

**COMMENCEMENT REMARKS
DR. TIM COLLINS**

DECEMBER 15, 2019

WELCOME CAV NATION!

WE ARE GATHERED TODAY TO REFLECT UPON COUNTLESS HOURS OF STUDY, SEEMINGLY HUNDREDS OF TESTS TAKEN, HOURS AND HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR OTHERS, AND INTENSE INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC PREPARATION AND COMPETITION ... ALL LEADING TO THE COMPLETION OF A WALSH EXPERIENCE FOR AMERICA'S MOST RECENT HIGHER EDUCATION GRADUATES.

CONGRATULATIONS! ... TO EACH NEWLY-MINTED GRADUATE, TO THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED YOU ALONG THE WAY, AND TO THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF THIS DISTINCTIVE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY ON THE ROAD TO NATIONAL PROMINENCE!

ALL Y'ALL ROCK!

OUR 225 GRADUATES, ARE A DIVERSE GROUP OF STUDENTS REFLECTIVE OF GOD'S PLAN AND THE WORLD HE CREATED AROUND US.

SOME OF YOU HAVE COME TO US FROM AS NEAR AS NORTH CANTON AND OTHERS FROM AS FAR AWAY AS UGANDA AND BRAZIL. YOU REPRESENT 3 COUNTRIES AND 10 STATES, AND 137 OF YOU LIVED ON CAMPUS. YOU ARE EARNING DEGREES IN 28 MAJORS. FIVE OF YOU ARE STUDENT ATHLETES.

TWO OF THE INDIVIDUALS EARNING THEIR DEGREES TODAY ARE CHILDREN OF EMPLOYEES, AND 25 OF YOU ARE THE CHILDREN OF OUR ALUMNI, CONTINUING THE TRADITIONS OF WALSH UNIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR FAMILIES AS LEGACY GRADUATES.

OUR NEW GRADUATES HAVE MADE US ALL VERY PROUD IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN THE COMMUNITY. YOUR AVERAGE GPA IS 3.62 AND YOU PERFORMED THOUSANDS OF HOURS OF SERVICE THIS PAST YEAR. WHEN I LOOK OUT ON YOU TODAY, I SEE IN OUR NEWEST CLASS OF WALSH UNIVERSITY ALUMNI A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR OUR NATION.

YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY AND HAVE EARNED – EARNED! – YOUR DEGREES.

WHILE YOU ARE EXCITED FOR WHAT TOMORROW MAY BRING, YOU MAY ALSO BE SITTING THERE PONDERING, “AM I READY TO FULFILL MY LIFE’S PURPOSE? AM I READY TO SERVE? AM I READY TO LEAD OTHERS? AM I READY TO GO FORTH INTO THE WORLD TO TAKE MY PLACE? ... IN SHORT ... AM I READY?”

THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION ... FROM A LOUD... EXUBERANT... PROUD CAV NATION... IS “YES,” ... YOUR WALSH UNIVERSITY EDUCATION HAS BEEN “ALL ABOUT” THIS VERY MOMENT IN YOUR LIFE: MAKING YOU READY.

WE HAVE TAUGHT YOU AN APPROACH TO OUR EDUCATION THAT IS DIFFERENT THAN WHAT A STATE SCHOOL PROVIDES ... THAT FAITH AND REASON BOTH WILL LEAD YOU TO THE TRUTH ... THAT THERE IS AN OBJECTIVE REALITY ... AND THAT YOU HAVE A REASON TO BE ON EARTH.

WE HAVE ALSO TAUGHT YOU – IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM – HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY ... DEAL WITH COMPLEXITY AND AMBIGUITY ... DEVELOP AND EVALUATE OPTIONS ... AND THAT CHOICES THAT RECOGNIZE THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON MATTER, AS DOES YOUR INDIVIDUAL HONOR AND INTEGRITY.

THESE ARE LESSONS AND SKILLS THAT WILL SERVE YOU WELL ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE.

NOW, I AM GOING PAUSE TO ASK YOU A QUESTION AND WOULD LIKE YOU TO RESPOND ... RESPOND LOUD ENOUGH THAT THE FAMILIES OF OUR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – ALL THE WAY TO BRAZIL AND UGANDA – CAN HEAR US...

HERE IS THE QUESTION FOR OUR GRADUATES THAT REQUIRES A SIMPLE YES OR NO: ARE ... YOU ... READY?

