**14196, Jama Goers**

"Still standing ready for the next step”

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to welcome everyone here today, faculty, staff, family and friends, and most importantly, our graduates! Today is a momentous occasion and you have much to celebrate for today you are finishing your bachelor of science of nursing BSN in Platt College’s accelerated nursing program. I’m quite sure all of you are as nervous as you are excited tonight. I know because I have stood in your shoes. I graduated from this same nursing program many years ago and now I teach the program concepts of critical care. This graduating class is the first group of students that I taught when I first came to Platt College as the Simulation Laboratory Coordinator/Faculty. I used the same approach I used as a nursing educator in the hospital setting. I want you to know I am very proud of every one of you as you complete your course of study.

I am very honored to be asked to speak to you on this great occasion. When I asked the students why they picked me one of the students stated it was because, “You approached us with honesty, expectations were clear and you were transparent. You didn't pretend to be arrogant or perfect; you were so real with us. When there were things that needed changed you didn't pretend everything was perfect; you acknowledged there were things to improve upon and most importantly we felt you were there as our PARTNER in our education. You were dedicated to helping us become the best we could be. There are always people that make their mark on other peoples' journeys and you managed to do that in such a short period.”

Each of you began your studies with a goal to complete your education and to finish strong. You can be proud of yourselves because you have indeed finished strong. This is a challenging program and you have all proven your ability to learn and to excel under challenging circumstances. Now that your studies are complete it is time that you put all that knowledge into practice as you go out from here today to begin your new careers.

You have some goals that I want you to take with you today as you close one door and open another in your lives. First and foremost, always remember that you are a valuable asset. You are well trained and well prepared for what is before you. The contributions that you make will be invaluable regardless of your specific positions. You can always feel good about nursing as a profession and the contributions you will make in your various positions.

In whatever individual positions you work, in whatever type of facility you work in any location, always remember that you are indispensable. No one can do the work that you do in the way that you do it and do it with the same level of excellence that you exhibit. You can always be proud of the work that you do.

One of your responsibilities will be to improve patient outcomes. You will do that with every task you complete, with every decision you make regarding your patients, with every effort you put forth. Know today that you are more than capable of carrying out your responsibilities with excellence. Your patients will appreciate your attention to detail and your every consideration of their needs. You will have many other responsibilities but this will be your most important one. Each of you knows by now how important it is for you to accept responsibility for your duties and for your actions. I know that you all accept those responsibilities without question.

I know from being your teacher that each of you is proud of the profession that you have chosen. I want to encourage you to find some way to celebrate your profession in some way every day. Being a nurse is not just being an assistant; it is a unique profession of its own that has its own set of requirements and necessary skills. The medical profession is more complicated than ever before and medical professions are on the rise.

Today there are many different types of nurses, not just one. Many years ago the Bachelor of Science degree in nursing didn’t even exist. You could be an LPN or an RN and that was about it. Today there are these certifications as well as the BSN. There are also specialties in nursing positions today as well, offering today’s nurses many more opportunities for careers in medicine. Being a nurse is a vital position in medicine. Doctors depend on nurses to provide unique skills and talents. You knew that when you chose this career. That is part of why you chose nursing as a profession.

Today you stand on the threshold of the next season of your lives. Today you close the door on your college education but you do not close the door on learning. You understand that medicine is changing and improving every day. New drugs, new treatments and new procedures are developed every day. As nurses you will have to work hard to stay on top of all these changes. But, then, that is part of your DNA. You are as good as you are because you have a thirst and a desire to continue your learning so that you can always provide your patients with the highest level of care. This is what makes you great at your job.

Today you are all standing still and ready for the next step. You have completed your studies, you have done your diligence and you are prepared for the next step in your career. I can tell from looking at you that you are anxious to take that next step. You are ready to take the next challenge. When you leave here today you will take that next step. You will meet the next challenge and the next. Know that we who have been your teachers are proud of you and stand with you. We are here for you if you ever need us as you move forward.

Congratulations and Good Luck Graduates!