

June 23, 1989

TO: Liz

FROM: Becca

RE: Commencement, 1989

The planning, preparations and oversight of Commencement this year was the responsibility of the Student Services, Publications, and Dean of Studies Offices, the Dining Halls and Maintenance Departments. Each assumed appropriate tasks and among the five directors and their staffs, all tasks were accomplished. While the Alumni Office had no direct responsibility for the Commencement activities, the Reunion events required that many of the College's services be shared, and, consequently, there were very frequent exchanges with the Alumni administrative staff.

You had asked me to "sort out and oversee" the Commencement planning this year, to act as coordinator. I did so and, as it developed, with pleasure. We have bright, capable, reliable people working in these various offices and departments, and their cooperative spirit, each with the other, made the planning thorough and the event itself smooth-running. Even though every piece of the two-day celebration required "Plan B" (rainy weather plans), things went well. Heather Jennings and Wendy Guerra carried much of the burden. Either one could run General Motors if given the chance.

Bob Ayers and Paul Renzi know their tasks well. They are indispensable to the management of Commencement. Each anticipates what needs doing - especially if plans need to be changed at a moment's notice. Each has the cooperation of his staff. Those staffs do not complain when asked to do even more, as was the case this year because of the weather.

Everyone worked very hard and, as I observed it, in good spirit. We are enormously fortunate to have Paul and Bob here at the College.

The responsibilities for the Commencement events were assigned as follows:

Student Services Office

- Senior Committee
- Senior Speaker(2)
- Distribution of questionnaire to seniors for information on their parents and guests (number to be invited to Commencement and addresses) and seniors' names as they want them printed on diplomas
- Senior Party
- Sound System (with David Beach)
- Communication with Parents
- Frequent communication with the Senior Class to keep them informed
- Text for Commencement Exercises for President and Chairman of the Board
- Dinner Tickets
- Student help for ushering, etc.
- Staff help as ticket sellers and buffet monitors
- Collection of all bills and submission to the Business Office

Publications

- Work with Senior Committee on choice of Commencement Speaker and Senior Class Speaker(s)
- Printing of:
  - invitations
  - diplomas
  - dinner tickets
  - program
- Safe keeping of diplomas and arrangements for signing
- Press releases and photography

Dean of Studies Office

- Faculty signatures on diplomas
- Cue cards
- List of graduation seniors updates to Publications (which office is responsible for the diplomas).

Dining Halls Department

- Friday Night Commencement Dinner
- Refreshments at Senior Party
- Saturday morning special breakfast for seniors
- Refreshments following Commencement
- Security and all special arrangements



#### Maintenance Department

- All physical arrangements including:
  - rental of tent and chairs
  - setting up of chairs for Friday night dinner & Saturday Commencement exercises
  - setting up of platforms, dias's, and chairs for speakers, both Friday night and Saturday morning
  - in case of rain, moving of robes and diplomas
  - rental of plants

A handbook for Commencement is being assembled by everyone involved to serve as a guide for the future. It will be a detailed "how-to." (It will not include recommended changes for procedures from those persons involved in running Commencement this year which I now record here. Once decisions have been made on the recommendations they can be added to the handbook. Here, then, are the recommendations including one from you:

- That the budget for the Friday night dinner be increased. The menu this year was much curtailed by me in an effort not to repeat the overrun of 1988. There has been comment from all sides that the dinner was more properly a luncheon menu.

- Your suggestion that robes be designed by faculty and the Senior Committee next year and that all seniors wear them.

- That the student performances on Friday afternoon be re-evaluated and, if retained, that faculty divisions take an active role in selection preparation, and the logistics of the performances themselves.

- That the processional and recessional for the exercises not be left to a last-minute composition. It seems to me the Music Division faculty should be involved and that it not be left entirely up to a student.

- That the actual awarding of the diploma be incorporated into the formal ceremony and not made a separate event after the ceremony.

The Director of Publications and the Student Services Office think there should be a special events coordinator at the College to oversee our

events. I, myself, do not think we need to create that new position, because ordinarily a Division or one office or another quite naturally has responsibility for a particular event. In the case of a College-wide event, like Commencement however, some one person from either Student Services or Publications must play the coordinator's role.

Finally, let me say that all of those who worked on Commencement were willing, hard-working and able. They did a wonderful job. They were delightful to work with.