YOUR INTERNSHIPS, GLOBAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES, SERVICE-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, AND ADVANCED STUDIES DID MORE THAN PREPARE YOU FOR THAT FIRST JOB OR CAREER ... THEY WERE DESIGNED TO ASSIST YOU IN DISCOVERING YOUR LIFE’S PURPOSE AND TO FIND PERSONAL MEANING IN THE WAYS YOU BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS.

ARE... YOU... READY?

IN OUR RESIDENCE HALLS, CLASSROOMS, ON OUR ATHLETIC FIELDS AND CAMPUS GATHERING SPACES ... YOU DID MORE THAN ENCOUNTER OTHERS.

YOU LEARNED THE LESSONS OF COMMUNITY AND SPORTSMANSHIP AND HONOR AND INTEGRITY. YOU LEARNED HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR AND A GOOD FRIEND, AND YOU LEARNED WHAT IT IS TO BE “MY BROTHER’S KEEPER.”

YOU LEARNED THAT YOU CAN BE SUCCESSFUL WITH SOMETHING ... AND NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL AS SOMEBODY.

ARE... YOU... READY?

YOUR TIME AND EXPERIENCES IN THIS CATHOLIC ENVIRONMENT OFFERED YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS FAITH AND VALUES IN ACTION – FROM THE STAFF, FACULTY, OTHER STUDENTS, AND EACH OTHER.

YOU LEARNED NOT ONLY HOW TO BE A LEADER IN SERVICE TO OTHERS ... YOU BECAME A LEADER IN SERVICE TO OTHERS.

ARE... YOU... READY?

THE TIME YOU HAVE SPENT HERE ON OUR CAMPUS IS PRECIOUS TO US. WE ARE HONORED YOU CHOSE WALSH UNIVERSITY FOR YOUR HIGHER EDUCATION, AND AS YOU EMBARK ON YOUR FUTURE, WHEREVER THAT MAY LEAD YOU, WE KNOW – AND YOU KNOW – YOU ARE READY.

59 YEARS AGO, SEVEN BROTHERS OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION STOOD ON THIS VERY GROUND AND IMAGINED A CATHOLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTED TO STUDENTS WHO WOULD WORK AND LEARN TOGETHER SO AS TO EVENTUALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD.

THEIR CATHOLIC FAITH GUIDED THEM ... AND IT CONTINUES TO GUIDE OUR INSTITUTION TODAY.

WE PAUSE TO THANK THE BROTHERS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED AND BLESSED US FOR NEARLY SIX DECADES.

I HAVE JUST BEGUN MY FRESHMAN YEAR AT WALSH UNIVERSITY AND, AS I CONCLUDE MY FIRST SEMESTER, YOUR LAST SEMESTER IS ALSO COMING TO A CLOSE. BUT LET THIS NOT BE THE END TO YOUR EDUCATION. I ENCOURAGE YOU ... NO, I CHALLENGE YOU ... TO CONTINUE YOUR LEARNING ... EVERY DAY ... FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIVES.

SUCCESS IS NEVER FINAL.

TODAY IS NOT THE END ... BUT THE MARK OF AN OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN ANEW.

I URGE YOU TO EMBRACE OPPORTUNITIES AS YOU TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD WITH CONFIDENCE, WITH GRACE, WITH HUMILITY ... ALWAYS MEETING OTHERS WITH CHARITY AND KINDNESS – SPEAKING THAT LANGUAGE THAT THE DEAF CAN HEAR AND THE BLIND CAN SEE.

AS YOU STEP OUT OF THIS WALSH EXPERIENCE ... THE MOMENT HAS ARRIVED WHEN YOU MUST NOW STEP UP TO A LIFE OF SERVING OTHERS.

IT HAS BEEN OUR PRIVILEGE TO HAVE BEEN PART OF YOUR JOURNEY, AND WALSH UNIVERSITY LOOKS FORWARD TO ACCOMPANYING YOU FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

ARE YOU READY? ABSOLUTELY ... YOU ARE READY!

AND WE PLACE INTO THE HANDS OF THE FIRST LADY OF WALSH UNIVERSITY – OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP – OUR PRAYERS FOR HER INTERSESSIONS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUCCESS.

GOD BLESS YOU, WALSH UNIVERSITY, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.