Good evening, Centre College! What a pleasure it is to be here on this historic day.

Tonight, as we look to build on the powerful legacy of John Roush, never have I felt such a sense of optimism for the future of Centre College.

I have had the good fortune to be on this stage several times at moments that were milestones for me personally or for the college. First, to receive my own degree, much later to deliver the Commencement address as Kentucky’s Lieutenant Governor, and just a little over a year ago to speak at the Founder’s Day celebration of the school’s 200th anniversary.

Each of those occasions caused me to reflect on the role this institution has had in my own life and the lives of countless alumni, and of the college’s impact on the state and broader community we serve.

On Founder’s Day last year, I focused on the personal stories of graduates who for 200 years have gone on to lives of purpose, service and leadership. And as I prepared those remarks, I was reminded once again of the outsized impact Centre has had throughout its history in turning out graduates whose lives have meaningful impact on the world around them.

It was those deep feelings I have for this place and the respect I hold for its rich traditions that I carried with me into the search process for a new President.

I had my own perspective as an alumna and member of the Board of Trustees. And each participant in the search brought his or her own perspective to the table. But we all shared a common bond...a passion for all that is best about Centre and a commitment to secure its future. We all shared a deep sense of responsibility to get this right! And to a person, we all agreed that with the selection of Dr. Milton Moreland, we got it right!
Dr. Moreland is deeply rooted in the liberal arts tradition, yet he is realistic about the challenges facing institutions like Centre and brings creative, visionary ideas that will help the college adapt to a changing world while protecting all that is best about our past.

Among the many ideas Milton brings is to forge partnerships that will make Centre more relevant to Kentucky. This is of particular interest to me because throughout my career in public service I have seen how often Kentucky battles negative stereotypes as we work toward progress.

But Centre College is a beacon of educational excellence in Kentucky and Dr. Moreland believes we can be even more relevant to the state by linking our students with opportunities here and engaging business leaders in supporting our future.

On a personal level, Milton Moreland brings a warm and engaging style that will help nurture the strong sense of community that is such a vital part of Centre’s success.

In higher education, we use a number of ways to measure success. We are proud of our beautiful campus, our new buildings, our endowment, our national rankings…but in the end our success here has always been built on the personal strengths of the individuals who comprise our campus community. It is the hearts and minds of our leadership, our faculty, our staff, student body and alumni…their passion for learning and their commitment to excellence that makes Centre College what it is.

Milton Moreland embodies all that is best in those ideals.

And Milton and Dena, you can expect to be welcomed here with the same generous spirit that has always been the hallmark of this institution. Dr. Milton Moreland is the right person at the right time to lead Centre College forward into its Third Century!

I couldn’t be more pleased to help welcome him to the Centre College community.