



**Leadership Dinner Remarks  
October 4, 2024**

Thank you, Joe, for that kind introduction and for your unwavering dedication to Ursinus. To our trustees and alumni volunteers here tonight, your leadership and support are invaluable, and I am deeply grateful.

Good evening, everyone. Tonight is a celebration—not just of what we’ve accomplished together but of the boundless potential we hold to shape the future of Ursinus. We are not maintaining the status quo; together, we are creating something extraordinary.

As I stand before you tonight, I feel the energy and commitment that have fueled our journey forward.

Your support—your volunteer efforts, mentorship and service, and financial support—has an indelible impact on our students.

Ursinus has much to be proud of. Yes, we are one of the top 100 national liberal arts colleges. But that’s not all. We are the first liberal arts college to sign the Okanagan Charter affirming our commitment to student health and well-being, and we are proud to be the first college certified as a Recovery-Friendly Workplace.

I am particularly proud, as a first gen, Pell kid myself, to share that Ursinus is ranked among the top 60 institutions for social mobility. We are proud that our commitment to access and excellence remains at the core of everything we do.

These accolades are nice, but they are not enough. **We can, and we must, do more.**

Ursinus is at a crossroads, and so is higher education. We face rising competition, shifting societal demands, and an evolving landscape of expectations. But with great challenges come even greater opportunities. This is our moment to redefine liberal education for the 21st century—to ensure that Ursinus not only thrives, but sets the standard for what higher education can and should be.



We're not interested in being an institution slow to change. **We're committed to bold action.** By embracing an entrepreneurial mindset, taking calculated risks, and learning from failure, we unlock limitless potential—for Ursinus, for our students, and for the future.

Our mission is to equip students not just to navigate complexity but to **flourish in a world of constant change.** Ursinus will be known as the college that prepares nimble, creative, forward-thinking leaders—people ready to shape the future.

Our students are more than learners. They are innovators, problem solvers, and future leaders. They are trained to think across disciplines and create solutions to challenges seen and unforeseen. This is in our DNA. And we must be intentional about how we prepare them for this future.

At Ursinus, students are immersed in an environment that goes beyond traditional boundaries. They engage deeply with their fields but also learn how to connect, integrate, and create knowledge across disciplines. **The challenges of tomorrow do not recognize boundaries, and neither can we.**

We look to a future where every student receives a personal and personalized educational experience, one that blends the best of liberal education with hands-on, real-world learning.

My vision is for Ursinus to be a beacon of what liberal education should be: A place where career preparation, leadership development, and experiential learning are woven into the very fabric of what we do.

But we can't do this alone. **We need your partnership** more than ever. Together, we will push boundaries, set new standards, and ensure that Ursinus remains a place where the unimaginable becomes reality.

I am deeply grateful to each of you for everything you've done for Ursinus—as philanthropists, as volunteers, and as advocates. I ask you to continue supporting us by investing in our future, volunteering your time, referring students to Ursinus, and providing internships and early-career opportunities.



# Ursinus College

And most importantly—brag about us! We are not a hidden gem. Ursinus is a college that changes lives and, in doing so, shapes a prosperous, just, and sustainable future for us all.

Thank you again for your unwavering support. I look forward to the future we will build together.

[PAUSE FOR TRANSITION TO STUDENT SPEAKER INTRO]

Now it is my pleasure to introduce to you Alisa [A-LISA] Zenchenko [ZEN-CHENK-O].

Alisa is a member of the Class of 2025, a biology and politics dual-degree, our student government president, scholarship recipient, and Melrose fellow, amongst her numerous other accolades.

Alisa recently represented Ursinus on a study abroad trip to Seoul, South Korea, where she and her classmates explored human rights and the Confucian and Buddhist traditions as well as human rights violations in World War II and the Korean War.

She also completed an internship with President of the Philadelphia City Council, Kenyatta Johnson. Alisa represents her peers whether on campus, regionally, or worldwide. She illustrates what can be achieved through an Ursinus education, but I'll let you hear it from her own words. Please welcome Alisa.

[LEAD APPLAUSE]