Good Morning.

The Campus Communication Committee would like to thank Ann Caldwell and the Office of Disability Concerns for a very informative discussion hour on disability services offered at Illinois State University. Such services reaffirm the university’s commitment to being inclusive.

Founders’ Day typically gives us an opportunity to reflect on our heritage, celebrate our successes and look to our future. As such, we would like to congratulate Professor John Freed for the publication of his book on Illinois State University’s history. This is a precious resource for all of us and generations to come. We encourage everyone to order a copy.

While the nation and other institutions face some difficult times, Illinois State University continues to thrive. This is the direct result of the careful guidance of our leadership and the hard work and engagement of our students, faculty and staff, some of whom were recognized during the Convocation yesterday.

There are other accomplishments worth noting:

- A pass rate of 97% on the state licensure exam for Mennonite College of Nursing Graduates, which is well above the state and national averages.
- A designation by the Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree Campus USA university for our campus forestry management and environmental stewardship. We are the only college or university in Illinois to be designated as such.

The unveiling of Gladly We Give, the university’ annual fund, is also an important milestone for our community. This is an important step in building on our financial strength in the face of dwindling state support. As we ponder our future, we are hopeful that a new dynamic amongst the leadership at the state level will also bring a new approach to funding higher education that will benefit Illinois State University. We have consistently been asked to do more with less. I ask all of you in this room to briefly pause and reflect on what Illinois State University has accomplished since being faced with budget cuts, rescissions and hiring freezes. Now, imagine the possibilities with more funding...

Thank you.