Good afternoon and welcome. Are humbled to be neighbors of this Meskwaki nation, recognized as the Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, through its purchase of land and establishment in Tama County in 1857, less than 30 miles from Grinnell College. And we acknowledge that we are on the ancestral territory of the Sauk and Ioway Peoples, whose land was taken from them through the encroachment of white settlers and then formally in 1845 through government land concessions. We wish to pay respect to the Meskwaki, Sauk, and Ioway peoples both past and present.

Hello. Hello. Can you all hear me? My name is Gabby Hernandez. I use any pronouns and I am serving you through my position as SGA President. [ Applause ] SJ stands for student Government Association. It is made up of students, it was made for students. SJ represents supports and cares about each and every Grinnellian, which now includes all of you. On behalf of the SGA, I would like to welcome you all into this community. I would like to welcome you all into this family. One of the core goals of the SGA is to make Grenell feel as much as it can like a home. SJ treasures your input and participation in fulfilling this goal. I encourage you to reach out to any of your representatives so that the SGA can concern conserve you all must effectively. We love hearing from you. I also encourage you to keep an eye out, whether for posters, social media post your emails for opportunities to get involved in student programming. I will step away from the family and community and more towards the individual. I would like to give you three pieces of advice that I hope will be valuable for this new chapter in your life.

First, don't be afraid of change. You will not graduate as the same person you are today and that is good. That is a growth. In the time we spent here, you will see your interest and worldviews shift. You will find yourself growing stronger in ways beyond the academic. Don't fear change because without it, you will not grow. Piece of advice number two, ask questions. Asked questions not only in classes and office hours but also in your personal lives. This can be as simple as, how are you? Or, do you want to grab lunch together? Questions will lead to new friendships, perspectives, and other things that will last a lifetime. Lastly, and most importantly, take care of yourself. In the busyness of coursework, jobs, and trying to maintain a social life, it can be difficult to forget to decompress, sleep or do other acts of self care and love. This can be as simple as stepping outside for some fresh air or treating yourself to a snack. It is easier to enjoy this chapter of your life when you are taking care of yourself. Don't fear change, ask questions, and take care of yourself. That's all I have for you right now, but if you want more, please feel free to reach out. Once more, welcome to the family. Thank you for listening. [ Applause ]

Good afternoon. My name is JC Lopez and I'm interim vice president for student affairs this year. I'm very excited to join you all. I go bite pronouns he/him/his. I want to say we are so happy to see you here, class of 2027. Can you please stand so we can recognize you? Let's give them an applause. [ Applause ] Nice. There are 467 new students joining the Grenell community this fall +1. I too will be joining you in many of your first this year. I am excited to join you. What I have been on campus for only a few days, I know the hard work of the student leaders it takes to provide an excellent experience for incoming students but I would like to encourage
student leaders to have supported this transition, the community advisers, international orientation program leaders, peer connections and orientation from leaders, the Grenell science project leaders and new student or ambassadors to please stand and wait if you are able to for your dedication and commitment. [Applause] Their ongoing leadership provides support for first-year experience students to be successful inside and outside of classroom. I would be remiss if I didn't take the time out to recognize your parents, guardians and families for all they have done to make this opportunity possible. Please take the opportunity to thank her families for all they have done to get you to this journey. [Applause] We are so pleased that they truly understand there is no greater investment into the education of one child. Thank you for trusting us with your students. They always said, look what --. What's translates to being kind or courteous does not to from your debris or value. This academic year I will embrace grace and kindness, suppleness, empathy and positive changes. I am sure you will have values that ground you and you will practice those values with one another. As we start this academic experience together, find ways to uplift each other because there is power in relationships and the community that you shape. Welcome to Grenell, class of 2027. I have been practicing that and messing that up for like the last six days. I just got here five days ago. Thank you for your generosity and grace. [Applause]

