

School of Business Graduation Remarks

May 21, 2021

Dr. Kathryn J. Jervis, Dean

Good morning to members of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, families and to the class of 2021! Congratulations on graduating from the School of Business at The College of New Jersey! And, you did this in spite of extraordinary events over this past year.

Yes, it has been hard, though look what you have learned and accomplished. I found a quote that seems to capture what we have lived. From Eleanor Roosevelt, in her guide entitled: *You Learn by Living: Eleven Keys for a More Fulfilling Life*.

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

Since I started as the new dean on July 1, 2020, I can attest that you did the thing that you thought you might not be able to do. You finished classes, often excelling, as evidenced by our Honors Awards celebration this past Monday evening. You wrote senior theses, and made academic research conference presentations. You worked in internships in major corporations and smaller business entities. You provided community service.

Some examples: Our School of Business Student Government group held a virtual seminar about mental health challenges for student athletes. Alpha Kappa Psi held a virtual Letters to Strangers program that promotes mental well-being globally. They also participated in a community cleanup day in the Trenton area. Women in Business hosted their annual student Women's Leadership Summit and participated in a Meals on Wheels fundraiser. Delta Sigma Pi worked with the Food Network Recovery and raised money for the Ronald McDonald House.

Because there is no national entrepreneurship club association, our Entrepreneurship Club formed a partnership network with 13 additional clubs in the region to develop educational and networking opportunities. Eleven teams entered the Mayo Business Competition, and our judges were

thoroughly impressed by students' business plans, and highly praised the presentations by finalist teams. Three students earned the highest grades in New Jersey for the Excel certification exam. There are so many more that I could mention! And, all this was done almost entirely online!

Are we disappointed that this happened? Of course, we are. Though, one way to think about this is that you will have many fascinating stories to share with those who come after you. I hope that you journaled some of your experiences, whether good or bad.

What do you do now? Well, you go out there and use what you have learned, because you know now that you can do what needs to be done, regardless of what occurs. Good luck to you in all future endeavors. You will be just fine! Congratulations!