

**President's Alumni Weekend Remarks
June 25, 2005**

Good afternoon and Aloha to all of you!

Just as Sarah Balas has extended our thanks to many special people who have made this day possible, I, too, would like to send a hearty aloha to past and current members of the Board of Trustees who are with us today. Our trustees are critical to the growth and prosperity of Heidelberg College. They have given richly of their time, talent and treasury.

As one example of just how much they do, in recent months five of our trustees have each given \$500,000 as a challenge grant to complete the funding necessary for the construction of Gillmor Hall.

Would all of the trustees – past and present – please stand and let us thank you for all you do for Heidelberg College.

Also with us today are current and former members of the faculty, staff and administration of Heidelberg College. These are the people who have sparked your imagination when you were students, helped you pursue your life's dreams and created a home a home away from home when you were at Heidelberg College. They made this your Sweet Alma Home.

Would all of the retired and current members of the faculty and staff please rise so that we can extend our heartfelt gratitude to you.

Finally, we also need to extend an especially warm thank you to Sarah Balas,

your Director of Alumni Relations, for all she has done to make this day possible.

Sarah is a 1998 Heidelberg graduate with an infectious laugh who brings energy, joy and good humor to any task that involves her alma mater.

Sarah, would you please rise and let us extend our thanks to you.

It is appropriate that our theme for this weekend is “Aloha Alumni” because in many ways it reflects the spirit and soul of Heidelberg College. Let me explain.

On one of my first days as president of Heidelberg I met a gentleman in the dining hall who was here to lead a youth basketball camp - which is something he has done at Heidelberg and at other colleges all around the country for the past 25 years. The coach – who lives in Hawaii – told me that Heidelberg is one of his favorite places to visit because he knows no other place that has the “Aloha Spirit” quite like we do on this campus. He went on to describe the care, the warmth and the nurturing spirit he feels every year that he returns to Heidelberg.

That same Aloha Spirit was also felt by dozens of parents last weekend during our orientation for new students. I can't tell you how many parents commented to me that they sensed their children would be both nurtured and challenged at Heidelberg College and that they knew they were joining a very special family.

Understand that Aloha is more than "hello" and "goodbye." The "Aloha Spirit" is the attitude of friendly acceptance and genuine sincerity for which the Hawaiian Islands are famous. That culture of friendly acceptance defines this campus. It is an important part of our mission and values. Not only do students form friendships with other students, they also get to know their faculty well. These relationships enhance learning and last beyond a single course or semester. As I have heard from you this weekend, many of these relationships last for years - if not a lifetime.

This is particularly evident in the lives and work of those who will shortly receive this year's Alumni Awards.

For example, through the efforts of the Brown family the Fellows Organization at Heidelberg College was founded. Over the years, four generations and 15 family members have faithfully served their communities, professions and Heidelberg College.

Consider, too, the selfless work of Dr. Peter Hartsock, who has been a world leader in the global fight against AIDS, drug and alcohol abuse.

And Gene Gilliom who has lived a life without boundaries, making the planet his classroom by bringing a global, cross cultural education to students and teachers throughout the world.

And Lucy Boyadgian Janjigian, who has generously assisted those in need through her artistic talent, education efforts and Christian ministry, and lives out the Aloha Spirit.

Truly our alumni award winners inspire us and make us very proud.

Lisette and I have been part of the Heidelberg Family for just about two years.

Some tell me that means the "honeymoon" is over. I have heard it said that for college presidents – and I suppose most grooms – the first year is bliss. Then the blinders come off (as well as the make-up), reality sets in, and it is downhill from there.

But let me assure you: the more I know about Heidelberg College and its people, the more there is to love. Lisette and I believe that this is a remarkable college and it has captured our hearts.

This year has been marked by accomplishment, from the record-setting leap of freshman Greg Tyson, who shattered a 49-year-old Heidelberg record in the long jump and came in second in the nation, to the leaps we made in science education with the opening of

Gillmor Hall. Not only is it a remarkable building, but many friends and alumni of the college have shown remarkable generosity.

Just this week we went over the \$15 million mark toward our goal of slightly more than \$17 million.

Today's Heidelberg College has focus and momentum. We are working hard to ensure that current students and you, our former students, have a great Heidelberg experience -- not only when you are enrolled here, but in the years to follow.

Last fall, we welcomed the largest entering class in 30 years, and last month we launched a new group of alumni into your ranks. I told the entering freshmen at convocation and this year's graduates at commencement that they, like you, are linked to Heidelberg College for life. Linked by the skills you have honed and knowledge acquired. Linked by good friends made in society halls, dining halls and residence halls. Linked by great times with outhouses on Greenfield Street, cows in the chapel, sparrows at convocation and rain dances in the well. Linked by the responsibility and opportunities of a Heidelberg degree.

Today, we celebrate that relationship. We are grateful to you for the many ways you connect to your Alma Mater.

And speaking of connections, we have someone back on campus today reconnecting with her alma mater on her 75 th reunion year! Dorothy Castanien Parcell, please wave so a grateful college and the extended Heidelberg family can show you our admiration and appreciation. Dorothy's connection and your connection to Heidelberg -- that red, orange, and black thread that binds us together -- makes the college stronger.

I am very proud to say that the people in this audience today have contributed more than \$217,000 to the Heidelberg Fund in the past year. What a wonderful reflection of your loyalty!

On behalf of the entire Heidelberg family, I offer a very sincere "thank you" to all of you. Your generosity enables us to keep moving forward.

This is the heart of my message today. You are important us. We want our alumni and friends to be engaged - engaged in the life and mission of the college. Together, we can see Heidelberg College grow in quality and stature. The foundation is here -- built by all of you. This is our time to move forward. But for us to seize the moment and the momentum, to move from good to great, we need your continued help.

Today, I ask you to keep a place in your life and your heart for Heidelberg, and also help us to re-connect other alumni who are not with us today.

Heidelberg alumni and friends, thank you for all you are doing for Your Sweet Alma Home. And, in the spirit of the day, let me close with the words of the

Hawaiian Farewell Song, Aloha 'Oe: "Until we meet again."