One of the wonderful things about being President is that you have many opportunities to spend time with both graduate and undergraduate students. This year it has been my privilege to share in your work by attending your poster sessions and research presentations; learning about progress on your thesis and experiencing your passion about your topic; hearing about the ways that you have touched lives in your field placements; and seeing the results of your activism. I had the wonderful opportunity to be in conversation with you about your concerns and aspirations for the College: in my office, over lunch, at the Big Cheese, Coffee Hour or community conversations. I had the joy to celebrate your talents: cheering you on at games or coaching basketball and crew, applauding you at culture shows and concerts, enjoying performances in the arts, honoring you at the Student Awards Ceremony, and swimming with you to raise funds to fight cancer. Lastly, I had the great joy to just have fun: at graduate student picnics, PopUps, May Day, and most recently with seniors on the Boat Cruise and yesterday’s picnic. It has been an amazing year, and I thank you for including me in your lives here.

While this weekend’s festivities are ostensibly about marking the ending of your studies at Bryn Mawr – the culmination of years of hard work and exertion, I believe they are equally about celebrating a beginning. You are leaving this place; the place you have called home for the past few years. The place that has challenged you, sustained you, and changed you. But I am not the least bit worried about you. In fact, I am quite sure that you are going to do amazing things because your Bryn Mawr education has allowed you to develop the tools that you need.

At Bryn Mawr you have learned how to identify and describe a problem, develop and consider various solutions, construct a persuasive argument and determine a course of action. You have expanded and refined your intellectual interests, developing a depth of expertise through study and original research. In this richly diverse community, you have challenged assumptions, reconsidered your own perspective, and helped others forge their own path. This growth and change has occurred because you chose to fully engage in the community – both in and outside of the classroom. You pushed the boundaries, testing yourselves in close living quarters in the dorm, in class and in seminars in deep discussion of the most challenging issues of our times, on the playing fields, the stage of Goodhart and the architecture studio in Rockefeller, the labs in Park, the archives and collections of the College, and in field work and clinical practice.

As you leave Bryn Mawr, I hope you do so confident that you possess the smarts, the grit, and the joy of discovery that will be your traveling companions on the journey ahead. You can be fairly confident that much of what you do will likely be easier than what you did here. Take this moment to be proud, be happy and be grateful and know that you will be amazing.

And also know that while Bryn Mawr may have transformed you, you have also transformed Bryn Mawr. We are forever a little bit different because you have been here. Bryn Mawr will always be your place and we will always be here for you if you
need a touchstone to remind you of excellence, of deep engagement of your minds and hearts, and of joy in learning.

You have my very best wishes and heartfelt congratulations.