That afternoon. It is a pleasure to be here this afternoon to welcome you, the class of 2027. My name is Beronda Montgomery, I use she/her pronouns become the vice president of academic affairs and Dean of the college. You are sitting at an exciting juncture. You and your loved ones recently celebrated your graduation from high school and now you have an exciting new journey of what you have officially embarked. I still remember sitting where you now sit, many, many, many years ago. I even remember the sheer excitement and perhaps a bit of nervousness that sat with me. I also remember sitting in a zoom version of the event in August of 2020 one my own son embarked on his college years and the height of the pandemic. Although we are all decades apart, we all were about to experience launching into a new path. In different places and times, there are some commonalities that we can contribute to a successful journey. To get from my new student orientation to the finish line, I did what I hope you will be prepared to do during your time here at Grinnell College. That is to fully embrace opportunities. Opportunities to learn, yes, that's why your parents or guardians have sent or brought you here. But also embrace opportunities to learn in and out of the classroom and formal learning spaces. You will encounter opportunities to grow, to grow as a learner number but also there'll be ample opportunities to grow as a person and as a member of community. Although in four years you will stand on the stage and accept the diploma as an individual, the process to get there will not be one that you will complete alone. The path to graduation success and beyond is a collaborative journey. To get the most from this journey you need to gather and cultivate a network of supporters and accountability partners, on and off campus. One of the roles of leaders, faculty members, instructors and step over the next few years will be to serve as stewards of the environment, to ensure that each of you who absolutely have the potential to be wildly successful here at Grinnell have access to and agency to pursue all that you need to support yourself and succeed.

Successful involve reciprocity. It is decidedly reciprocal relationship for promoting success. How do you ensure that your primed and ready to activate success and engage in full reciprocity? Be prepared to do three critical things, engage, enrich, and empower. You must engage actively in your classes and the community. Yes, you are here to take classes. That will start very soon. However, your full success here and beyond depends upon your being engaged both in and
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Hello, dear Grinnellians. My name is Anne Harris. I use she/her pronouns and I have the honor of serving as the 14th president and the joy of standing before you today. You have heard words of warmth and welcome from cherished campus partners and leaders, words that are ideas, that our offerings and invitations to you as all of us gather here today pause on this marvelous threshold with you. For you are in this moment on a marvelous threshold of both space and time. Of here and now, of their and then. I invite you to hold this moment by visualizing the paths that you have walked in family and fellowship to come to Grinnell. By seeing in your minds eye the people who have supported you, cheered you, challenged you, and cherished you. And all those that you have supported and cheered and challenged and cherished and now I invite you to imagine yourself crossing the threshold of an architecture that you will build in the many partnerships and friendships you will make here at Grinnell. You are now in a place where your relationships, your ideas, your actions, and your commitments will gather to all shape and reshape this institution. This multicultural, multiracial, interconnected community in perpetual formation and striving. You are now in a place open with possibility, relating us with its openness, alerting us to the shifting skills of the individual, the community, and the world. Being here, you will experience the infinite specificity of the math problem the brushstroke of the word, the ritual act, the data point, the civic action, the blade of grass, and you will also experience the infinite expanse of theoretical systems, works of art, literatures, religions, statistical metal ologies, civil rights movements and interconnected ecosystems. Know that in standing with you on this threshold, we make our pledge to you that Grinnell College offers itself to your imagination. That the care and brilliance and passion of the faculty, the staff, and administrators who have dedicated their lives to knowledge and its ability to foster and safeguard human dignity complex systems and global societies are gathered here, eager and ready to create this college, and yes, this world with you. Know that in standing with you on this threshold, we do so within the living legacy of the Grinnell alumni who have themselves shaped the world, who have pushed and changed inequitable systems, researched scientific discoveries and
nurtured wonder. The actual architecture, not the metaphorical one of my speech, the architecture that you see emerging in downtown Grinnell is dedicated to one such alumna, Mrs. Edith Smith, the first black alumna of Grinnell College who graduated in 1937 and celebrated her 109th birthday this summer. [ Applause ] You will be here when Renfro Hall, a downtown student resident opens in the fall of 2024. You will cross its threshold and shape the community and mission of civic innovation and community engagement it's spaces will foster and embrace. Think of the Grinnell and the world that we will build together. Think of the brilliance of energy result and gladness that you bring. Think of the threshold that you will cross and of the doors that you will open. Think with me on these words by the French philosopher -- from his 1958 book the poetics of space. And here I make a special invitation to the parents and families gathered here and online as you think on your beautiful children and of how you have known them for so long across so many threshold. If one were to give an account --. Of all the doors one has closed and opened, of all the doors one would like to reopen, one would have to tell the story of one's entire life. But is the person who opens a door and the one who closes it the same being? The gestures that make us conscious of security or freedom are rooted in a profound depth of being. He invites us to think of both gesture and symbolism of opening and closing doors. He invites me to imagine your opening the door of your room and your residence hall, the door of your tutorial classroom. The door of what will become your favorite room on campus, your friends room, your place of respite. It makes me think very soon of car doors closing and windows lowering and goodbyes. Of childhood bedroom doors being left open to remember, of doors reopening for reunions. Dear parents and families, thank you for giving us the chance to earn your trust upon this threshold and know how honored we are to walk with you and your beautiful child. As I end, I will ask you to think of one of the earliest doors that was opened towards Grinnell College by members of the Iowa band abolitionist Congregationalists who came to Iowa from Massachusetts in 1846. After my remarks about you will be gifted with a silver medallion that is a replica of the one that James Jeremiah am a member of the Iowa band laid on the table as a call to action to his brethren to establish a college and to endow it in perpetuity for the support and thriving of its students and faculty. This medallion bears an engraving of the oldest building on campus on one side, that's good now on Park Street, and is engraved with your graduation year on the other. It is our pledge to you to use the gifts of our resources and abilities to walk with you, learn with and from you, and to be with you these next four years. It is our pledge to build with you our emblem of what we hold together as possible, of the threshold we will cross together, and the doors we will open. Your medallions, like our shared threshold, also bear the simultaneity of past and present within them and future come if you think of the happy date of your graduation four powerful years from now. I'm going to close by returning to the idea of simultaneity at the threshold. Of the here and now, of that there and then. We live with and within simultaneity's and I invite you to be aware of the state of being at Grinnell. Of the simultaneity of highly concentrated work on a protein or a poem or a problem set and of the expansiveness of a nighttime prairie sky. From the simultaneity of a momentary blip in time when you are walking across campus and of the depth of time when you think of all who have walked here before you on this same ground over the past 175 years and well beyond. Having traveled far, accomplished much, and bringing abundance, you are on the threshold of an incredible journey. Made this moment, this time as we are gathered in this place be a wellspring for you, a source of the care and confidence this community has for you and in you. Dear Grinnellians, you are here and we are glad. Delight in learning together, savor your good moments and let them be respite and renewal to you for the tough months. Let them energize you
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and connect you to each other. Know that we are here, that we believe in you and that we work and will always work to create and cross threshold with you. Thank you for all that you already make possible in being here. As you come forward to receive your medallion, know that you are simultaneously both in a brief, beautiful moment in time and in a deep rich expense of possibility. Welcome to Grinnell, class of 2027. It belongs to you now. [ Applause ] I am now proud, very proud to introduce 2007 alumnus, Nino Parker. [ Applause ]

