

Well, happy Mothers Day. I want to begin by wishing my mother, Carol Lee, and my wife, Sarah, happy Mothers Day. I am honored and quite moved by this award, and I want to thank the Board of Trustees, the faculty and graduates of Pomona College.

And I especially want to thank David Oxtoby, who has, from the moment of my arrival at Occidental, served as both a mentor and a friend. As you know, he's an extremely busy man, the leader of a great college, so the fact that he took the time to single me out and take me in hand means a great deal to me. Some of you may know that being David's friend can be a humbling experience, particularly if you're on a bicycle. Not long after my arrival at Occidental, he took me on a 35-mile ride near Ojai that left me gasping for air. He is a tough man to keep up with, whether on a bicycle or off, but I have been inspired by his example, and never more so than in this past year.

I bring you greetings from the Occidental Tigers. I can say with confidence: there is nothing a

Southern California as they do under the gray skies of Eastern Europe. Perhaps never more so than in a country like our own, which is so thoroughly divided and so much in need of repair. I am absolutely convinced that the education you have received at Pomona College is the very best preparation you could possibly have to address the concerns of a country that sorely needs your thoughtfulness, your deliberation, your character, and your vision.

I wish you well on this fine day, on the occasion of your graduation from this very fine institution. Thank you.

Jonathan Veitch is the 15th president of Occidental College, a private liberal arts college founded in Los Angeles in 1887, the same year as Pomona College. Veitch was inaugurated as president of Occidental on July 1, 2009, where he has sought to create new partnerships with Southern California's premier cultural institutions and strengthened the College's civic engagement, arts and literacy programs. A Stanford graduate, Veitch earned his doctoral degree in the history of American civilization from Harvard and is the author of the award-winning