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Opening Remarks, delivered at Science Olympiad on May 15, 1998

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It is good for a person to know that he or she is good at something, and we can constantly learn to do something well — all of our lives. For instance, at 90 years of age, Mr. Annis, who has accomplished so much scientifically, learned that he can ride an elephant. You have learned to do scientific experiments well at an early stage in your lives. In fact, you are the best middle and high school students in the nation in doing science. We at Grand Valley are pleased to have you here. More than that, we are honored. Whenever you can have the best of your campus, it is an honor.

The Olympics have always represented the best from the time they began in ancient Greece. To hold control in sports encouraged young men and women to achieve at their highest levels, and then in the next round they and others sought to surpass the records set. We will be forever grateful to those who established the Science Olympiad. They transferred a sports format to science and it works. Science provides a part of our world that can always be improved by discovery. In Les Misérables, Victor Hugo writes, “Where the telescope ends, the microscope begins.” Which of the two has the grander view? I suppose that depends on your
interest. It demonstrates the vastness of our world where experiment and discovery never end, and in the process bring exciting knowledge.

You are beginning young, working with scientific knowledge that will inevitably lead you to more knowledge if you stick with it. We are happy that you are stopping at Grand Valley State University on your journey toward expanding scientific achievement.