Good afternoon and welcome. It truly is my pleasure to welcome you to the Grinnell community. As president Harris stated, my name is Nino Parker. I use he/her pronouns. Currently serving as the senior associate director of alumni relations for the college, more importantly, I am forever a member of the class of 2007, similarly, you now are forever members of the class of 2027. For some of you, this is your first time being afforded this is the first person in her family to be afforded the opportunity to attend college. For some of you this is your first time in the United States. For all of you, this is your first step in a lifetime journey of being a Grinnellian. I am excited for you because you now have a community of more than 23,000 accomplished and dedicated Grinnellians in your corner. I know it's hard to believe that people you have never met or likely even thought of are going to have your back. But it is true and trust me, you will find out in your own time. For the first 18 years of my life, I only knew the city. I knew public transportation and crowded streets. I New Chicago, neighborhoods that tourists don't visit and it was likely all that liveliness that pushed me to find somewhere a little more intimate. I only had a few stipulations when I began my college search. I wanted an institution with small class sizes so I would be able to develop relationships with my professors. I needed some type of scholarship or financial support, and I wanted to be able to get home quickly if I ever had to. Grinnell checked all three of those boxes, so of course I declined a visit. I had already visited 12 or 13 other campuses during my college search but it ended up being interactions with an admission counselor, and Grinnell alumni to help sway my decision. Though I have to admit, the moment I stepped foot on campus, it wasn't exactly sure what I had gotten myself into. Grinnell took some time to get used to, but it wasn't before too long that I began to realize that a lot of the differences I was noticing were positive once. Like you might have seen how strangers were waving at one another one stopped at the intersections. More likely to get another kind of hand signal in Chicago. Or how people smile as they are passing one another on campus. I was surprised to be acknowledged and greeted with kindness. My time at Grinnell became dictated by opportunity. I had the chance to play football, which I had never done before. I was engaging with classmates who were the best of the best. They were smart, articulate, and gave me confidence in the world. In Chicago my best friends weren't getting opportunities to go to college like I was. I was determined to make the best of my experience and now I stand here hopeful you can do the same. I want to encourage you, don't be afraid to try new things. You already heard this from our SGA President, but I want to reiterate. Don't shut yourself off from new experience is because you are used to doing things a certain way. Approach difference with an open mind and enjoy all that Grinnell has to offer. While I don't know what your individual Grinnell experiences will hold, I can all but guarantee two things. First, this is a community that cares for one another. You will see alumni return to campus to give their time, volunteering or lend their talents in the classroom. Or maybe you will be like me and benefit from a scholarship that was established by alumni donors who received the help they needed when they were on campus. There will be several aspects about your experience that you grow to love and I'm willing to bet you will also find your own way to give back. The second guarantee is that you will make
multiple connections while here in the Prairie. And they will have a lasting impact. Some of these connections are here at the ceremony today while others will happen unexpectedly. Growing up in Chicago and in studying here, I never imagined I would meet my wife and start a family in a little Iowa town. But here I stand a father of three, a husband and a resident of Coralville, just a little ways up the road. When I think about what has kept me here, I'm not sure I can put a finger on it. My friends and I don't have one distinct or shared experience or trade that keeps us all together, but certain expenses have led me to certain people. A quick story about my moving day, while I was getting unpacked over in loose pit, my mom was crying all over Walmart. She was concerned about leaving her baby in the middle of Iowa. A Grinnell student went up to her that day , talked to her and assured her I was going to be okay. Who of you would have guessed that a decade later I would be standing next to that Grinnell student at his wedding? Or that he would be the godfather of one of my children? That's the difference about Grinnell. The type of people who go here and graduate from here are the type of people who look out for one another and connect us. Again, welcome. We are so very glad you're here with us. I consider myself privileged to be able to be here and see how you will join in and look out for our paradise on the Prairie and how you too will support fellow and future Grinnellians. Thank you. [ Applause ] It is now my pleasure to invite our ushers to come forward and to release you to come up and receive your medallions.

