

Thank you, President Rose, honored guests, friends of the college. Thank you to the Class of 2019.

It is my distinct privilege to dedicate this year's senior class gift. The Class of 2019 has chosen to bestow a scholarship to a deserving member of the incoming Class of 2023. Each of us has valued the opportunity to engage with the bright minds from manifold backgrounds, stories, and walks of life that embody the promises of "The Offer of the College." Bowdoin's steadfast commitment to improving this place's accessibility inspires our gift. With participation from many members of our class, the generous many are excited to share the immeasurable opportunity that this school offers. An opportunity filled with joy, frustration, kind people, learning, challenges, hope, late nights in HL, early mornings in class, and maybe a dose of intellectual fearlessness.

We are giving to this future Polar Bear an opportunity that includes many lessons, those that come from in and out of the classroom. Today, after we have all walked the same stage and we all hold the same diploma, perhaps the lessons from out of the classroom become more pertinent. These lessons are plenty. Small lessons in kindness, grand lessons in community and place.

I would argue that Bowdoin's most valuable lesson, though, is the lesson of balance. Bowdoin is a place defined by balance. As students we balance our schoolwork and our job applications, our friends and our clubs, our performances and our practices, our ecstatic highs and our painful lows. Throughout our journey we have sought a happy balance, one that challenges us and one that rewards us. While we have not always succeeded in finding balance—maybe in finals, in rejection letters, in dark days, or in trees that refuse to bud—but we have always sought it.

The mosaic of the Bowdoin experience is unique to each of us. There are shared tiles in each that represent the memories and moments that compose our brief and fleeting four years, and I believe one of them is balance.

While we have crafted our own mosaics, one person among us has included a few extra balance tiles in hers. She did so in a way unlike her 471 classmates.

I'm honored and humbled to dedicate the Class of 2019 Scholarship Fund to Lisa Yankura Bouffard. Eighteen years ago, Lisa sat down in her first class at Bowdoin: "Introduction to Poetry." Last week, she wrapped up her thirty-second course at the College: the religion department's "Christianity." What did Lisa balance? It's hard to fit it all in. Working full time in Bowdoin's dining services, Lisa squeezed one course a semester under her belt, all the while shepherding her own children off to and through college. Today, Lisa graduates alongside her classmates with a double major in religion and gender and women's studies.

Without a doubt, Lisa has included balance in her mosaic, with no shortage of tiles in humility, positivity, and humor. It is difficult to imagine someone who embodies the ideals of Bowdoin's lessons better than Lisa.

As we finally add the Bowdoin tile to our life's mosaic, remember the importance that Bowdoin's lessons played in its crafting. At Bowdoin we have all strived to find the perfect balance—an impossible combination of passions and necessities. With this we have all struggled. Considering that, I would like to leave you all with the proverbial words of John Steinbeck: "And now that you don't have to be perfect, you can be good."

Thank you. And congratulations to the Class of 2019!