

Valedictory Speech Delivered By Patience Kpiniong

Representative of Chairman of Council;

Representative of Vice Chancellor;

Madam Registrar;

Provost, College of Humanities;

Dean, Graduate School

Guest Speaker;

Members of Convocation;

Deans;

Colleague Graduating Students;

The Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very much privileged and proud to stand before you at this special occasion to deliver the Valedictory Speech on behalf of my colleague graduates present here, and those unavoidably absent. I wish to congratulate all graduates for a job well done. Many of you will testify to the hurly-burly life on Campus and the herculean task of securing a post-graduate degree admission to this prestigious institution, the University of Ghana.

Some months ago, many of us walked onto this multicultural campus with so much excitement and expectation. This was against the backdrop of varied experiences and news our friends, family and social media had relayed to us. If we had been asked exactly what

gave us the feeling, we would have been persons dumbfounded. But today, we can boldly say we have achieved what we aimed at. If for nothing at all, graduating successfully with our postgraduate certificates and the requisite experiences to manage our own lives and institutions, is worthy of celebration.

It has been a wonderful experience on campus, both academically and socially. Determination, self-confidence, purposefulness, knowledge, practical skills and sense of direction among other virtues, would not have been attained without this institution. **GOD IN HIS LOVING KINDNESS HAS MADE THIS POSSIBLE.**

We have come a long way to reach this far even though there were times we thought of giving up. At a point, we were either disappointed in the careers we had chosen or despaired in our future. But little did we know that we were on the way to our individually destined successes.

It gives us a reason to celebrate today. There were times we had to embrace financial constraints, sleepless nights, restless days, fatigue, serial quizzes, ailments, and of course power cuts or “dumsor”. Education to some of us was really a challenging knowledge-acquiring process to say the least. Least can we underestimate the odd hours we had to attend lectures. Nonetheless, the experience we have obtained in this very institution has fully baked us well and made us the preferred choice of human resource and manpower base needed by any nation on earth.

Though we are overwhelmed with joy and happiness at this moment, let us not forget the fact that, now it is not just about the certificate of our status, rather the satisfaction from having the material evidence of our precious knowledge and experience gained in the years of our study at the University.

Personally, I see this stage as a call-to-duty in our nation-Ghana and beyond. Let us not bury our talents, but make optimum use of them to project the image of our beloved Alma Mater and Ghana as a whole. As we take the world into our own hands, let us take it up reverently for it is an old piece of clay with millions of thumbprints on it even as we all try to create our own prints on it. I believe each of us here is capable enough to make significant change in the job environment. J.K. Rowling, best known for her Harry Potter series once said “We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: we have the power to imagine better.”

The University of Ghana has equipped us with the necessary knowledge and skill to turn our fortunes into reality. We can!

Let me remind you colleague graduates, let us not wait for opportunities to be created for us, we must challenge ourselves with the knowledge and skills we acquired from this institution to create such opportunities for ourselves, even though, it is challenging. A former American Poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson said “Do not follow where the path may lead. Go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail.” I hope with determination and focus this is possible.

Let me also use this opportunity to commend the university authorities for the opportunity offered us to pursue various courses and the wisdom, pieces of advice and guidance given us during our pursuit for knowledge on this campus. We are grateful.

No one achieves success without the help of others. I would like to extend my gratitude to all lecturing staff from different faculties, all of the administration staff who help us out with some of the most fundamental questions we have. our friends and family for your patience, support and love. Let me take this moment to acknowledge my husband, Meredith kuunyem, who has been my greatest source of encouragement and support throughout my studies. I also like to thank my mum Cecelia Ewuntomah for her super human support, cooperation and pieces of advice during my studies. And to all of us I say Ayekoo!!!

Let me end with this quote from a great British Educator, Charlotte Mason, which sums up mood for today: *"Of all the joyous motives of school life, the love of knowledge is the only abiding one; the only one which determines the scale, so to speak, upon which the person will hereafter live".*

Thank you all.