



encouraged our abilities, tested our strengths and helped us to overcome weaknesses. Without them, we would not be here.

As students of Lewis University, we are all members of a nurturing community that pulls us together as one. The support systems we have developed with one another have encouraged a foundation of tolerance and understanding that has led to many positive interpersonal relationships from which we have drawn. Although established in the past, these relationships are interwoven in to the present and will give us security in the future.

When I began my learning experience here at Lewis, I thought that I was all alone in my pursuit of higher education. I was unaware of the strong bonds that I would establish and how they would lead me to achieve the level of success that I am enjoying here as a graduate. I am certain that many of you shared similar feelings but also found bonds of hope and experienced achievement.

Beyond faculty, family, and friends, another component of a healthy and nurturing environment can be found in extracurricular activities. Such opportunities allow students to discover hidden talents and abilities. For me, it has been the debate team, for others it has been athletics, the theatre, honor societies, student government, cultural groups, departmental clubs, and fraternities, among the many opportunities. Taking part in these activities encouraged us, challenged us, and transformed us.

In the union with all the other parts, the entire nurturing community is reflected in Lewis University and the LaSalle education tradition as carried on not only by the Christian Brothers but also by all the members of the Lewis University community. This is witnessed by their shared values, their sensitivity to student, their dedication to education and learning, and their responsiveness to those in need. Because of this tradition, we have grown together as part of

one body and we have also been fortunate enough to receive both nurturing and many rewards that we would not have received at any other institution, either public or private.

Nurturing stimulates growth. This is true in education as it is in careers, child rearing, marriage or friendships. Growth I have witnessed both in myself and in many of my fellow graduates includes increased personal maturity, self-awareness, enhanced stability, a heightened ethical and moral perspective, an ability to think critically, and a genuine responsiveness to the needs of others.

We have not all grown in all these ways, but because of a Lewis Education, we have all grown. Lewis by providing us with a strong

Because of my experiences here at Lewis, I am more assertive, more aware of myself, and not afraid to try something new. I am sure that this also applies to all of my fellow graduates in that throughout my course work I have noticed students becoming increasingly more aware and more confident about themselves. Attitudes and beliefs have matured and changed. We understand others better and more compassionately a strength necessary in the years to follow this commencement.

What kind