[ Indiscernible - background noise ]

Hello, again. My name is MJ Gibney and I use she/her pronouns. I'm the assistant director of student involvement. I want to thank all of the speakers who have welcomed you today for their words of inspiration and encouragement. I also want to thank our facilities management staff for all of the work they do from adjusting -- [ Applause ] -- from adjusting one necessary to keeping our facilities and grounds in excellent shape. I would also like to say thank you to the many students who have participated in preparing for your arrival and helping to start your college experience off in a positive direction. [ Applause ] We are going to transition into the next phase of the day, class of 2027, transfer students and exchange students, you are going to remain here in Darby Gym for your class photo. Please remain seated until your ambassadors direct you were to go. Families and guests, you are invited to join President Anne Harris for a reception on the grassy area just out front where most of you entered the building. We have staff that will help direct you. The president, tutorial faculty, and members of various departments will be able for you to chat with and answer any questions you have. They are committed to assisting and making your students experience a positive one and interacting with you. After the class photo and reception, please take time to reconnect, families and guests of students on the same grassy area of the reception to spend some farewell time before your students will re-engage with their groups and had to dinner. Students, good luck as you start your college journey and enjoy all aspects of new student orientation. Families, enjoy your remaining visit. Do not forget to send a letter or care package tutor student every now and then. We hope you will visit sometime soon and have safe travels back home. Thank you for joining us. [ Applause ]

[ Indiscernible - background noise ]

Hello again. Oh my God, that was so loud. I'm sorry. It wasn't that loud two seconds ago. The ambassadors are going to dismiss you row by row. You are moving to these bleachers over here.
The photo was being taken from the top of those teachers. Ambassadors, don't go yet. Ambassadors, when they are gone, the first five columns of chairs need to be stacked and moved out of the way so they are out of the photo. Okay? Are we good?