Dear Graduates:

A collection of letters, quotes,
Bible verses and other notes
dedicated to the Class of 2021
from your Wesleyan family

Compiled by the Kentucky Wesleyan College Alumni Association

Words cannot fully communicate how proud I am of your achievement! During one of the most difficult times in our nation's, and world's, history, you have endeavored to earn your degree from Kentucky Wesleyan College. The trials and tribulations through which you passed to reach this momentous goal were made much more difficult by having to navigate the COVID-I9 pandemic which surrounded each of your days for the past I8 months as an undergraduate. You strove tirelessly toward your educational goal as you dealt with a new reality within your life in both a pedagogical and personal sense. You learned and matured in ways you never imagined possible as you dealt with the upheaval that this virus placed upon your shoulders! Your shoulders have proven to be much stronger than you may ever have known! You did navigate your pathway successfully, and in good cheer. Having gone through the barriers that were set by nature, you have come out the other side much stronger, and more ready to lead the next generation as you march proudly forward.

Your degree from Kentucky Wesleyan College has prepared you for much more than the major you studied. During your time as a Panther, you have learned to be a leader, a teammate, how to work within a small class environment, and how to integrate into the larger community around you. You have picked up traits that will allow you to help solve puzzles that will be faced by our society over the next several decades. You have picked up traits that will place you in a position to guide others in a world that is in constant flux. You have learned to navigate the unknown with courage and resolve rather than fear!! You have learned to keep moving forward regardless of current situation because you have the confidence that you can reach your goal.

The world can rest easily knowing that you will be the ones to lead us onward! You are ready to receive this mantle and to serve your communities in a multitude of ways with dignity and honor.

We believe in you, we are proud of you, and we are excited to follow the wonderful path you will establish as a Panther alum! Go forward, graduates, and make your mark in this world! You have earned this opportunity!

President Thomas Mitzel, Ph. D.

During your years at KWC, did you make close friends? Find a life-long mate? Survive a broken heart? Feel anxious about your future? Benefit from being mentored by a favorite professor? Grow in ways you couldn't predict? Change your opinions on important life values? Learn what makes other people "tick"? Find a passion that moves and motivates you? Wonder where and what you'll be in 20 years? Yep....me, too! Take the time to celebrate your accomplishments and learn from your failures. With God's grace, we can change the world and make life on earth as it is in Heaven.

Ray Solley '74

Congratulations on your graduation! I'm sure the last year hasn't been anything like you pictured your senior year to be, but you should be so proud of all that you have accomplished. You have adapted and persisted through so many changes at KWC and in the bigger world, all the while upholding the Wesleyan Way. These past four years have helped you reach this moment, and I can't wait to see all the amazing things you will accomplish in the future! I wish you the best of luck as you start this next chapter of your journey!

Rachel Pritchard,
Associate Professor of Biology

Congratulations for overcoming and succeeding during a most difficult pandemic year. What a great accomplishment! As you move on to greater things, never forget the friendships and lessons you've learned while here at KWC. Cherish the fact that you'll always be a Wesleyan Alum and a Purple Panther!

Kathy Sherman '73

I hope you have enjoyed your time at Wesleyan. As you continue through life never stop learning, make an effort to make others' lives a little bit better, and also remember to enjoy the journey--it goes faster than you think it will. Love and prayers for you all.

Tony Hardesty,
Administrative Assistant for Student Life

Your four years at KWC were hopefully packed full of a myriad of experiences and memories. These experiences have likely prepared you for whatever lies ahead. All that is left to do is go out tackle whatever comes next with the same enthusiasm and excitement you did the previous four years. Don't forget to come back to campus to visit!

