

NAA OBOSHIE ANANG
FRIDAY MORNING 20TH JULY 2018
VALECDICTORIAN SPEECH

Chairman of Council representing the Chancellor,
Members of Council,
Vice-Chancellor,
Pro-Vice-Chancellors,
Registrar,
Provosts,
Distinguished Guest Speaker,
Chairman and Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Humanities,
Members of Convocation,
Staff, Alumni, Special invited guests,
Parents and Guardians, Fellow Graduands,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is with a humble and grateful heart that I stand before you today to represent this year's graduating class of 2018.

Honestly, I was shocked when I got the call from the College that I have been selected as one of the valedictorians for this year's graduation. Then it got me thinking; I have met students at the Accra City campus who are smart and with great potential as future leaders. I also had friends on the main campus who are equally intelligent and determined. This made me realise that the campus or situation in which we find ourselves need not define who we will turn out to be and that hard work and effort will always pay off.

Now, I was faced with the challenge of writing a speech, something I had never done before. So as usual, I went to GOOGLE which always has tons of information. However, it seemed something was missing, and I knew what it was. The valedictory speech is not about me but about all of us here today: our joys, heartaches, achievements and aspirations for the future. Thankfully, with the help

of my colleagues from both the city and main campuses we can all own this address.

My fellow graduands and I know that we would not be seated here, at this graduation ceremony, without the help of many others. We would therefore like to express our gratitude to all who have held our hands and have been a source of inspiration and encouragement to us. We are most grateful to the Most High God, Jehovah, who has kept us safe and given us the power beyond what is normal throughout our four-year stay at the University of Ghana: the trips we had to make from home, the near IA and exams misses and the A's we got when we feared we could get a C. I believe you would all agree with me when I say it has not been easy yet through the grace of God bestowed on us today, we can be called Graduates of the University of Ghana.

We would also like to thank our parents and family members who supported us financially, emotionally and most importantly motivated us to never give up on achieving our goals. You are the driving force behind our education and future plans. Although we may not always say it, we are deeply grateful to you for the time, effort and love that you have provided even when we did not deserve it. Mr. and Mrs. Anang and all parents here, I want to personally thank you all for putting up with us for all these years.

To our lecturers, we want to say Ayeekoo. We know we were not the easiest students to deal with. Yet, lecturers like Dr. Cletus Agyenim Boateng, Dr. Samuel Nana Yaw Simpson, Dr. Saint Kuttu, Mr. Aaron Makafui, Mr. Augustine Addo and many others taught us to look beyond the grades and seek to acquire knowledge that would benefit us throughout our lives. In addition, Dr. Afful-Dadzie, Prof. Mohammed Amidu, and Dr. William Coffie, we thank you for helping us realise that we will not always have things easy. Instead of giving up, we can achieve results through hard work as Alfred Lord Tennyson in his novel "ULYSSES" succinctly puts it, "To strive, to find, and not to yield". Your style of lecturing always pushed us to step out of our comfort zones and brought out the best in us.

Every journey starts with a first step. Ours started on *24th October 2014, exactly 1,365 days* ago. There were struggles and successes, good times as well as bad times. Who can forget the early morning and late evening lectures, surprise quizzes, group assignments, IAs and examinations? In addition, we faced some real challenges at the Accra City Campus, where for instance, there were major issues with infrastructure and space for student activities. Fortunately, there are

signs that the issues are being addressed with a new block behind the Library complex and an improvement on the existing infrastructure.

Positive events that will forever shape our lives also happened during our stay. We met friends who may be our bridesmaids and best men at our weddings. Also, some of us have started businesses because of seminars and workshops we took advantage of when we were on campus. For example, the 2017 entrepreneurship fair held by the late Dr. Buame, Dr. George Acheampong and Mr. Shelter Tayi propelled some of us to transform our entrepreneurial ideas into thriving businesses. Typical examples are my team's Kraft TV; Edward, Alvero, and Seth's Myletech; Delali's Nadel Naturals; La Crème De La Crème and LT Bakery by Augustina etc were all ideas which emerged from the fair and may soon become household names. This is a clear demonstration that the knowledge we acquired can serve as the platform to practically transform our lives by providing jobs for those of us who may not get the opportunity to work in the formal sector.

The lecturing techniques at the University of Ghana Business School where students were made to work as a team also created in us a positive attitude towards teamwork and collaboration. The class presentations helped build our interpersonal skills, time-consciousness and confidence. These have all contributed immensely to some of us already securing jobs in various institutions.

Today marks the climax of those *1,365 days*. When we step out of this Great Hall, we will begin a new chapter in our lives. As we leave the boundaries of the University of Ghana, we will take with us knowledge that will guide our future endeavours. In addition, we should not forget the lessons we have gleaned over the last four years: continuous learning, taking advantage of our environment, being team players, holding firm to our values and yet being adaptable and flexible when necessary.

To my fellow female graduands, let us always remember that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. We deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, but we would only get that if we know what we are made of. Let us be willing to take the long road if it means we must work hard to obtain our basic needs.

To all of us, a spirit of volunteerism will also help. Always be on the look-out for little opportunities to assist those who are in need. Everyone needs help from time to time. I know I do, and I believe so do you.

Let us set out to make a difference wherever we find ourselves. This includes little contributions like planting one more tree to reduce deforestation or performing beyond what is expected of us at tasks assigned to us.

Gail Lynne Goodwin said, “Our greatest limitations are the ones we place on ourselves”. Indeed, with a little faith, we could become more than we ever imagined. We have already proved that today. So never should we underestimate the power of a determined mind and most importantly our potential. I am eager to see what we can soon accomplish.

I conclude with the words of Dr. Seuss, “You are off to great places, today is your day, your mountain is waiting, so...get on your way”

And as we say these days, I wish you all the very best, Class of 2018.