



GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY

THE MERCY UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

John K. Lloyd, FACHE, President and CEO of Meridian Health GCU Graduate Commencement Ceremony Address May 19, 2016

Good Afternoon! As President Joe Marbach mentioned, my name is John Lloyd. First and foremost, I want to thank President Joe Marbach, as well as Jo Ann Cummings, the entire faculty here at Georgian Court, the parents, and grandparents, or anyone who has inspired, encouraged, nurtured . . . and financed these outstanding students who have successfully earned their master's degree!!

I am deeply humbled to be here and receive this honorary degree from Georgian Court. This university has a special meaning to me because I served on its board of trustees for 12 years and it was probably the best experience I've had serving on a board and seeing how outstanding this university has become.

In the short time I have here today with you all, I want to inspire each and every one of our graduating students and hopefully give you some helpful advice as you move forward. So let's go on a little journey today through our **past**, our **present**, and the **future**.

We begin our journey in **the past**.

All of you were on a journey when you decided to complete your undergraduate studies and enter a graduate program at Georgian Court. It's no surprise, but I too was on a similar journey when I completed my undergraduate degree at Princeton University and entered Temple University, where

I received my Master of Business Administration in Health Administration. I remember those days as if it was yesterday.

I started my career in Philadelphia in 1973. I then came to this area in 1982 (and actually, because I came here in '82, I declared myself a clam digger). I came in as the new, young, "dark-haired" CEO of Jersey Shore University Medical Center. To show you how fast we move, in the program it says \$1.8 billion and now is a \$2.4 billion organization with more than 15,000 team members and comprised of seven acute care hospitals, a state-designated children's hospital, and more than 100 locations of ambulatory care services throughout Monmouth, Ocean, and Middlesex counties.

I'm also extremely proud to say that I served our great country in the United States Marine Corps for three years. Ooo-rah! The Marine Corps instilled within me the principles of Honor. Courage. Commitment. Leadership. I've always carried these principles with me in everything that I do.

That's especially true because, as we say in the Marine Corps, "Once a Marine, always a Marine!" And you should apply that same principle to all of our graduates. Once a Georgian Court student, always a Georgian Court student . . . dedicated to perpetual learning and permanent progress.

I know that all of you are committed to Georgian Court's core values of respect, integrity, justice, compassion, and service. You should always carry them with you in everything you do in the future.

And this brings us to our next stop on our journey: **the present**.

While your ideals play a big part in who you are now and who you will one day become, I cannot stress enough the importance of adaptability. The ability to adapt to change is one of the most crucial qualities you absolutely need to survive in the real world. I say this because **news flash!** Everything you've studied in undergraduate and graduate school WILL change. I know this very well, I do.

"But, John, how can you know what the world will look like in 20 years?"

I know because I lived it. Think about the world 20 years ago from today, going back. Do you know how much it's changed since then? Most of you were young back then, so you probably don't

remember things like landlines, when the CW was the WB, or when Ask Jeeves was THE Web search engine everyone was using.

For example, when I went into health administration, I entered the industry at a time when the approach to health care was very backward. Care was provided in silos, which wasn't a good experience for the patient. Hospitals thought that patients should be grateful for treating them. As Albert Einstein said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

Today, patients and their families are very sophisticated. They research physicians and hospitals online, think nothing of getting second opinions, travel outside their local areas to receive care, evaluate qualities of care and service, and even shop around for the best price.

So what did we do? We adapted and prepared for change. We've taken our ambulatory services and facilities out into the community to provide better access to care. We are focused on providing the very best health care experience for our patients and even have concierge services at each of our hospitals. Our patients are now more like consumers and customers.

No one can survive in this world today if they're not willing to change, because the world is going to change going forward regardless—whether they're ready or not.

So yes, I know what the world will be like in 20 years because the world changes—and it changes fast. You know, it was nearly 20 years ago that the DVD was launched . . . the DVD! Can you believe it? Now most everything is cloud-based, and the graduates here—your generation is the most connected to technology and social media than any other generation before you. It was also nearly 20 years ago that Buzz Lightyear instilled the words, "To infinity . . . and beyond!"

So this brings us to our last stop on our journey: **the future**. I really want all of you to follow your dreams and be successful in whatever field you choose. Over my entire career, I've developed a handful of key attributes that I hope you might consider and even embrace.

First and foremost, always have a positive attitude. My favorite saying is "attitude reflects leadership!!"

Work hard, be inquisitive, and excel in your job. Think out of the box, be innovative, and be eager to take on more responsibilities. Always volunteer for more responsibilities.

Seek out a mentor who can accelerate your growth. I did that, and after 18 months, early in my career, I was promoted over two executives in my organization.

Never stop learning. Throughout my career, I've never stopped learning, and I'm always eager to learn more. Never accept "good enough" as good enough because the world is going to keep changing, and so should you.

Each of you will be faced with challenges as well as opportunities. The more you can overcome these challenges, the more opportunities that will open up for you!

To the Class of 2016, I wish you the best of luck on your newest exciting voyage—it is quite possibly the most important journey you may take. And it gets bumpy along the way, but you will just have to adapt and you're going to have to ride the waves of change. After all, "life is a journey to be experienced, not a problem to be solved."

Now get out there . . . to infinity and beyond! Thank you.