

**Welcome Remarks by Kathleen Sideli, Associate Vice President for Overseas Study at Indiana University and Managing Director, Bologna Consortial Studies Program since 2007**

Thank you President McRobbie, Mrs. McRobbie and Rettore Ubertini and all of you for joining us today. Since I have spent my entire career sending students abroad, I speak with knowledge when I praise the Bologna Program. Its success is based on the efforts of many individuals, some of whom we will recognize today. A partnership between two universities is only successful when those involved are committed to the relationship. We have seen that with each generation, the University of Bologna and the institutions in the Bologna Consortial Studies Program have demonstrated that commitment. And the proof of that is visible today, with more than 100 alumni and faculty from the United States who are here with our Italian colleagues. Together you represent the more than 1,500 American alumni, 300 Italian alumni, 34 resident directors, 35 exchange professors and dozens of staff who have participated in this partnership since its inception.

This program began as the simple idea of one professor—Mark Musa, an Italian scholar who spent his academic career at Indiana University. It was with sadness that we learned of his death last year. I studied with him when I was in graduate school and I can still see that twinkle in his eye and the passion in his face as he taught us about Dante. He brought that same enthusiasm to his idea to launch a program through which Indiana students could study at the oldest university in the world. He served as the program's first director in 1965-66, establishing a rotating director model that was in place for almost forty years. It wasn't long before other schools wanted access to this program that placed American students in University of Bologna courses while immersing them in Italian society. First came the addition of the University of Wisconsin in 1969. Over time, other institutions joined, including the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois and, for a time, Queens College. These partners shared the rotation of the faculty directors. Another feature of the program was that Indiana and Wisconsin funded one-year opportunities to graduate students from Bologna. As the program gained in prestige and visibility, associate members were added which included Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Columbia, Cornell, Mount Holyoke, Northwestern, the University of Michigan and Notre Dame. Indiana University has always served, with great pleasure I might add, as the managing institution of this complex consortium.

In 1995 the program agreed to exchange undergraduate students from Bologna at consortium institutions, thus giving them a chance to spend a year in the United States. And around that same time we also agreed to exchange faculty members for short-term experiences, thus widening the partnership even further.

This overview gives you an idea of what we are celebrating today. When I was interviewed about my own experience in Madrid as an undergraduate, I said that studying in another country, using only the language of the host country, is akin to being reborn. We rarely remember how we learned our first language, how we adapted to our own society or navigated our environment. Yet when you live in another country as an adult, you are reborn in the sense that you have to learn everything all over again—how to speak the language, how to communicate your thoughts and needs to others and how to describe the new sights and sounds around you. It is as if every sense has been awakened in ways you had never experienced before. This is why we are here today, to celebrate 50 years of giving students and faculty an opportunity to reawaken to life and, in a true sense, to become new citizens of the world.