



Class of 1968 Reception & Dinner

Friday, June 8, 2018

Armstrong Student Center, Fritz Pavilion

6:00-10:00 (7-10 pm)

Gregory P. Crawford

President

Miami University

Welcome Class of 1968 – Congratulations on 50 years. Wow.

As you stroll around campus, I am sure some things have changed and some have stayed the same. During your time here, you saw the opening of:

- Millett Hall
- Flower and Hahne residence halls
- The first phase of King Library
- Benton and Shriver academic buildings.
- The Miami European Center in Luxembourg – 11,000 have studied there (50th Anniversary & 800)

Your tuition was \$195 per trimester in-state, with a \$30 surcharge for out of state students. Today, Ohio students pay tuition of \$12,500 for the year.

Many things started in 1968 have made the world a better place.

- The Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded to three scientists “for deciphering the genetic code and its function in protein synthesis.” Today that science is used routinely in modern health care.
- In 1968, the Apollo Guidance Computer (AGC) – designed for spacecraft – was reduced to only 70 pounds and a size of about 1 cubic foot. Today, of course, students carry computers billions of times more powerful in their pocket.
- And most importantly, in 1968, a girl was born in the Netherlands. She would move to America to study physics and get her Ph.D., but end up meeting a handsome and brilliant prince – oops, I mean physicist– and eventually come to be University Ambassador & adjunct Physics professor at Miami University. What a lucky girl!

You graduated from Miami during a tumultuous time. But the leader of Miami was an amazing man – President Philip Shriver. He was so loved by the Miami students.

- A few weeks before your commencement ceremony, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was shot and killed in Memphis.
- A few weeks after you graduated, Robert Kennedy was shot and killed in Los Angeles.

But even amidst all that upheaval, there were signs of hope.

- The signs of a more inclusive America, so many standing up for equality for all.
- And something special was underway in Columbus, Ohio in 1968 and 1969 – an inspiring story not told until today.
 - A. East High School in Columbus OH would make history.
 - B. There were worries that the school would experience difficult times after the assassination of MLK and Bobby Kennedy.

- C. But the students of East High inspired the state of Ohio and made national headlines – they WON the state baseball and state basketball championship, and debate.
- D. Why do I bring this story up? Well it is an Ohio story from 1968 and it will be the freshman classes read this year – told in a new book entitled: *Tigerland: a City Divided. A Country Torn Apart. A Magical Season of Healing* by Miami alumnus Wil Haygood, Class of 1976, Award Winning Author of *The Butler*. This book about your time and place will debut right here in Oxford in August, and students will get a copy months before it becomes a best-seller. After our announcement in March, more than 200 media outlets pick up the story.

Yes, Miami has changed. There are more buildings and more students and more cars and more technology – really, there’s just more of everything.

But one thing will never change – Miami students do amazing things. More than 2,000 students work on research projects with faculty each year. Nearly half study abroad. More than half have a second major or minor in another college, different from their major.

Let me tell you about two examples of current students:

Sara Al-Zubi just completed her junior year at Miami. Sara exemplifies a passion for change and compassion for others’ suffering.

Sara spent some of her childhood in Jordan, near the Syrian border, before her family immigrated to the United States.

Several years ago, images of a three-year-old boy drowned in the Mediterranean Sea inspired her, and she leapt into action.

She began a letter-writing campaign to the children of Syria that grew into her first nonprofit venture, “Peace of Mail.”

Sara also co-founded “ProjectEquip,” designing mental health training modules for community leaders to prepare them to help refugee clients and patients.

Now Sara is a Truman Scholar, one of only 59 nationally and Miami’s first since 2003. One of the most competitive fellowship for a student!

Biochemistry major and physics minor Audrey Short also just completed her junior year. She’s an example of Miami’s commitment to undergraduate research.

Audrey joined a large lab group during her first semester at Miami, researching diabetes.

Last year, Audrey presented her research at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society.

She's a member of University Honors and a tutor at the Rinella Learning Center – helping so many other students to be successful.

Audrey was one of two Beckman Scholars, a program that provides support for undergraduates for research.

Sara and Audrey and all of the other incredible students at Miami are just like you, exemplifying courage and passion to be difference makers in the world.

Fifty years after you graduated here, Miami still stands for excellence. Three big new directions to tell you about:

- Career Services will radically change. We are amazing already with 97% students getting a job or going to graduate school upon graduation. Now, freshmen will have a career adviser from the time they walk in the door. We will offer many more experiences for our students as interns and even curricula developed by our corporate partners. State of the art space in this building.
- We will be even more innovative and entrepreneurial. Our Institute for Entrepreneurship ranks in the country's top 25 again for the tenth year in row. We just signed an agreement with Wright Patterson Air Force Base to find new applications and ideas for their more than 1,000 patents. Can we take defense-oriented discovery and find new commercial applications?
- We continue to invest in excellence – Our Boldly Creative initiative calls for \$50 million targeted to academics during the next 3-5 years. We will be leaders in preparing Miami graduates for the next generation of jobs and careers (in 1968, Miami's entire operating budget was about \$27 million).

Let me tell you about one more campus project that is very special to the Miami community. Through the generous support of many alumni and friends, we are now prepping a site between Wells Hall and the Campus Avenue Building for constructing an Alumni Veterans Tribute. The tribute will honor alumni who served or are now serving in our country's armed forces.

The tribute will represent the five branches of the armed services, display the flag prominently, and provide a fitting site for both formal events and personal remembrance and meditation.

I invite those veterans with us in the room tonight to please stand if you are able.

Above all, it is the people of Miami who generate excellence.

Some things never change. Love and Honor never changes. Study Hearted Pure of Soul alums – that never changes. And when Miamians achieve extraordinary things, their humility shines through – Prodesse Quam Conspici.

Renate and I are truly privileged to be at Miami, and to be here with you tonight. It has been two wonderful years.

Everyone knows Miami has a beautiful campus. Rolling Hills. Stone Bridges. Red Brick Buildings. But the real beauty of this place comes from within all of you – your passion, your generosity, your fierce loyalty. We admire and appreciate your dedication to your alma mater as we build on the firm foundation of the past and advance Miami into the future.

Tonight we Love and Honor you – for the life you led in this place, for the lives you lead now as Miamians – as we celebrate your 50th anniversary.

Love and Honor!