



GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY

THE MERCY UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

Daniel Beach '17 GCU Graduate Commencement Remarks May 24, 2017

Sister Barbara Williams, family, friends, faculty members, our speaker Mr. Adam Lowy, and fellow graduates; good evening and welcome to the Graduate Commencement Ceremony for the class of 2017. Tonight is the end of a long road. We have all spent countless hours working towards this goal. Thank you for supporting us along the way and thank you for being here to celebrate with us tonight.

Georgian Court Graduate Class of 2017:

Think.

It doesn't have to be about anything in particular. It doesn't have to be about some grand idea. It doesn't have to be about today. Just think for a second.

Thinking is what I've always done. For as long as I can remember, I would think about something that I wanted to accomplish, and I would just go and do it. The ability to think, formulate a plan, and carry that plan out served me well for a long time. I became an Eagle Scout, I finished high school, I went to college, I graduated, and now I have a career doing work I find challenging and enjoyable. Like I said, thinking has served me well.

But, a few years ago, I came to the realization that thinking was not everything. Eventually, I began to feel stuck. I had accomplished everything that I had set out to do, but I didn't feel fulfilled. What

had always worked in the past was now failing me. I could feel that something was off; I could feel something was missing. Will Rogers once said, "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." I knew that I was on a good path, but I also knew that simply being on a good path was not enough to ensure long-term, lasting success. That's exactly what led me here to GCU.

I am not the traditional M.B.A. student by any means; my bachelor's degree is in biochemistry. In more than one of my classes, I've been asked what I'm even doing here. People want to know why a scientist is sitting in a business class; they want to know why I think a business degree will be helpful. I was never able to completely explain it, until I sat down to think about writing this speech.

I'm here because I have learned to see things differently and because I want to continue to see things differently. There are plenty of people in every walk of life who think. There are people who are much better at thinking than I could ever hope to be. There are plenty of people who can identify and fix a problem. I realized that I needed to come up with something that makes me stand out.

And that's what we've all done, isn't it? You might not have thought about it, but it's the reason we're all sitting here this evening. We made a decision to stand out, to think differently, to see things differently. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 12% of the population has a graduate degree. That immediately puts us into a small, but distinctive, group.

But, just being a part of that group isn't enough. Stopping now would be a disservice to ourselves, our professors, and everyone else who has helped us over the years. We have been working toward this point our whole lives. We have invested time, money, and most importantly, ourselves. By continuing to think differently, we can ensure that we will be a success. By continuing to see things differently, we will ensure that we stand out.

Like I said, it is important that once we walk off of this campus today, we continue to push ourselves. It is important that we continue to grow and strive for greater things. I challenge each and every one of us to do exactly that. We must prove to ourselves, on a daily basis, that we will never allow this journey to become meaningless. It is important that we continue to see things differently.

I can tell you with a great degree of certainty that I never thought I would be standing here today. I never thought I was the type of person who would go to graduate school. When I finished my undergraduate degree, I was 100 percent sure that I would never spend another day inside of a classroom in my life. Then I learned to see things differently, to think differently. Thank you.