

“Looking Towards a Brilliant Future”

University-Wide Celebration of Herbert Presidential Scholars

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie

President

Indiana University

Alumni Hall, IMU

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5:00 p.m.

(Speaking Program begins
at approximately 6:50)

1. INTRODUCTION

Over a century ago, Joseph Swain began his freshman year at Indiana University. Born in Pendleton, Indiana, in 1857, Swain ultimately graduated from IU and became the university's ninth president, the first to be born and raised in Indiana. William Lowe Bryan, born on a farm near Bloomington, earned IU degrees in ancient classics and philosophy and became IU's tenth president. Herman B Wells, born in Jamestown, Indiana, was the university's eleventh president and first chancellor. Our seventeenth president, Adam W. Herbert, was not born in Indiana but like IU's other leaders, he made great efforts on behalf of IU students throughout his tenure.

Each of these leaders envisioned IU as an institution built on strong Hoosier foundations but reaching out to a wider world of challenge and opportunity. Each saw education as the key to success in that world. And each recognized the tremendous possibility that talented Hoosiers have at this great university.

2. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS AND FAMILIES

As Presidential Scholars, you are the best and the brightest that Indiana has to offer. In your time at IU, you are living up to—and exceeding—the great potential so many people have recognized in you.

Whether you are serving as concertmasters of an IU orchestra, doing research through the IU STARS program, or officiating intramural sports, you are becoming part of the rich and vibrant fabric of Indiana University. You have received the Freshman Chemistry Achievement Award at IUPUI, served as officers in the Indian Student Association, and been invited to play tenor sax with world-renowned trumpeter Nicholas Payton. You are Kelley Scholars, Druck Scholars, and Hudson-Holland Scholars. You rank at the top of your classes and offer models for others to follow.

These are truly remarkable accomplishments.

These details merely hint at the unwavering support of your family, many of whom are here to help you celebrate your many achievements.

I remember those years not so long ago when my daughter Josephine was in your very situation as an IU student, and just next year, my son Lucien will enter the ranks of IU freshmen. I cannot tell you how proud I am of their confidence and poise. To borrow from Distinguished IU professor Scott Russell Sanders, I marvel at my children's transformation into young people, as their minds fill up with the world.¹

Even during these exciting years of change, I encourage you to remember your family's support and love as they watch with pride the great strides you are making.

¹ *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1993. Page 23.

3. TRADITIONS OF EXCELLENCE AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Indiana University, steeped in traditions of excellence, is the ideal place to make that progress. Here you have access to the great benefits of liberal education that will not only help you prepare for your career but will also help you prepare for your life. You have entered Shakespeare's theater, Plato's Academy, and Edison's laboratory as you pursue the corpus of human knowledge that Indiana University makes available.

As one Presidential Scholar aptly put it, Indiana University is "a politically-minded young adult oriented breeding ground for thought and discovery."² Another remarked after his first year, "College is much more about guiding your own education" than he had ever expected.

This is true on every campus of Indiana University.

4. LOOKING HOMEWARD AND STAYING PUT

Of course, as Presidential Scholars, you have the opportunity and incentive to venture beyond the boundaries of your campus and expand your education on a global scale.

The talent, drive, and thirst for knowledge that define Hoosier determination and achievement are precisely the characteristics that will lead you towards success in the global future.

One Presidential Scholar who recently studied in Florence, explained some of the more intangible aspects of her experience. She wrote, "Each trial I encountered, whether it be trying to find my hotel in Paris in the middle of the night or rebooking a cancelled flight just seven hours before I was supposed to leave for home, taught me how amazingly

² "a politically-minded . . . young adult oriented breeding ground for thought and discovery" (Solon)

capable I am, especially in the face of adversity, and I would not change a single thing about my experience.”

The value of an IU education cannot be contained within one classroom, one state, or one continent.

It spans the globe.

5. CREATING THE FUTURE

Some people might peer into this great hall this evening and see it is filled with IU students and their families. When I look at all of you, I see that and more. I see hope and aspiration. I see optimism and possibility. Most important, I see the shining light of our brilliant future.

Best of luck to you all.

Thank you very much.

6. PRESENTATION OF HERBERT MEDALLION

Trustee Talbot and President Herbert, would you please join me on stage?

On behalf of Indiana University, I am pleased to recognize President Herbert's tremendous efforts in establishing the award formerly known as the Hoosier Presidential Scholarship. In 2007, the Board of Trustees renamed the award the Herbert Presidential Scholarship to honor President Herbert's great efforts.

To mark this occasion tonight, it is my pleasure to present Dr. Herbert with the first minted Herbert Presidential Medallion.

Would you please join me in applauding his achievements, commending his work, and expressing our appreciation for his dedication to the students of Indiana University?