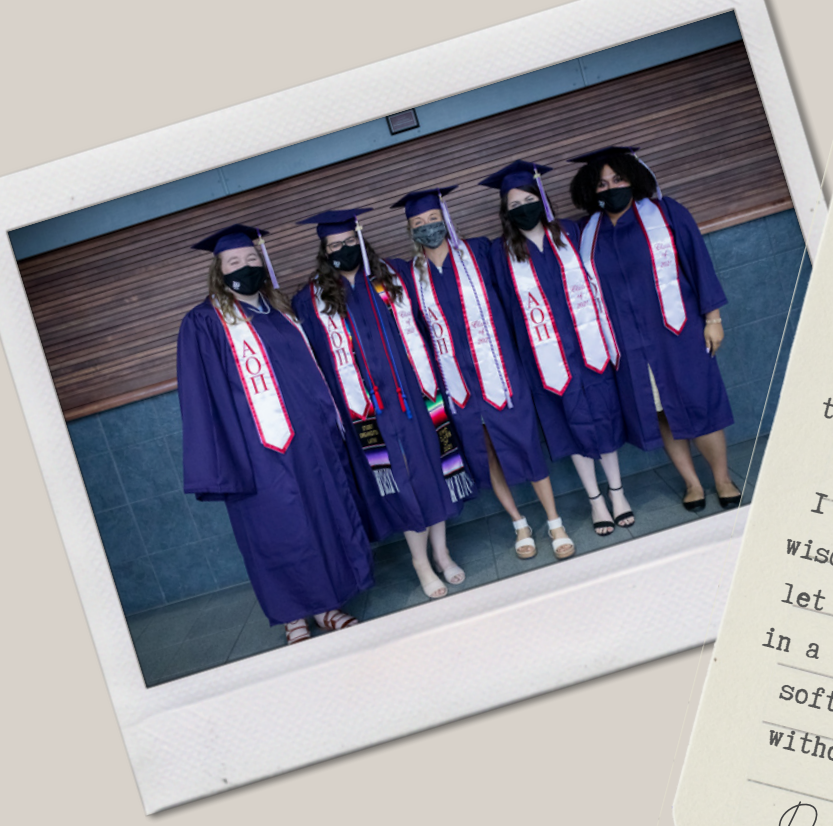
Lauren (Bishop) '08 & Stephen Wood '08

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." -Nelson Mandela

Kim Johnson, Bursar

Congratulations to you Class of 2021!! I feel like you deserve, more than ever, the most congratulations and honors for not only reaching this awesome point but all during a global pandemic too. I hope your experience at KWC is one you will carry with you forever and look back on fondly. I graduated 13 years ago now (WOW) and have loved my experience as an alumni as much as my experience as a student. I hope you'll be as excited to become an alumni and hopefully stay in touch with your KWC family as you move into your next chapter. Best of luck as you graduate and take your next steps, please know we wish you all the best and wish you the best of luck!!

Megan (Thomason) Kosewski '08



I truly wish the most prominent memories of your senior year didn't include the words Covid-19, masks, vaccinations, lockdowns, remote, and hybrid. Nevertheless, if I've learned anything in my 54-year life, it's that you can learn and benefit from just about anything. Some of my worst experiences turned out to be my best blessings in the long-run.

I can't possibly share all the words of wisdom I'd like. As a business professor, let me try to encompass as much as I can in a business kind of way: Hone both your soft skills and your hard skills. One without the other doesn't do you much good.

Danielle (Benson) Woodward '88
Assistant Professor of Management

The Wesleyan Way

We do everything with HONOR.
We always SUPPORT EACH OTHER.
We will COMPETE WITH INTEGRITY.
We LOVE EACH OTHER in Christ.

Congratulations! I am sure when you thought about what your four year plan at Wesleyan would include, you did not include a global pandemic. Overall, you handled it well. Well done!

Your last three semesters were a grind. May you find the rest you need now--and throughout your life--in Jesus Christ. (Matthew II:38 "Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.") Life is a grind. It will not always include the suffering and struggle of a pandemic, but it will always include hard things you will have to grind through. May you always embrace the hard things in your life with God's help. (Romans 5:3-4 "...but we also glory in our suffering, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.") As you move into the next season of your life, I pray you are filled with the joy and peace found in a relationship with Jesus Christ. (Romans I5:I3 "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.") I am praying for you to live out the Wesleyan Way...and to walk like Jesus walked (I John 2:6) in each season of your life!

Shawn Tomes '99,
Director of Campus Ministries

Blessing on you upon your graduation. As you emerge from your experiences at Kentucky Wesleyan College be well-assured that you are well-prepared not only for the rigors of career, but the challenges of everyday life. Your time at our beloved KWC all but seals it.

