

Beacons

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Greetings to everyone celebrating this special day!

Class of 2024, life is a wonderful journey and today you have reached a major milestone. Completing your Albion education has been your quest the past four years. You came here anxious about starting college during a raging pandemic, but excited about the opportunities at Albion. You learned to navigate college life in the midst of numerous challenges. And, with the help of many of those present here today, you persevered. Congratulations on your accomplishments!

Class of 2024, we are wayfarers along life's journey. We are guided by beacons, physical and metaphorical, that aid our travels. The many lighthouses that dot our shores warn us of dangers and help guide us to safe ports. Even with modern technologies, lighthouses still play a notable role for mariners. We look for those beacons.

Southeast of Boston is the Minots Ledge Light. It is an important navigational signal that flashes its beacon with a distinctive 1-4-3 pattern: one flash, then four flashes, then three flashes. Locals refer to it as the "I love you" light because the digits 1-4-3 correspond to the number of letters in each word of the phrase "I love you."

Class of 2024, take a few moments to reflect on the beacons in your life, those here and elsewhere—family members and friends—that have sacrificed and supported you to get to this day. — Take time after the ceremony to thank them for their love and support. Their beacons shine for you even through the storms of your personal struggles.

You are also a beacon to others who are navigating the rough seas of life. Your presence provides hope and comfort to many—some that you see and some that only see you. You are someone's lighthouse!

For faculty, knowledge and learning serve as beacons. Knowledge is never complete nor perfect. Even so, we strive to shed light on the mysteries of our world. We have been honored the past four years to share those

insights with you. Your education is an enduring beacon that will forever burn bright.

Class of 2024, the world needs beacons. This world needs beacons to continually remind us of the deep connections we share with the eight billion others linked in the fragile web of life cohabiting this tiny planet. This world needs beacons to shine the light of hope and understanding into the dark chasms that all too frequently separate us from others.

The world needs beacons. This world needs beacons that only you can provide.

Where there is uncertainty, be a beacon.

Where there is conflict, be a beacon.

Where there is injustice, be a beacon.

Where there is oppression, be a beacon.

Where there is inequity, be a beacon.

Where there are people in need, be a beacon.

The beacons that burn inside each of one you have the power to change the world! Today we send you out to be those beacons.

Your time as an Albion student has come to a close. We will miss you, but we want to hear about your journeys. Stay connected with us. Let us help you achieve your goals and celebrate your successes. Some of my favorite moments as a professor are catching up with former students. Alumni—like you—are my beacons.

Today you will board the ship of dreams that is awaiting you. It will carry you to begin new adventures in our ever-changing world. Despite the best preparation, at times the journey will be hard. There will be no precise map to guide you. Look to your beacons. Be a beacon for others. As you ponder the vast unknowns before you, I'm sure you are filled with both anxiousness and anticipation. It is difficult to imagine what challenges you will face and the joys you will discover, but know that Albion will always be a beacon that lights your pathway far from home through the distant days.

Farewell on your journeys!