

MATRICULATION PLEDGE REMARKS
PRESIDENT REISBERG

GOOD AFTERNOON, EVERYONE.

FIRST, I WANT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF AND WELCOME YOU HERE TO HARTWICK. AS KAREN SAID, MY NAME IS DARREN REISBERG. I USE HE/HIM PRONOUNS. I'M 47 YEARS OLD. I GREW UP IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY, LESS THAN 3 HOUR FROM HERE. I WENT TO A PUBLIC SCHOOL, PLAYED VARSITY SOCCER AND TENNIS, AND WAS A HUGE FAN OF THE YANKEES AND GIANTS. I WENT TO DUKE UNIVERSITY FOR COLLEGE AND LOVE MY DUKE BLUE DEVILS, AND THEN WENT TO YALE LAW SCHOOL. AFTER LAW SCHOOL I MOVED OUT TO CHICAGO WHERE I SPENT 22 YEARS. FOR MANY OF THOSE YEARS I WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. I ALSO, DURING THOSE YEARS, MET MY HUSBAND, JOHN. WE HAVE THREE DOGS – AND ABOUT TO GET ANOTHER ONE – AND A TORTOISE. SERIOUSLY.

THEN, LATE LAST YEAR, I WAS APPROACHED ABOUT AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVIEW FOR THE PRESIDENCY AT THIS SPECIAL AND AMAZING INSTITUTION. I CAME TO CAMPUS, MET WITH STUDENTS, WITH PROFESSORS, WITH THE STAFF, AND FELL IN LOVE. FORTUNATELY FOR ME, I WAS OFFERED THE JOB. AND, AS OF AUGUST 1, HERE I AM.

WHICH MEANS, JUST LIKE YOU ALL, I'M KIND OF A NEW STUDENT TOO! AND WE'RE GOING TO GROW UP HERE TOGETHER!

SO YOU ARE PROBABLY WONDERING WHAT IN THE WORLD THIS MATRICULATION CEREMONY IS. WELL, IT'S KIND OF A BIG DEAL. HARTWICK IS HAVING ITS 225TH BIRTHDAY THIS YEAR. IT IS ONE OF THE OLDEST COLLEGES IN THE COUNTRY, WHICH I IS REALLY SPECIAL. AND OVER THOSE YEARS, HARTWICK HAS ESTABLISHED TRADITIONS THAT

ALL OF THOSE STUDENTS AND NOW ALUMNI SHARE.

ONE OF THOSE TRADITIONS IS THAT, DURING THEIR FIRST WEEK ON CAMPUS, EVERY NEW STUDENT SIGNS THEIR NAME INTO THIS MATRICULATION BOOK. IN FACT, YOU'LL SEE ON THE STAND ONE OF THE MATRICULATION BOOKS FROM WAY BACK WHEN THAT WE'VE PULLED FROM THE COLLEGE ARCHIVES. YOU'LL BE SIGNING YOUR NAMES TODAY IN OUR MOST RECENT BOOK, WHICH GOES BACK TO THE STUDENTS WHO CAME HERE IN 2017.

BUT, YOU NEED TO BE AWARE THAT SIGNING YOUR NAME IN THE BOOK MEANS SOMETHING. BY SIGNING, YOU'RE COMMITTING YOURSELF TO THE WORDS OF THE MATRICULATION PLEDGE. THAT YOU, AS A HARTWICK STUDENT WILL CONDUCT YOURSELF WITH HONOR AND BE AN ACTIVE, ENGAGED MEMBER OF THE HARTWICK COMMUNITY – BECAUSE YOUR ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT, AND

THE PERSPECTIVE WILL ADD TO THE CULTURE AND MAKE IT THAT MUCH MORE VIBRANT. YOU ARE COMMITTING TO BE THE CLASSMATE OR TEAMMATE THAT OTHERS CAN DEPEND ON AND LEARN FROM. AND YOUR CLASSMATES AND TEAMMATES ARE COMMITTING TO THE SAME SO YOU CAN DEPEND ON AND LEARN FROM THEM.

