

**Thank you Provost Harris. Good afternoon everyone.**

**I am pleased to add my welcome on behalf of the entire university community – current students, faculty, staff, alumni and over 500 corporate partners. This is a very special occasion and we thought we would dress up a bit for you.**

**No - we don't dress this way every day at Kettering. In fact, you will probably not see us in this medieval looking garb again until 2014, when we will be celebrating the graduation of the new students joining us today!**

**Parents – how many of you are having this experience for the first time – the experience of bringing a son or daughter to college and going home without them?**

**Both you and your sons and daughters will always remember this day. I know you are a little apprehensive about it, but I want to assure you that everything is going to be okay.**

**Kettering students mature more rapidly than any I've ever observed elsewhere in higher education. If you laid a solid foundation of personal development, then you have very little to worry about; and you will marvel at the rate of continuing personal development your sons and daughters will experience and exhibit over the next few years.**

**You are making a very significant investment - not only in the future lives and successes of your sons and daughters but in the future of your country and the world. The value of the educational experience that Kettering provides - resulting from small class sizes, personal attention by faculty and staff, the cooperative educational experience, and a focus on innovation and entrepreneurship - makes the investment extremely worthwhile. I am confident that the return on your investment will be excellent.**

**Students - What you now see as significant and perhaps worrisome challenges in today's world are accompanied by**

**fantastic opportunities for you - if you are prepared to take advantage of them.**

**In your next few years at Kettering you will prepare for these opportunities, and when you graduate you will be uniquely positioned to make many contributions to society and a positive difference in the world. I am extremely pleased that you selected Kettering as the place where you will prepare to compete in the "innovation economy" armed with the distinct advantages of personal and professional development only Kettering can provide.**

**Embedded in Kettering's mission statement are the words, "Kettering is dedicated to adding transformational value to its students." Yes, we are committed to engaging you in active learning and to facilitating your personal growth in as many ways as possible; and, although Kettering is more than just a teaching institution, its research and outreach missions are**

**frequently tied to the intellectual development of its undergraduate students. Each faculty member has their own specific creative interest and, because we are focused on undergraduate learning, there are many opportunities for faculty and undergraduate-student creative collaboration.**

**These opportunities, plus those provided by the existing centers of applied research and others that will be established here in the future, will allow many of you to gain additional experience in an applied research setting as a supplement to your classroom, laboratory and co-op learning experiences.**

**The collective and individual professional and career successes of Kettering's alumni, and the ability of students to obtain excellent jobs immediately after graduation, or gain admission to graduate or professional schools, attest to the value of what we do here.**

**I am extremely impressed with the incredible professional success that the graduates of this institution have achieved.**

**Ultimately this is the litmus test for any institution – the success of its graduates – and Kettering’s alumni are a most impressive lot. Any institution in the United States would love to be able to claim Kettering alumni as theirs; because an unusually high percentage of Kettering alumni have become successful business leaders and entrepreneurs.**

**Over the past four years I've had opportunities to meet many of them and I have asked them what it was about their education here that set them apart from graduates of other institutions. They consistently point to the following things: First, they say that by the time they graduated they knew how things were made – knowledge that few college graduates have in hand.**

**Second, they say that their co-op learning experiences exposed them to nearly all aspects of the companies that they worked for – so they knew how the dots were connected – they had a good conceptual grasp of the entire business system.**

**Third, they say that Kettering’s professional co-op program provided fantastic opportunities to build professional relationships and networks that they utilized throughout their careers.**

**Today, I thought it would be nice for you, new students, parents and friends, to have the opportunity to meet and hear from one of Kettering’s most distinguished alumni, and observe a very special ceremony - a ceremony most often conducted at university commencements. By “most distinguished” I mean an alumna whose accomplishments and contributions are worthy of the highest honor that Kettering bestows - an honorary doctoral degree.**

**Today we are particularly pleased to honor one of this institution's most admired alumni and a former member of Kettering's Board of Trustees. Marissa T. Peterson is a 1983 graduate, who emigrated to the United States from the Philippines with her family, and shortly thereafter found her way to this institution at the age of sixteen. She also earned an MBA from Harvard and her career encompasses management roles at the Saturn Corp., Booz, Allen & Hamilton and at Sun Microsystems.**

**From 1988 until 2006, her senior executive roles at Sun Microsystems included being the chief customer advocate for Worldwide Operations. She retired in 2006 as Sun's executive vice president. Today, she provides leadership as a member of the board for Supervalu; Ansell Limited; and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital.**

**Marissa, please come forward while Dr. Harris reads a proclamation.**

**DR. HARRIS** (Reads the Proclamation):

**"Marissa T. Peterson**

**Business executive, philanthropist, alumna and friend, you have blessed our institution with your selfless support and enduring faith in the mission of our University to prepare tomorrow's leaders:**

**For remembering the lessons you learned as one of the youngest students to ever attend our University,**

**For your insight and insistence that corporate leaders must embrace the values of good citizenship across the world,**

**For paying forward with your dedicated efforts as a Trustee  
and as an honored scholarship donor,**

**And for your deep commitment to strengthen our University,  
our industry and our society through your ongoing and  
devoted volunteer activities,**

**Kettering University is proud to confer the honorary degree**

**Doctor of Management"**

**DR. LIBERTY** (confers the degree while Dr. Harris hoods Ms.  
Peterson):

**“By the authority vested in me by the Trustees of  
Kettering University, I confer upon you the degree, Doctor of  
Management, honoris causa.”**

**Dr. Peterson, the lectern is yours.**