



2002 COMMENCEMENT SPEECH EXCERPTS

Chancellor Robert Dynes, John Muir College Commencement:

The final year of college is always a memorable one. But yours has been like no other. The tragedy that occurred as you were heading back to school in September has changed the world you are going to inherit. You will face challenges we never anticipated. We've watched you closely this school year, and we know you are ready. You have shown a strong sense of community. You have embraced diversity because you grew up with it. You are full of hope. You have faith in humanity. And you will not tolerate hate. So this year, I would like to depart from the usual Commencement tradition of quoting somebody old back in history. Instead, I'd like to share words from one of your own Muir graduates.

Her name is Elan Drucker, and she's sitting down there somewhere - there she is, over there - and she was one of 40 undergraduates who presented papers at the 2002 UCSD Urban Studies and Planning Research Exposition.

Along with her research findings, Elan presented a list of what she called "lessons in research methodology." I think you could also think of these as "lessons in life." And I quote:

One: Be open to new information.

Two: Don't cling to your initial grand ideas out of pride.

Three: Be willing to grow over obstacles.

Four: Pick a subject for which you feel genuine passion.

Five: Ease stress by working consistently. I'd like to add to that: Ease stress by working out consistently.

Six: Address all contacts with respect.

And seven (although you think you've probably turned in the last assignment, it ain't true): Turn in assignments with pride and confidence.

Let me take this opportunity to pay tribute to some of the people who supported you along the way. To Muir College Dean Chips Dreilinger - I think Chips could be described at this point as "outgoing" but never "retiring" - thank you for teaching several generations of students that learning is a passion and that knowledge is a joy.

And then to the parents and loved ones of our graduates, thank you for lending us these remarkable young people and for lifting them up so that they could see new horizons. I'm afraid you're going to have to lend them a lot more in the years to come.

Finally, to the graduates, as you head to these new horizons, let me ask two favors of you.

Firstly, you are the lucky ones. You were born with a few more connections in this three-pound piece of meat called "the brain." You're just lucky. And because of that luck, you've had the opportunity to study at one of the premier universities in the country. I believe that, in return, you owe something back to society. Please find ways throughout your life to use your talents to serve other people. Everything you give, you will get back, in some form or another at some time or another. And you have so much to give.

The second is a very parochial favor I have to ask of you: Stay in touch.

Today marks your transition from UCSD students to UCSD alumni. I hope you will come back often and remain active in the UCSD community. I hope you will be extremely successful because the more successful you are, the better we look.

I salute you on this joyous day, and wish you much happiness throughout your lives. Now go out and please make us very proud.

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