

Commencement Remarks

17 May 2014

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Thank you, Ian Berry, Phil and Marie Glotzbach and administration, Linda Toohey and the board, Beau Breslin and faculty, but most of all, thank you to the Class of 2014 for allowing me to be part of this outstanding group of graduates. I am thrilled to have finally crossed this stage to receive this wonderful degree, because in 1959 I was in Tacoma, Washington, with my Army lieutenant husband and baby boy, and in 1982, for my UWW Bachelor of Science degree from Skidmore, I was attending, the same day at the same time, my other son's graduation from St. Lawrence. So, this is it. Thank you, Skidmore Class of 2014.

Now here comes your grandmothers' thoughts: You have been given an elite liberal arts education, prepared by a faculty who care about you. Remember to stay in touch with your mentors and thank them. They have given you the tools to confidently and creatively find solutions for the horrific challenges that face us all. Make them proud by working for transformative answers with passion and kindness.

Volunteer – say yes when asked to serve – whether it is to raise funds for your favorite non-profit or run for political office. Yes – that is volunteer work. Local governments desperately need talented, honest volunteers who will make the best decisions for their entire communities. Yes, take your time and participate. It is the most satisfying privilege you can imagine and volunteer service is what makes the country great.

Life is not a straight line. Continue to explore, engage in life-long learning. Attack each challenge with a sense of purpose and a sense of humor. Because of technology, everything is faster today, so say yes quickly when opportunities arise. As Woody Allen said, 90 percent of life is showing up and, may I add, for the other 10 percent, put a smile on your face. Of course, Skidmore taught you that creative thought matters. But, she also taught me that education matters, citizenship matters, country matters, service matters, family matters and trust matters. Speak proudly of your Skidmore education and give back! End of Grandma's speech.

When I hear of the remarkable things that you have already accomplished, I am so encouraged and hopeful. Can't wait to hear what you will do next. Go for it!