

Good morning, everybody!

Welcome to the **5th** Commencement of Humboldt College of Xi'an International Studies University and Humboldt State University. I here offer congratulations to the eight of our graduates, and to the faculty, staff, parents, friends, and other students, who helped bring us to this day. Every single person present today has given something to make this moment possible for the class of 2014—well, except for me. I really just showed up and put on the robe.

Today is a day of ceremony and celebration. Along with the graduates, we wear academic regalia, to signify the entry of these graduates into the larger communities of scholars, businessmen, or social workers. I am here with what I brought with me 26 years ago at my commencement ceremony at this university; confidence and optimism. It was in 1988 when China was a radically different country and when we needed almost everything for a respectable life: we didn't have cars and many didn't have bicycles; we had to walk to wherever we were going; it was not rare for two newly-wedded couples to share a ten-square meter room, with a curtain between them. But now you see China is entirely different. It is those college graduates like you who have made the difference. Today you give us good reason to believe that the future will be even better than today and you guys will make the difference.

Since the founding of Humboldt College eight years ago, four ceremonies have been held and today eight more graduates will join the **64** other alumni of this joint program, which has proved to be competitive in preparing students to grow as individuals, to achieve educational goals, to pursue meaningful work, and to improve the lives of others—and our world.

To our great delight, many former graduates have been enrolled by competitive universities and research institutions at home and abroad. Among them are the London School of Economics and Political Science in the UK, Northeast University in the US, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The class of 2014 has been doing just as well. Some of them will further their studies in University College London, the University of Manchester and the University of East Anglia in the UK, the University of Montana in the US, and Macquarie University in Australia. These students change in ways that influence every aspect of their lives—and lives of others.

Today is also a day of thank-giving. I have to say thank-you to all those who have involved themselves in this joint program: my colleagues here at XISU and our colleagues at HSU, who have been helping the program grow and preparing the students to excel academically and personally, especially HSU President Rollin Richmond and former XISU President Hu Sishe for their decision to initiate the program. Also among us today is XISU alumnus Dr. Ray Wang, the founding Dean of Humboldt College, who is here to attend the commencement on behalf of President Richmond.

Of course, behind every graduate stands a very proud family. Graduates, your family and your friends, in all their endless beauty and variations, have been there for you during your years at XISU and HSU.

Class of 2014, university life leaves no one with the easiest path in life, I know, but I have every confidence in you. You give us a reason to hope that tomorrow can be better than today, but it depends on guys like you how much better our life will be in another 26 years, when you are invited to a celebration for me on my retirement. So hold fast to your dreams and help others realize theirs.

Keep in touch. 常回家看看。

Thank you, and congratulations.