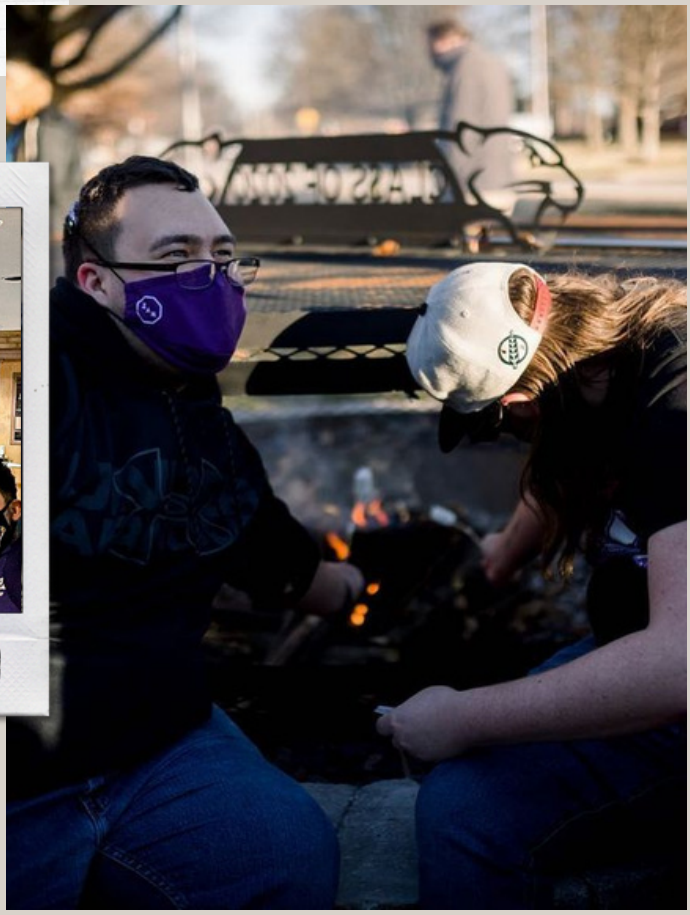
As you move forward, hold fast to your faith, serve others, stay true to yourself, and continue to live out the Wesleyan Way.

God bless you.

Tom Grieb '78

KWC will always be a part of your life! You will keep in touch with friends and faculty for the rest of your life. Enjoy your graduation and live in the moment. You will remember this as one of the best times of your life.

Abby McGregor-Mullen '03



Congratulations on your tremendous achievement! So much hard work and now you have done what the apostle Paul has done, as he said, "I have run the race" and his reward was before him. You have completed your education and now can go forth and CHANGE THE WORLD. As an alumni of Wesleyan, I am very proud of you all.

Cynthia (Taylor) Evans '91

Dear Graduates,

Congratulations on your graduation from KWC! Wherever your road leads from here I pray that God directs you every step of the way.

Tonya (Schroader) Johnson '95

Congratulations to all - COVID-19 did not defeat you!! You persevered, were resilient, and flexible and made 2020-2021 memorable for all. Live the Wesleyan Way, find your passion, don't be afraid to fail, and remember to "make your bed each day" so you will have something to celebrate as an accomplishment each day. Best Wishes!

Dr. Paula Dehn,
VP of Academic Affairs &
Dean of the College

Congratulations! Welcome to our group of KWC Alumni. The last year and a half of your college life was unlike anything anyone could have imagined as we were in the midst of a global pandemic, but you stood strong and persevered. Prayers and best of luck in all your future endeavors as you enter the true world of adulthood. Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. Proverbs 16:3

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6

Jessica (Merritt) Bramschreiber '06

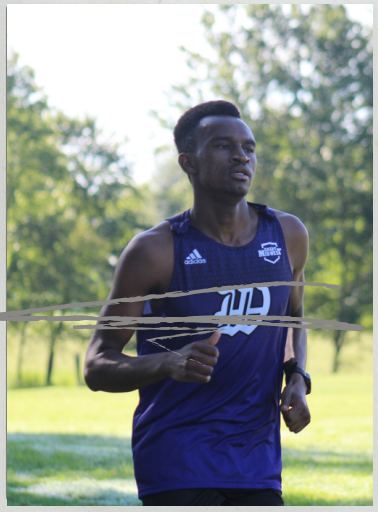
Your graduation marks a mile-stone for you that includes not only graduating from college, but you have endured one of the most difficult experiences our world has known in modern times. You have weathered a world-wide pandemic, isolation, economic upheaval, and social injustice that sought to paralyze and divide our great nation. But, with the enduring character that you and your classmates demonstrated, you now have upon you the title of Graduate! Congratulations!

