

FRANKLIN COLLEGE

2016 President's Circle Dinner

Remarks of

Thomas J. Minar, Ph.D., President

April 7, 2016

Thank you for that wonderful introduction, Ken, and thank you particularly for retiring your *Franklin* column prior to my presidency!

Tonight is about stewardship, and I want first to thank so many of you for the way you have stewarded Frank's and my entrance to this community. Ken Inskeep is a remarkable example of that; Ken, you have given me notable introductions to your colleagues and friends in Indiana, to a slice of Franklin College history or two, and to the wonderful and liberating welcome that is available here. Thank you again.

The board of trustees, chair -- Christi, vice chairs, search committee chair and vice chair, chair of the transition committee and chair of the inauguration committee have all made remarkable differences and your support has been very important to me. Thank you. Christi, your leadership is a great beacon for the community through these transitions. Thank you.

Now -- I sincerely want to thank each of you for joining our "Celebration of Philanthropy." Tonight is truly about *you* -- and your impact on Franklin College. Your generosity -- your gifts -- are the life force of our college. Thank you for what you make possible.

Today's higher education sector, both public and private, is challenged to meet the demands of students with very different expectations, needs and skills than in previous generations. Moreover, we must do so in a time of profound economic inequality.

Philanthropy and those with giving spirit are how we bridge the gaps. Many of us intimately involved in higher education today understand that this sector wouldn't even exist without private support. This support is part of what makes this form of higher education truly American.

Your gifts to the Franklin Fund, your planned and memorial gifts, your gifts for special initiatives such as the renovation and expansion of the Barnes Hall science facility,

and your scholarship funds help us address the college's immediate priorities. They also provide an opportunity to focus on our future needs and our plans to meet the growing needs of the region.

In short, philanthropy is what sustains and advances our institution.

As philanthropists, you understand the value of a Franklin College liberal arts and sciences education. You realize our personal and practical liberal arts and sciences education facilitates retraining throughout students' entire lives.

You want what's best for the future of the community, for Franklin College and our students – and so do I.

That's why Franklin College is embracing new dimensions, adapting to meet the times and to keep liberal arts and sciences education significant because we know our graduates solve problems. We are preparing to roll out what is perhaps the most comprehensive strategic plan in our history. We are evolving to serve our students and to meet the needs of our economy.

Our trustees, students, alumni, faculty, staff and community friends have invested a great deal of time into collaborating and formulating the college's strategic planning goals in recent months. We have developed goals that provide a forward-thinking, ambitious and truly strategic framework for Franklin College's future, while building on the strengths we all value. I am pleased to give you a glimpse of the goals on which we will build the future of the college, shaping the next ten or twenty years of this institution's growth and sustenance.

We excel at engaged learning. We have prime examples from years of Winter Term experiences that our alumni tell us impact them for a lifetime. We have extended those engaged learning experiences to other areas of our curriculum – TheStatehouseFile.com and our revised science curriculum focusing on undergraduate research and experiential learning are also models. We recognize that we need to build upon this engaged learning strength to deliver a bold, nationally-recognized, innovative curriculum in the liberal arts and sciences through immersive, involved, experiential learning.

We must holistically prepare for a diverse Franklin College community to contribute actively to our global society. In its broadest of terms, our liberal arts and sciences education provides an overview of the arts, humanities, social sciences, mathematics and natural sciences.

Derived from the Latin, "artes liberales" refers to the general skills a "free" person needs to contribute meaningfully to society.

In today's terms, this translates into lifelong, self-motivated learners who can flourish in and transform the world.

The *diverse* set of skills and knowledge afforded to our students is the gold standard by which we should serve a more diverse population. While the changes may seem slower and less noticeable in our immediate surroundings, the fact that demographics are shifting across our region and the nation – and that the rate of change is accelerating – is undeniable. We will increasingly serve an audience that is more varied and must educate our graduates to thrive in a social and professional environment that is richly diverse. We must all become better equipped to confront the challenges that come with diversity and to harness its power, and our students must understand and appreciate difference. To do this effectively we must appreciate and reflect racial, religious, economic, gender and sexual diversity – indeed the full range of human difference. This community must be proactively inclusive of all, at all levels, in all activities, at all times. Diversity of experiences, perspectives and ideas fuels us as individuals and as an institution.

You've most likely heard me say that Franklin College is the best kept secret in higher education. We must communicate the connection and the relevance of the college to our local, regional, national and global communities. Strengthening our external outreach is of paramount importance.

Especially relevant to you tonight – we will be intentional about stewarding resources, thereby enhancing institutional capacity for innovation and sustainability. This involves a call to action for all of our alumni and friends. You are all ambassadors, our best spokespeople. We need you to talk about the college wherever you go, wherever you are; engage in our social media platforms; advocate to prospective students; come home to campus, serve on a career panel, speak to a class, host interns. Please continue to be generous.

Your private education was built by philanthropists. Engagement of our alumni and friends profoundly impacts student success, recruitment and retention, national rankings and college reputation, and grant and charitable opportunities.

We are stewards of our college – together we must sustain and elevate our finances, our people and our environment.

We will meet these goals with your help. You've demonstrated your loyalty and love for this college by being here tonight. Now please allow me to give you a glimpse of highlights facilitated by your philanthropy:

- A Franklin College-IU Robert H. McKinney School of Law partnership is enabling Franklin students and alumni to receive, at a minimum, a half-tuition scholarship to the law school. The Franklin Law Scholarship provides a guaranteed externship and research assistantship to each recipient. Inaugural scholarship recipients were class of 2015 graduates Tess Anglin and Hayley Kemp.
- Trustee John Talley, alumna Audra Ferguson-Allen, dean David Brailow and professor Alli Fetter-Harrott facilitated the college's partnership with the McKinney School of Law and my friend Dean Andy Klein.

