On behalf of your Library School Alumni Association, I want to add my congratulations to the Class of ’13. Please note that I said "your Library School Alumni Association." You can be proud to have earned your degree from the best program in our field. In addition, you join colleagues who are highly respected nationally and even globally because each earned a degree from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois. They lead in libraries, they innovate technologies, they build communities of information, and they inspire the people around them do the same.

Now undoubtedly your time in GSLIS has involved working in teams. You got to know your first teams in boot camp. By today, you have worked with many who share your desire make the world a better place with the education you gained in GSLIS. Your skills and insights joined those of others in courses where you and your team members gained new skills and insights. Sometimes this happened in the GSLIS building, sometimes in Moodle and sometimes over at Legends.

Gaining new skills and insights with your colleagues doesn't end today. Regardless of what the next stage looks like with your new degree, today you join a new team, the coalition of graduates of GSLIS. Some of you will work with fellow GSLIS alums next week. Others will cross paths with alums in the course of your careers, in professional development settings, and in academic and industry activities. (I experienced this early in my first job when I was asked to call a library services
vendor in another part of the country. After introducing myself, the person on the other end said, "Hey Jim, it's me. We were in Collection Development together.")

The deliverables for your new team include maintaining the value of the degree. You will do this by excelling. And GSLIS will support you by continuing to make the program the best there is. Here's where your Library School Alumni Association comes in. Your new team needs you to keep the program strong, to bring potential students to GSLIS by telling what you know about the school, to build support for the brilliant faculty and their work, and to speak out about the importance of GSLIS for society.

Here's how you can support and be supported by your new team:

First, stay in touch. Trade emails and Facebook IDs with the people in this hall and with those you took classes with. See each other over drinks. If you don't drink, see each other over something else.

Second, make sure Diana Stroud or anyone else in Office of Alumni Relations has your current email address. She will send you the eUpdate. Read it and find out the amazing things GSLIS is doing, the outstanding things your teammates are doing in the Class Notes, and where you can meet up with other alums around the country. And yes, she will ask for your support financially. Please understand why GSLIS needs your support -- to make a better society and to maintain the value of your degree.

So welcome to your new team. We're here for you.