

Wayne Harding – Finding Sense in the Nonsense

President Rose, Members of The College, and Guests,

Thank you all for the love and support that was needed to get us to this momentous day. And to the Class of 2021 – congratulations are in order! It is exciting that we could make it to this moment, and we should all be proud.

I am honored to have the privilege of presenting the 2021 Senior Class Gift. In a year and a half that brought so much disruption and turmoil to the pursuit of education, I cannot think of a more rewarding and fitting contribution to our collective class legacy than bestowing this scholarship upon an incoming member of the Class of 2025. As I look out and see the faces of my peers, I see the products of (final graduates numbers) distinct Bowdoin experiences out of all the endless possibilities that have come before and have yet to come; With this scholarship, someone new will have the opportunity to write the story of yet another unique Bowdoin experience, and that should be cause for excitement.

At the beginning of our Bowdoin careers, we are given the building blocks of a Bowdoin education; floormates and suitemates, “The Offer of the College” and the Common Good, and a quaint Coastal Maine campus where all the magic happens. Oh, and classes; can’t forget about the classes. Bowdoin gives its students the same starting ingredients, and that makes it all the more awe-inspiring to see the final products that we all arrive at. Whether it’s finding yourself on the cutting-edge of experimental research or discovering and exploring a previously-unknown passion or talent, students are continuously growing and changing as we navigate the years of our Grand Bowdoin Adventure, leaving those building blocks far in the rearview mirror.

As we stare out into the future, we look forward and see so many different paths, so many different options, but even before figuring out how we are going to conquer the new challenges ahead, we cannot forget where it started. It started with the fateful day you received your

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Bowdoin acceptance letter, with the conversations with family how to navigate the uncertainty and excitement of the college experience ahead, with figuring out when and how you'll make it to the first day of orientation. It may be easy to forget, but there is plenty to think about at that moment in time, especially in the year 2021; With this scholarship, I am grateful that we can at least take the question of whether or not Bowdoin is feasible off the table for a member of the class of 2025.

Thus, with this class gift, we hope to be paving the way for someone to get those Bowdoin building blocks, to make those discoveries about themselves and the world, to create yet another new Bowdoin experience. To the recipient of this gift, I may not know you now, but I leave you with this: go out and chart a Bowdoin journey; I'll be ready and waiting to hear your story.

Thank you, and, once more, congratulations to the class of 2021.