Dr. Fetter-Harrott serves as the Elmon and Lucile Williams Chair in Law and Public Service and the Mock Trial team adviser. The Williams Chair is an important funding mechanism for experiential learning.

- Our efforts to build upon an already strong science program were reenergized over the summer with a grant from the Nicholas H. Noyes Jr. Memorial Foundation. The grant will help fund future renovation and expansion of Barnes Science Hall.
- Our science program, its faculty and its students are drawing the attention of firms ranging from Eli Lilly and Company to a new startup, B2S Labs, slated to open this summer off the Courthouse Square, a few blocks from campus. These firms want to collaborate with our college. They seek our students as interns and our graduates for jobs. The science center project is indeed a priority.
- A significant gift directed to student professional development efforts recently came from the estate of Clifford and Paula Dietz. Their foresight in making a final, impactful gift is remarkable, and we are so grateful for the launch of the Clifford and Paula Dietz Professional Development Lecture Series. Cliff and Paula's philanthropy will bring nationally renowned individuals to campus.
- A hallmark project debuting this fall coincides with the Indiana Bicentennial and the endorsement of Franklin College as a legacy project contributor. The college will be mentioned in statewide publicity materials, inviting the public to the September 15 opening of the Governor Roger D. Branigin Archives in the B.F. Hamilton Library.

Governor Branigin was a 1923 Franklin College graduate and Indiana's 42nd governor, serving from 1965-69. His official papers, rare books and personal memorabilia will be on permanent display. We will host a lecture by Dr. James H. Madison, Indiana University historian, who will share Branigin's significance in Indiana history and politics. We thank alumni John Duffey and Teresa (Hagee) Duffey for their generosity in making this possible.

- Also this fall, donor generosity is making it possible for Franklin College to host an exhibit from The Remnant Trust. Students will be able to see and hold manuscripts, first edition and early works – some dating to 2500 BC – dealing with the topics of individual liberty and human dignity. Providing our students with this unique opportunity to learn about the great thought leaders of the past will be an excellent supplement to the liberal arts experience.
- I'm pleased to share that our Professional Partners Advisory Council continues in its second year. Recognized leaders in their fields, these partners are paired with rising juniors to assist with career coaching, network opportunities and professional leadership. Pro Partners also agree to join our President's Circle and to advocate for the college with prospective students and in their communities.

Undoubtedly you know that 95 percent of our students receive some form of financial aid. These next examples of philanthropy illustrate how your gifts enrich students' lives and studies.

- Over the Winter Term, a scholarship from an anonymous donor covered travel expenses for sophomore Kelsey Baker. Her internship at the Sidney Lanier Center in Gainesville, Florida, involved international music outreach programs and music education for students with disabilities. Kelsey came back with the clear goal of becoming a music therapist after she saw what an impact she can make.
- Senior Spencer Wesche has been involved in a research project since freshman year with classmate Elizabeth (Hendershot) Barker and Dr. Alice Heikens. At the college's biological field station, Hougham Woods, the trio discovered and collected Beechdrops, a plant previously undocumented in Johnson County. They also have presented the findings at state and regional science conferences, and earned a first place with their original research at a national conference. They will wrap up the project with a journal article.

- In March, junior Andi TenBarge and freshman Shelby Mullis traveled to Michigan to cover a presidential debate and the subsequent primaries in that state. The women filed stories that appeared first on our own TheStateHouseFile.com, and then were distributed to media partners around Indiana. TheStatehouseFile.com also sent teams of student reporters to Illinois and Ohio for coverage of their primaries.
- Senior Ryan Baker is building a formidable *curriculum vitae*. Ryan has completed two internships in Washington, D.C., with Senator Joe Donnelly's office and the Lugar Center. On top of that, he's been accepted into some of the nation's top law schools, including the universities of Michigan and Pennsylvania; and Duke, Cornell, New York and Northwestern universities. Ryan, let me talk with you about where to go to law school. Ryan received the Franklin College Discovery Scholarship and twice received the Richard Vandivier Endowed Scholarship in Public Service.
- Senior Chemistry major Sam Ferran discovered his career path last summer during a six-week research experience, a fellowship with San Jose State University's Summer School in Nuclear Chemistry, funded partially by the Department of Energy. A glimpse into the life of a nuclear chemist was all it took to inspire a change of career paths. Initially focused on becoming a pharmacist, Sam's energies are now directed to applying to graduate schools and pursuing a career in radiopharmaceutical production.

These are *just a few* of the examples of the students who benefit every day in numerous ways from your philanthropy. I know you are committed to staying closely informed and in touch with our students and their work. I am deeply honored and grateful that my inauguration could coincide with tonight's celebration of philanthropy – and I sincerely hope you can join us for tomorrow's symposium and Saturday's investiture.

If you leave here with only one take-away this evening, please let it be this: From philanthropy, new opportunities emerge.

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Philanthropy, fueled by your desire to see Franklin College even stronger in the future, will give momentum to the strategic plan.

Philanthropy will drive the college's growth in academic excellence, in services and programs for students, in faculty recruitment and retention, and in state-of-the-art facilities, all of which will enable a bright future.

We are embarking on a new day for higher education, and a new world for Franklin College. We are now Thinking Forward, and it is our time to Embrace New Dimensions.

Please join me, and thank you.

