wetzen Hsu, the first Chinese graduate of Indiana University, who earned a bachelor's degree in history here in 1909, and who went on to serve as a justice on the Supreme Court of China,

and

- Josephia Amada, Grima of Mexico, who was among the first class of five graduates of the IU School of Nursing in 1917.

Today, Indiana University has a large and diverse international student body of nearly 8,000 students, whose members come from around 140 countries.

We warmly welcome all our international students and value them for the diversity in thought and culture they bring to our campuses, and for the window they provide into their own countries and cultures.

They enrich our campuses and the communities we serve.

They expose students from the United States to new ideas, helping them to reflect on the increasingly diverse compositions of our communities.

They bring the world to IU.

And when they return to their home countries—where they often become leaders in their countries in areas such as business, education, and government—they also become passionate IU alumni for the rest of their lives. In fact, I have had the great pleasure of visiting many of the international chapters of IU's Alumni Association around the world—and hearing first-hand about the IU experiences that transformed the lives of our international alumni.

3. SUPPORTING IU'S INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students who come to the United States to study often have to overcome a number of obstacles, including language barriers, navigating visa and immigration requirements, and the difficulties of adapting to a new culture and a new educational system.

For 75 years, IU's Office of International Services has provided service and support to IU's international students to help them navigate these and other challenges and to succeed and thrive.

In 1943, when IU's international enrollment was around 50 students, IU became one of the first universities in the country to have a full-time staff member dedicated to advising and supporting international students when IU's visionary 11th president, Herman B Wells, appointed Leo R. Dowling to that role.

Since that time, the Office of International Services has helped make the transition to American culture easier for thousands of international students.

The office's international admissions team visits dozens of countries around the world each year to talk with prospective students and their families. And they analyze and respond to rapidly changing global trends to ensure that IU remains a national leader in international education.

The Office of International Services has also been a national leader in technology. The office developed the software system SUNAPSIS, which allows us to better manage international admissions, orientation, and advising. More than 100 colleges and universities around the world now use SUNAPSIS. In fact, it now manages the records of one in three international students in the United States.

On behalf of Indiana University, I offer our most sincere congratulations to Associate Vice President for International Services Chris Viers, and to the staff of IU's Office of International Services, past and present, who have done so much over the years to ensure that international students succeed and thrive at Indiana University.

We look forward to celebrating, during IU's Bicentennial year, the office's move into a new International Center in the heart of the Bloomington campus, a center that will

serve as the hub of IU's longstanding international engagement mission. This building will provide services and facilities for both the orientation of overseas students coming to IU and students intending to study abroad, allowing them to interact and learn from each other. The International Center will also serve as a venue for the welcoming of members of the international delegations who regularly visit IU. It will also provide facilities for meetings and other functions by the roughly 100 formal and informal internationally-focused student organizations on the Bloomington campus. This model will be unique in the Big Ten and one of the few of its kind in the United States. It also represents a very strong continuing commitment by IU to international engagement.

And so, all of us gathered here look forward to another 75 years for IU's Office of International Services that will be as successful as the years we celebrate today.

And given that there are so many international students here today, let me say again on behalf of Indiana University, how much we welcome you at the university, and how much we appreciate all that you bring to Indiana University. We very much look forward to continuing the relationship between IU and all of you after you graduate and return to your home countries.

4. INTRODUCTION OF MAYOR JOHN HAMILTON

And now, it is my pleasure to welcome to the podium the Mayor of the City of Bloomington—a city that is celebrating its Bicentennial this year—a city that provides a safe and welcoming environment for IU's international students—and a city that has been a strong partner with IU for nearly 200 years.

Please join me in welcoming Bloomington Mayor John Hamilton.