

Annual Senior Recognition IMSA Class of 2015  
29 May 2015, Sheraton Hotel, Lisle, Illinois  
"Remarks"  
Dr. Jose M. Torres, President  
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy

Greetings parents, family members, PAC, Faculty & staff and Class of 2015! Welcome and congratulations on reaching this milestone.

Seniors, over the past three years, you've developed skills that you didn't have; learned content that you didn't know; and nurtured relationships with roommates, wing mates, hall mates, and classmates.

You started out as strangers. And found out the truth of the saying, "There are no strangers here, only friends we haven't met yet." And today and over the past few days, you have felt a wide range of feelings.

What I believe that you're experiencing today: excitement and sadness; joy and fear; anticipation and trepidation. These are normal feelings that we all experience one way or another. Remember just a few years ago (three years, 36 months, 145 weeks, 1014 days, 24,336 hours, (1,460,160 minutes, 87,609,600 seconds). Just a few years ago, you were sophomores or schmen, wide-eyed, scared and naïve.

Look at you now! You're wise, mature (some of you), confident seniors. Congratulations. You made it! In just a few short years you've experienced such personal growth.

Time is strange, isn't it? We think we know time because we can "tell" it, "watch" it, speak about it. But what do we mean when we say that time "runs," or that time "goes slow?" Time fools you into thinking that it goes slow. You remember the classes that went so slow that it felt that time wasn't running, it was crawling! In the end, you find that time flew—passed us by. Like now, here you are three years later and it seems like it was just yesterday that you were taking your placement exam!

It's not "time" that fools us into thinking that it goes slow; rather, it is us. We are the ones who deceive ourselves into thinking that time is experienced in terms of days, weeks, and years. In fact, time is best experienced in terms of minutes. The last three years were actually 1,460,160 minutes! (87,609,600 seconds for those of you who are curious.)

"Life is Just a Minute"  
Life is just a minute, only sixty seconds in it.  
Forced upon you, can't refuse it,  
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,  
But it's up to you to use it.  
You must suffer if you lose it.  
Give an account if you abuse it.  
Just a tiny little minute,  
But eternity is in it.  
Dr. Benjamin E. Mays (Mays)

As you look around the room today at your classmates, promise yourselves to stay in touch. Rely on one another because before you know it, a minute will pass, then days and weeks, a

year and then, three, five, then 10 and so on. Before you know it, it'll be your 25<sup>th</sup> year reunion, then your 40<sup>th</sup>.

Don't miss life's opportunities to stay connected to one another. Your classmate today can be a co-founder of a start-up with you tomorrow; or a partner in a law or medical practice; or a colleague at a lab; or a roommate at the University. I have even heard that a classmate here could even become your life partner, your spouse—I'm just saying!

My point is this: Don't neglect each other after today. For the sake of friendship, stay in touch long after tomorrow—with your friends and with IMSA, too! Make sense?

Let me end with a poem about time, friendships and connections by Charles Hanson Towne, "Around the Corner."

Around the corner I have a friend,  
In this great city that has no end;  
Yet the days go by, and weeks rush on,  
And before I know it a year is gone,  
And I never see my old friend's face,  
For Life is a swift and terrible race.  
He knows I like him just as well,  
As in the days when I rang his bell,  
And he rang mine. We were younger then,  
And now we are busy, tired men:  
Tired with playing a foolish game,  
Tired with trying to make a name.  
"To-morrow," I say, "I will call on Jim  
"Just to show that I'm thinking of him."  
But to-morrow comes—and tomorrow goes,  
And distance between us grows and grows.  
Around the corner—yet miles away,...  
"Here's a telegram sir,..."  
  "*Jim died today.*"  
And that's what we get, and deserve in the end:  
Around the corner, a vanished friend. (Towne)

Class of 2015, do not let the distance between us, between one another, grow and grow. Please stand and let's take a minute, just 60 seconds, to thank each other for our friendships as we know them today and as we hope them to be in the future. Thank you.

#### References

- Mays, B. (n.d.). Life is Just a... Retrieved May 2015, from <https://morganconover.wordpress.com/tag/dr-benjamin-e-mays/>
- Towne, C. (n.d.). Around the Corner. Retrieved May 2015, from [http://www.Ins.cornell.edu/~seb/around\\_the\\_corner.html](http://www.Ins.cornell.edu/~seb/around_the_corner.html)