LIKE EVERYONE WHO HAS SIGNED BEFORE YOU, YOU ARE SECURING YOUR PLACE IN THE 225-YEAR HISTORY OF HARTWICK. IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY – YOUR CLASSMATES AND THIS COLLEGE WILL BECOME PART OF YOUR STORY. YOU WILL MEET LIFELONG FRIENDS, YOU WILL HAVE HUGE WINS, LIFE-CHANGING MOMENTS, AND MAKE MEMORIES THAT WILL STAY WITH YOU FOREVER. YOU ARE NOW PART OF OUR HISTORY.

AND SINCE I'M ASKING YOU TO MAKE A PLEDGE, I AM MAKING MY OWN PLEDGE AS WELL. MY PLEDGE IS THAT I AM GOING TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO MAKE SURE THAT

YOU FEEL WELCOME HERE. THAT YOU FEEL LIKE YOU BELONG. THAT YOU ARE GIVEN THE TOOLS TO PURSUE YOUR OWN PATH, YOUR “FLIGHTPATH”, WITH EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, GROW, AND CAREERS TO EXPLORE. AND WHEN TIMES CAN BE TOUGH, AND THE CHALLENGES SEEM OVERWHELMING, KNOW THAT YOU HAVE A COMMUNITY HERE TO SUPPORT YOU – YOUR SUCCESS COACH, PROFESSORS AND FACULTY ADVISORS, ATHLETIC COACHES, WELLNESS TEAM, STAFF, AND SO MANY OTHERS ARE HERE FOR YOU. AND VERY IMPORTANTLY, HAVE FUN. ENJOY THIS JOURNEY, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL HARTWICK HAS TO OFFER, GET INVOLVED, MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

YOU HAVE HEARD ME MENTION TRADITION – AND ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT TRADITIONS, I THINK, HERE AT HARTWICK, IS THAT AT GRADUATION – WHICH WE CALL COMMENCEMENT – I HAVE THE HONOR OF RINGING THIS

BELL TO CELEBRATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENT AND TO MAKE SURE THE WORLD KNOWS YOUR COMING TO GET IT. I PLEDGE TO DO ALL I CAN TO MAKE SURE EVERY ONE OF YOU HEARS THIS BELL RING. I HAVE AN AMAZING TEAM THAT WILL HELP ME HONOR THIS PLEDGE, BUT IF YOU SEE THAT WE ARE NOT KEEPING THIS PLEDGE, I WANT YOU TO LET ME KNOW.

SO, IN JUST A BIT, I'LL HAVE EACH ONE OF YOU COME UP AND WRITE YOUR NAME IN THIS BOOK. THE REST OF YOUR CLASSMATES HAVE DONE OR WILL BE DOING THE SAME THROUGHOUT TODAY. AND THE SIGNING OF THE LAST NAME WILL SIGNIFY A MOMENT – THAT YOU ARE ALL MEMBERS OF THE HARTWICK COMMUNITY.

ON THURSDAY WE WILL CELEBRATE ANOTHER TRADITION, OPENING CONVOCATION WITH BAGPIPES AND ALL. AT OPENING CONVOCATION, I WILL BE RECIEVING THE

MATRICULATION BOOK WITH ALL OF YOUR SIGNATURES AND I WILL KEEP THE BOOK IN MY OFFICE. AND, JUST BEFORE YOU GRADUATE, WE'LL HAVE DINNER TOGETHER AND I'LL BRING THIS BOOK FOR YOU SEE. IT'S A MOMENT THAT I KNOW WILL MAKE EACH OF YOU – AND ME—VERY PROUD.

BUT BEFORE YOU SIGN, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR YOU TO HEAR, NOT JUST FROM THE PRESIDENT, BUT FROM A STUDENT-ATHLETE, ABOUT WHAT SIGNING THE MATRICULATION BOOK HAS MEANT FOR THEM. SO, I'M GOING TO ASK SYDNEY GAGNON/JULIAN KOVACS, CLASS OF 2023 TO COME UP HERE AND, JUST FOR FUN, I'M GOING TO SHOW YOU WHERE SYDNEY/JULIAN SIGNED THIS VERY BOOK BACK IN AUGUST 2019.