

## Alumni Message

College of Fine Arts and Communications

April 25, 2014

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On behalf of the College of Fine Arts and Communications Alumni Board I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each of you as we celebrate your graduation today. You may not remember the details of the day, but you will always remember how you felt. I know I do...

Just over 30 years ago, I was on this same stage where you are, contemplating my future. At that time I never imagined that later in my life I would come back to BYU and become engaged in the mission of the College as an alumni mentor. So today I am asking you to imagine it now. When you arrived at BYU, it was the beginning of many things, but perhaps one that you hadn't considered was that you were preparing to become an alumnus of this grand institution and this great college. Your network began on the first day. Throughout your career here you have formed partnerships with classmates, faculty and perhaps even a few alumni, who like me have come back to visit and offer guidance from life lessons or participate collaboratively on projects with students and faculty. I hope that network, those partnerships will continue throughout your life.

I want you to see a time when your life experiences - your story - will be a benefit to a future student. Whether you have been gone a year or 5 or 10 or 30— your experiences will be of value to those who come after you here at BYU. You will be sent an email with a variety of ways to stay connected to the college, to each other as alumni and to tell your story. I encourage you to contribute and to add to it as your life evolves. Just as we have witnessed today's achievement, we want to be witnesses of your accomplishments in all aspects of your life. – You are family and we want to hear from you often.

I have been fortunate in my career in professional theatre and now in worldwide media. I have received good reviews and then there are the reviews I would just prefer to forget. I have been on top of the world and at times the world has been on top of me, but through all of my experiences here at BYU and beyond I have learned something about myself and my capacity to achieve, to survive and even thrive. That perspective began here and informs me each and every day – perhaps this is how the spirit of the Y stays with me. How will the spirit of the Y stay with you? As you contemplate today “what's next” one thing you can be certain of at a time of uncertainty is that we want to know your story and we want to have the opportunity to cheer for you all along the way.

Who you are becoming has been shaped by your BYU experiences and you now join with over 21000 other College of Fine Arts and Communication graduates. You are the best of the best –

poised to make a difference in the world. To change lives as your life has been changed for having been here. We want you to go forth and serve and we want you to include BYU and this college among those whom you serve. We are forever connected to BYU and each other as alumni. We needed BYU when we started. Now BYU welcomes and needs you.

My most meaningful experiences throughout my career have been each opportunity I have had to come back to BYU and become engaged with the students, faculty and staff. I have been renewed and inspired and today is no exception. My prayer today is that you will each take the opportunity to have similar meaningful experiences and don't wait. Come back often to be renewed, inspired and to inspire others.

May the Lord bless you in all of your future endeavors and as the hymn says "God be with you till we meet again and may I add again and again.

Once more congratulations to you all. This is a time to celebrate and throughout your life, with shoulders squared and head held high, you can declare "I am a graduate of Brigham Young University's College of Fine Arts and Communications - it is the beginning of the story - what's next? It is your turn to fill in the rest.

To quote President Dieter F. Uchtdorf - "Your destiny is a glorious one! Stand tall and walk in the light of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ! You are stronger than you realize. You are more capable than you can imagine. You can do it now!"

And from President Thomas S. Monson "Be of good cheer. The future is as bright as your faith."

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen