

Good morning to members of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, families and to the class of 2023, our largest graduating class ever! Congratulations on graduating from the School of Business at The College of New Jersey!

Great things have been happening to all of us recently in our School. This past year, we received a five-year extension of our business school accreditation, an accolade bestowed on less than 5 percent of the business schools in the world. This accreditation attests to the quality of our faculty, staff, and academic programs, the support of highly engaged alumni, and the exceptional achievement of our students. Our rankings have improved as we remain in the top 100 undergraduate business schools in the nation according to *Poets & Quants*, an association that collects this data. In fact, we are 57th.

To mention our faculty and staff for a moment. Professor Susanna Monseau published a book last year and won a Fulbright Scholarship to travel to Finland to study the effects of trademark laws on sustainable textiles. Dr. Abhishek Tripathi and Adjunct Professor David Saul won a grant to use Virtual Reality in the classroom for case studies. Dr. Susan Hume took students to NY City for the

CFA Institute Research Challenge, a global competition, which was a great success. Asst. Dean Tammy Dieterich took students to the NY Stock Exchange at the invitation of an alumnus.

For you, as students, despite the ups and downs over the past four years that changed our world, you all have achieved incredible success. Most of you are graduating in four years. You wrote senior theses and made academic research presentations. You worked in internships in major corporations and smaller business entities. You entered the Mayo Business Plan Competition, Delta Sigma Pi attended the LEAD conference, and Pi Sigma Epsilon entered the national yearlong sales competition where a student won 5th place in the Pro-Am Sell-a-Thon. Some of you were the presidents or members of a student organization. Your sports teams won. You provided community service. A group of business students participated in the LeaderShape Institute to explore identity development and inclusive leadership. There are so many more that I could mention!

Your academic distinction is also impressive. Listed in the program are the names of graduates earning Latin Honors, that is, overall GPAs of 3.6 or better on a 4.0 scale. On this academic occasion, let us take a moment to further

recognize you by asking you to rise when I identify your Latin designation.

Will the 42 baccalaureate candidates earning cum laude designation, signifying a cumulative GPA of 3.6 to 3.74, please rise if you are able, or wave? [Please be seated.]

Will the 34 graduates earning magna cum laude designation, signifying a cumulative GPA of 3.75 to 3.89, please rise if you are able, or wave? [Please be seated.] And will the 23 of you graduating summa cum laude, our highest academic distinction, signifying a GPA of 3.9 or better, please rise if you are able, or wave? [Please be seated.]

Moving forward, you are on your way to a successful future in a fabulous job, or prestigious graduate school! How wonderful! At graduation, we always review the great things that happened, and the good things to come. Yet, suppose you made mistakes or failed at something in these past four years. Suppose that you don't have that job that you wanted yet or didn't get into that graduate school. Suppose a relationship fails. What then?

Please remember that you are human, and sometimes things are good, and sometimes things are bad. It just happens. Everyone succeeds sometimes and everyone fails

sometimes. It is like the fable of the wise peasant who lived in China who was the proud owner of a white stallion. One day the stallion escaped. The villagers told him that it was such bad luck that the horse escaped. The peasant responded, "Good luck, bad luck---who really knows?" The next day the stallion returned with 12 wild horses. The villagers came to congratulate the peasant for his good luck, and his response was, "Good luck, bad luck---who really knows?" The fable continues whereby the eldest son breaks his leg training a horse, bad luck, though the good luck is that he cannot join the army for that reason, "Good luck, bad luck---who really knows?" The moral is that good and bad will come your way. Just remember to maintain calm and peace inside yourself whatever happens.

Finally, as you think about success, think about what that really means. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, success means:

To laugh often and much

To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children

To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends

To appreciate beauty

To find the best in others;

To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child,
a garden patch

Or a redeemed social condition

To know even one life has breathed easier because you
have lived.

This is to have succeeded!

The faculty and staff of the School of Business extend our
best wishes as you commence from TCNJ. Congratulations!