CONGRATULATIONS SPEECH

FOR

KAZEEM AJALA

Hello everyone and thank you all for being here to share this great celebration with us tonight. It’s always a treat to celebrate a birthday and it’s especially wonderful to have friends and family share the occasion with us. It’s always special to honor a graduate. It’s extra special to be able to acknowledge someone who has achieved a great scholastic accomplishment like earning an MBA. But it is **extraordinary** to be able to gather to congratulate a very special “birthday girl” on the same day she earns her degree from business school (**university?**)!! If this is not the most perfect reason for a party, then I don’t know what would be one!!! Of course being an incredible wife, mother and homemaker, (**Name your wife**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ would probably have wanted to make her **OWN** party with all of her favorite treats, but today is her very special day- the day for her to accept the acknowledgement of her accomplishment, allow her family and friends to celebrate her, and allow the restaurant to cook for her!!! It doesn’t happen that often, so I really hope that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ takes all of this in and understands how truly gifted and blessed she is.

A very accomplished woman once said, “You can have unbelievable intelligence, you can have connections, you can have opportunities fall out of the sky. But in the end, hard work is the true, enduring characteristic of successful people.” If that’s the case, then \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is already probably the most successful person I have the privilege of knowing. She is a great wife, a super fantastic mother to our three beautiful children, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and she has spent the last several years working harder than anyone I know to create and raise a family, maintain a home, and if **THAT** weren’t enough, she was pregnant with our adorable twins while going to graduate school!! I honestly don’t know how she does it!! I am in awe of her strength, courage, energy and dedication to our family, to completing her education, and most of all, to herself and her goals. I know I don’t have to say the obvious, but those times were not easy-as a family we had our challenges, and she always managed to get everything done. She never complained. She never resisted her responsibilities. She didn’t take shortcuts.

And now we have the privilege of saying that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has earned her Master’s in Business! What a great moment this is for our family, and what a great example \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ sets for our children to follow. Oprah Winfrey said, “The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has always found the positive in everything that presents itself to her in life and that’s why I admire her so much. She gives each one of us hope in the possibility that whatever we **THINK** we can do **CAN** be done. She has proven it. Each one of us has our own unique path in life and at some point we face challenges that we may think are too difficult or impossible to conquer. We all think we want every day to be easy and happy, but the truth is, that would get boring very soon. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has shown everyone in this room that with determination, focus, self-confidence and faith in one’s talents, intelligence and capabilities, **nothing is impossible**.

(**Turn to your wife and say**), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_The hard schoolwork is behind you; we have acknowledged your accomplishments regarding your education. Now it’s time to celebrate your birthday!!! (**Present her with either 3 special balloons or 3 beautiful roses and say**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, you are a wonderful woman, wife and mother. Although these 3 (**balloons, roses**) represent our beautiful children, they also bring you special wishes from me. (**Hand her the first one**) This first (**balloon or rose**) is to remind you to keep learning something new-every day. Your formal schooling is complete, but we must never stop learning. We must never stop being fascinated by having new insights and wisdom. The second (**balloon or rose**) is to remind you to remember this day, your brilliant accomplishment, and just how special you are to me, to your children, to our family and to all of our friends. And the third (**balloon or rose**) is to remind you to find something to smile about-every single day. May you always have everything you wish for and work so hard for, and may happiness follow you wherever you may go. Happy birthday. Congratulations!!! We love you!!