

2013 VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

by

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Good evening Pro Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, distinguished guests, members of the administration, faculty staff, and fellow graduates. To present the valedictory speech is an honour but to be presenting it during the University's 50th anniversary is even more remarkable. Before I begin, I would like to congratulate my fellow graduates on achieving this goal. I'd also like to congratulate the University of Guyana for achieving this major milestone.

I believe each one of us took our first step in pursuing our dreams when we decided to enroll in the university. We have spent our time here developing our knowledge in our focus areas making our dreams a reality. Today, we take the final step in our university experience. . . Our hard work, long hours of studying, and constant stress has finally paid off. It is time to take the knowledge we have gained and apply what we have learned to the pursuit of our future endeavors. For some that may be the continuation of their education, to others it is the start of their chosen profession. Whichever the case may be, I wish all my fellow students success in life.

As graduates, we face many uncertainties in both the immediate and distant future. However, uncertainty is another word for opportunity. We must concentrate on enhancing our futures and setting great examples for those who will follow us. We must be tomorrow's positive images. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. We should all strive to leave a trail that others will be proud to follow.

We all come from different walks of life, we all have different stories to recount our journey here, and after today we will all embark on unique paths. Yet, the common thread that runs among us is the desire for a brighter future and despite our different views about what that future may look like, we took the same step to bring us closer to our ultimate goal.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." The importance of education can never be understated. Through our education, we realize that we are not powerless, that our choices will bring us to certain goals. Educated individuals are encouraged to ask: Isn't there more? Why am I here? But, best of all, educated people know that there is so much that we don't know.

The accomplishment of your goals is only possible through dedication, passion, and effort. Don't ever become easily discouraged, believe in yourself and stay determined in the face of adversity, and never let your fears hold you back. Sometimes, taking the road less traveled can lead to unexpected opportunities and memorable experiences. But never forget to maintain the curiosity of a child and embrace opportunities that will broaden or challenge your perspectives.

At this time, I would like to thank everyone who encouraged or supported me through this incredible journey especially my parents, Rohan and Selina Marray, who taught me the value of education and gave me the building blocks I needed. On behalf of the graduates I thank the lecturers and all other persons who were involved, directly and indirectly, in making us successful graduates in 2013.

As we close this chapter and begin a new one, let us never forget the bridges we've crossed, the bonds we've shared and the memories that we've made. Let us always remember the important role that the University of Guyana has played in helping us accomplish our goals.

Once again, congratulations to the class of 2013!

Thank You!