



## GREETINGS FROM IUPUI

May 2013

For 10 Mother's Days in a row I have been able to be with thousands of happy people at IUPUI's commencement ceremonies. During that weekend, we celebrate students who have earned IU and Purdue degrees from our more than 20 schools. This past Mother's Day, we celebrated 6,304 graduates, nearly all of whom were Indiana residents.

We also awarded honorary degrees to two former Hoosiers.

**Vija Celmins**, an internationally celebrated Herron School of Art and Design alumna, received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from Indiana University at the IUPUI Commencement Ceremony. The Latvian-born visual artist immigrated to Indiana with her family at age 10 and graduated from the then-independent John Herron Art School in 1962. (It became part of the IU extension campus in Indianapolis in 1967 and part of IUPUI when it was established in 1969.) After graduating from Herron, she earned an M.F.A. degree in painting from UCLA in 1965. Ms. Celmins has won every major award in the art world, including the MacArthur Fellowship.

Purdue University awarded an honorary Doctor of Technology degree to **Chris Stout**, a licensed clinical psychologist and founding director of the Center for Global Initiatives, a venture that serves as an incubator for new initiatives designed to improve access to healthcare in underserved communities throughout the world. Chris Stout is an alumnus of both our Purdue schools, having earned an associate of applied science degree in the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology and a bachelor's degree in psychology in the Purdue School of Science. He also holds a doctoral degree in clinical psychology from the Forest Institute in Illinois. Now a clinical professor in the College of Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago, with an academic appointment in the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, his educational background, entrepreneurial experience, and philanthropic spirit have gained him recognition as a leader and innovator in the nonprofit world's healthcare sector.

We are proud that both Vija Celmins' and Chris Stout's journeys began here, but now let me tell you some other inspiring stories from the Class of 2013, those who are just now setting out on their life and career paths with newly earned degrees in hand.

**Theresa Benz**, a mother of four, celebrated Mother's Day by receiving her Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs degree with a minor in forensic and investigative sciences. She had begun college some years before but stopped out to become a flight attendant, get married, and start a family. Theresa was chosen to speak at the morning Commencement Ceremony, where she shared her story about juggling the demands of family, work, and school, but also how she discovered new reservoirs of perseverance and determination, earned a 3.9 GPA, and now sets her sights on attending the McKinney School of Law and a career in family law.

**Elizabeth Bourgeois** spoke at the afternoon ceremony. She received a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology, capping off a stellar undergraduate career. The 2013 top female student at IUPUI, she was a record-setting varsity swimmer for the Jags. She will now enter a two-year leadership and development program with Whirlpool Corp. and then return to earn a master's in an engineering-related discipline. She wants "to

be an engineer who transforms ideas and concepts into tangible products that enhance the lives of those using them.”

**Eric Keller**, a Plater International Scholar in the IUPUI Honors College, graduated with degrees in biology and chemistry from the School of Science. Being a peer mentor and academic tutor, community service as a legal guardian at Wishard Hospital, international service learning at Moi University in Kenya—all were part of his undergraduate experiences. This fall, Eric will start a four-year dual degree program in medicine and bioethics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and Graduate School.

As an undergraduate at Washington University, **Benjamin Katz’s** mantra was social justice. He majored in African history because he wanted to understand the culture. Upon acceptance to the IU School of Medicine, he deferred matriculation to intern with an organization that helps Bedouin communities in Israel. During medical school, he improved his Spanish and conducted research on health conditions in Honduras in preparation for the IU-sponsored clinic that opened there in 2012. He did two stints in Kenya with the IU/Moi University School of Medicine partnership. Next, he will continue pursuing his interests in global health with a combined medicine-pediatrics residency at the University of Minnesota.

I suspect we will see some amazing accomplishments from these and other members of the Class of 2013 in the years to come. And we will keep you posted!

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CHANCELLOR CHARLES R. BANTZ



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