I welcome you the world of KWC Alumni. Learn from my experience and don't take this lightly! There are KWC Alumni all around you - seek them out. Many are in positions of leadership which may assist you in an upward path for your career. It never hurts to know the right people in the right places. As you get established, future alumni may seek you out for the knowledge and experience you can provide as well.

As a clergy, I want to encourage you to stay strong in your faith - regardless of your religion. All of us need to recognize we are a part of something much greater than ourselves. The faith we profess will lead to opportunities of hope/joy. This will overcome those things the world can offer that would destroy and kill your spirit.

I personally have great hope for the future - because of YOU! Enter this post graduate season with eyes wide open, receptive hearts and a determination to be all you can be! Congratulations again on your outstanding accomplishment and the future that awaits you!

Rev. Phil Hill '77



I was probably the lowest regarded student to have ever graduated from Kentucky Wesleyan College. In my Freshman and Sophomore years, I was continually on both Academic and Disciplinary probation. I even had to appear before the Student Council. That really put the fear of the Lord in me. I buckled down, help organize the Sigma Nu fraternity, and turned from a "D" to a "B" student. I made friend with some great Christian men, who I remain close to today. I would not trade my experience at KWC for any other educational experience.

I wish you the best as you enter the rest of your life!

Rodney Dempsey '59

Do the best job you can, where you are and with what you have. Congratulations with your completion of this milestone and remember the KWC family and what you have learned there. Be strong, healthy and in control of your attitude. May our Good Lord guide your steps and light up your life. Enjoy the ride.

Nell Ewing (Leech) Horman '84

Figuring out your path in life is often learned by first experiencing what you don't like. This is how you shape your idea of what drives you, what excites you, and what motivates you to be a change maker.

Kelly Flick, Grant Writer

Have confidence that KWC prepared you for the next step, whether you are entering the workforce or continuing your education. I remember wondering if I knew enough and was enough....trust me when I say you are ready!!! Best Wishes to the Class of 2021!

Lisa (Pointer) Bryant '85

Congratulations! You have achieved the dream of a college degree and have done so during interesting times to say the least. We are proud of you and excited to now welcome you into the Kentucky Wesleyan College Alumni Association.

As you started your college journey, you may have been nervous, excited, unsure, determined to work toward the passion you've had burning inside for many years - perhaps all of these together or separate at one point or another. This journey may have also begun with you and only those closest to you walking alongside. Now you have achieved that degree which so many desire, and you are joined by a family of classmates, friends, faculty, staff and an entire Alumni Association of over 8,000 whom you call Family. Embrace that family and utilize the proud Panther network.

Stay close to KWC and all who helped you reach this milestone. It is a tremendous accomplishment and we cannot wait to hear about the amazing things that are still to come for each of you. Stay true to The Wesleyan Way and you cannot go wrong. God Bless!

Eddie Kenny, VP of Advancement

You are now a proud Kentucky Wesleyan College graduate! This class has persevered like no other. Last year the conclusion of the school year was interrupted by the COVIDI9 pandemic, but the Class of 202I experienced a full year of adjustments as you completed your academic studies. This is a true testament to hard-work, dedication and commitment!

The Class of 202I will truly be remembered as a special group! Please know that if you ever need anything I'm only an email, phone call or text message away. You've been a true joy to work with during your time at KWC! Godspeed.

