

Graduation Remarks by Marjorie Harrison
SEGi College/ Upper Iowa University Commencement
Sunday, December 14, 2008, 11:00am
Prince Hotel

Dr. Steven Baptist, Acting Deputy Principal & Head of ADP SEGi College Subang Jaya;
Dr. Lisa Tan, Principal SEGi College Subang Jaya;
KC Lee, Chief Operations Officer SEGi & Principal SEGi University College Kota Damansara;
Dr. Alan Walker, President, Upper Iowa University;
Dr. DeWayne Frazier, Senior Vice President, International Programs, Upper Iowa University;
Faculty and staff from SEGi,
Other visitors from Upper Iowa,
Graduating Students, Parents of Graduates,
Distinguished guests:

Good morning.

And congratulations to all the graduates! It is a pleasure to be here today to help you celebrate your achievements. I know that you have worked hard to accomplish all that has led up to today's ceremony.

I am delighted to be here to help honor you and your families for the support they have given you to help you achieve your goals. Yes, congratulations are certainly in order. Now, you are ready for the next phase of your life.

By deciding to attend SEGi College's American Degree Program, in partnership with Upper Iowa University, you chose to study in the American style. I believe you made an excellent choice.

The American system of higher education has taught you how to learn, and provided you with the skills and the knowledge to go off to find your unique place in society.

And it is all about finding your place in society. What kind of role do you want to play? How do you want to contribute? Where do you want to make your mark?

These are the questions all graduates ask themselves. My friends and I asked ourselves these questions when we were graduating, and I know that many of you are wondering about the same things.

Hopefully, those of you who are going to start working directly, rather than going on to graduate school, already know where you will be working. This is when I love to tell people how I looked for my first job in the yellow pages!

I was a history major as an undergraduate, and really only had a vague idea of what I wanted to do. I decided to look in the telephone yellow pages. Now, there was no listing related to "history" but since I was also interested in education, I made a list of all the companies listed under "educational research."

I sent them all letters and copies of my then fairly meager resumé. When I didn't hear anything from a company, I would call and present myself over the phone. Did I get a job that way? No, not even an interview! But I did learn quite a bit about writing letters and talking to personnel directors on the telephone!

I really am very happy to have the opportunity to speak to you on such an important occasion. What a great day!

This is an opportunity for me to impart knowledge, be inspirational, funny, share wisdom, and ultimately hopefully leave you with a satisfied feeling that you have been properly sent off into the world.

That's a big job! I thought about what I wanted to say, what I wanted you to take away from this. I thought about what I've learned in my life and what has made me a happier person. Then I knew exactly what I wanted to talk about.

You are about to embark on a great journey. The destination, presumably, is professional success and the trip will inevitably take many twists and turns. There will probably be many detours as you find your way amid all the choices and the requirements of the route you take.

Along the way you will meet many different people. Some will help you and some will not. Some will be your supervisors; others will be your colleagues. Eventually there will be some who will be your subordinates.

You will make friends with some and be not so friendly with others. Some will become your best friends and others will feel like your worst rivals.

Please remember this: Your relationships with other people are the most important aspects of life. Treat them with great care. Pay attention to them and value them. Always work on improving them. Relationships with others will make the difference between a life you are proud of and one you may regret.

We're often taught that life should not be a popularity contest. Instead of worrying and wondering if others like you, it is important to be truthful and sincere and have integrity about what you do and how you do it. That's certainly true.

But what is missing from that advice is the information that what is also important is caring for others. Show kindness in all you do. Not because it will make you popular, but because it is good to treat others with compassion.

In the work place good relationships with your colleagues and your subordinates will be the most productive way to encourage and support effective work. Let your goal be to be the best co-worker your colleagues have ever met.

When you become the boss, be the best boss your employees have ever had. You will find that the more caring and supportive you are, the better the work environment is, and the more productive your office will be!

In your personal life, you will communicate love and commitment to your family and friends if you show them kindness and caring in every interaction. Make it your goal not to hurt others' feelings. You'll find that the benefits multiply as people feel good about being around you and you feel good yourself.

As I look around this room today, I know I'm looking at the faces of tomorrow's leaders. I know that you will all go far in helping to guide the future of your society and your country.....and the

world. You have taken the initiative to come to this university, to study hard and to prepare yourself. I commend you for that.

Our two countries, Malaysia and the United States, have a strong bi-lateral relationship. That is not to say that our leaders agree on everything, but we work together on many issues and in many areas and we have a mutual respect. As young Malaysians with American university degrees, each of you is in a truly special position to make a contribution to the future of the Malaysian-American relationship. Whether in the fields of business or economic development, environmental protection or energy conservation, you will be better equipped to appreciate the similarities and understand the differences between our two countries. We need people like you, as we move further into the 21st century.

I wish you every success in your future endeavors, from business to family life. Most of all, I wish you long and rewarding lives in your communities, and I hope and trust that the world will benefit from your talents and ideas. The world needs you! There are so many, many problems to be solved and you are the ones who need to solve them!

Again, congratulations on your graduation. I hope I have offered you something you can take with you today. Some food for thought. Some ideas to consider. Thank you.

I want to end by sharing you with these words from the Dalai Lama:

Never Give Up.

No matter what is going on, Never Give Up.

Develop the heart.

Too much energy in the world is spent developing the mind instead of the heart.

Be compassionate.

Work for peace.

In your heart and in the world,

Work for peace.

And I say again

Never Give Up

No Matter what is happening

No matter what is going on around you

Never Give Up.