Scott Kramer '87,
VP of Executive Initiatives & Retentionn

It has been an honor to be your Dean of Students at Wesleyan. Your class has shown grace, resilience, and strength during your time on campus. Your college experience started with a 90+ degree move-in day and ended in the middle of a pandemic. The last four years have had national tragedies and intense political division, but it's also been full of happy memories, celebrations, and successes for you and your classmates. The magic of Kentucky Wesleyan is that you actually know each other, you know each other's stories, and you will continue to be a part of the fabric of each other's lives even after you leave here.

I have five pieces of advice for you as you go off to change the world:

I. Get your people. Maintain your friendships, develop new ones, and be the kind of friend you would want to have. Maintain connections with the faculty and staff of Wesleyan and develop other mentoring relationships throughout your career. They will serve you in many ways as you move forward.
2. Show gratitude. In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. Think of the last time someone told you thank you for something you had done for them and how that made you feel. None of you have reached this point in your life without the encouragement or support of someone else. Make sure you have thanked those people and that throughout your life you thank people - for the big things and the small things. A grateful heart is a joyful heart.

3. Check your pride. People don't want to be around those with big egos or someone who would rather throw someone else under the bus instead of taking responsibility for their own actions. Admit when you're wrong or when you messed up - don't lie, don't shift blame, don't gaslight or deflect. Own it. People will respect you for it, they will give you grace to move on, and I promise you will sleep better at night.

4. Be the fan or the water. Social media sucks. While there are the benefits of being able to stay connected to friends and family, social media lends itself to comparisons with others and, especially over the last year, the opportunity to engage negatively with people about any number of topics. I've had to learn this the hard way, but you have two options when it comes to social media posts and negativity/gossip/complainers in general - you can be the fan or the water. Is what you are saying fanning the flames and making the situation worse or are you pouring water on the fire to calm things down? Or in a social or professional setting, are you fanning the fire of productivity, positivity, and synergy or are you pouring water on the fire by being negative, uncooperative, or letting your ego get in the way. Think about which of those you want to be known for in life - the fan or the water.

5. The only thing you can control is yourself. You can't control other people. You can't control many situations you may face. Instead, you choose how you respond to the things that happen to and around you. Choose wisely.

Thank you for all of the ways that you have changed Kentucky Wesleyan during your time on campus. I look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish and can't wait to see you when you return to campus for alumni events, Homecoming, and to help the generations of Wesleyan students behind you.

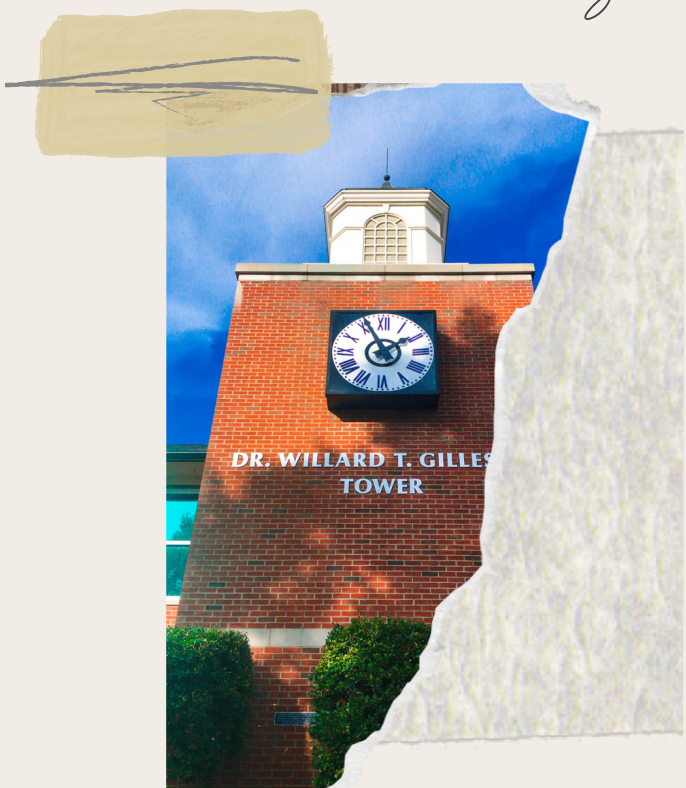
Dean Becca McQueen-Ruark

Congratulations and welcome to the Kentucky Wesleyan College Alumni Association! As I hope you've realized while reading this publication, being an alum of Kentucky Wesleyan is a very special thing. As you continue to sit with that realization, I wanted to let you know of a few ways your alumni office is here for you:

- We're here to sing your praises. Whether you're advancing in your career, getting married, starting a family or celebrating another life or career milestone, we want to know about it! We share these accomplishments on the alumni social media channels, in the Alumni Monthly e-mewsletter and in the biannual Kentucky Wesleyan magazine. You can always share these at kwc.edu/ClassNote.
- We're here to connect you with others. We host a multitude of alumni events every year and would love to have you join us! We also love reconnecting alumni. As you move through life, you might lose touch with someone you were close with. When you're ready to reconnect, give me a call and I'll do my best to make it happen.
- We here to help you give back. We lean on our alumni to act as mentors for current students, to serve on the Alumni Association's Board of Directors and to give financially so that future students have the opportunities you did. When you're settled and ready to give back, let us know!
- We're here for anything else you need.

I'm your new friend. I'm here to answer your "dumb" questions, to be your first friend at an alumni event where you don't know anyone else and for you to lean on as life ebbs and flows. Reach out to me any time at summer.crick@kwc.edu or on my cell at 270-619-6993.

Warmly,
Summer Crick '14, Director of Alumni Relations



I am excited to welcome you as our newest class of Alumni. I certainly hope that being an Alumnus of Kentucky Wesleyan College means as much to you as it does to me. I will tell you that in my earlier years, I did not think that it was that big of a deal. However, I was wrong. It was a big deal. It was a big deal for my dad, my grandmother, my sister, and everyone who invested in me (since I was a first generation college graduate). Once I realized this, I found a greater sense of pride in my accomplishments. I hope that every one of you can find that sense of pride and passion much sooner than I did. As a young man, I did not realize how much the Wesleyan community shaped my life. I did not appreciate the developments that came to fruition from each chapter that was written at Wesleyan. Not only did Kentucky Wesleyan College make some of the greatest impacts on my life, but it also taught me values. I did not realize that immediately. I hope that you are grateful for your education and your time at Kentucky Wesleyan College as it is a gift.

Here are few words of advice that I would like to pass on that I hold in high regard:

First, never let anything or anyone come between you and your character. Your character says everything about who you are. People will know you by your character. Having character means to have courage and willingness to do the right thing all the time. People with character always do their best and never give up. They work hard for themselves, their family, their church, their community, their friends and more. Do not do anything that might compromise your character. It takes forever to build and only a short time to destroy.

Secondly, I would invite you to take a moment and reflect on what integrity means to you. To me, it is about honesty and doing what is right even when no one is looking. I know that sounds cliché, but that is the easiest way for me to share it. Your integrity can be one of your greatest attributes in life. It is also a trait that you can teach others, especially your children. Think about it, do you want to do business or be in a relationship with someone who holds integrity up high or someone that cuts corners, misleads, or stretches the truth? I think that we know that answer.

Lastly, I would encourage each of you to figure out what your “BRAND” is. You may be asking what that means. Think about some of your favorite brands of clothing, restaurants, and businesses. Why are they your favorites? Now use that information to establish what your brand is. What words do you want associated with your name? What will people think of you when it comes to business, teaching, or community? If any of those words have a negative connotation, you may want to re-brand. Also, please keep in mind that all the hard work that you put into building your character, integrity and brand can be shattered in moments by poor choices in behavior, actions, and words.

I want to wish you the best upon your graduation and congratulations on this great accomplishment, and, as you will see from this album, I hope you will realize that your Wesleyan memories are just beginning. Hold your heads up high, build your brand, and lead with character and integrity. You are a Kentucky Wesleyan Panther and that is something to be proud of. Wear your purple often and wear it with pride. Hopefully, we will see you, the Class of 202I, at Homecoming in September. It is my honor to welcome you into the Kentucky Wesleyan College Alumni Association.

Keep living the Wesleyan Way!

Go Panthers!

Sam Taylor ’97

President, KWC Alumni Association

Join us for

Homecoming 2021

September 24-26, 2021

Visit kwc.edu/Homecoming for the full schedule and to RSVP for your I-Year Reunion!