

VALEDICTORIAN SPEECH AT THE 45TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF

NAIROBI

BY MAPILI MILLICENT MAPILI

The Chancellor.....

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Good morning,

Life in campus was full of ups and downs, good times and low times just like life outside here now. It required making of daily choices of how to go through its different facets. These choices are the same ones that could make you or break you. By the Grace of God and support of many individuals and institutions throughout the entire period, in addition to hard work and the choices I made I have thus reached this far and produced these good results.

There is an old adage that says “it takes a village to raise a child” but I would say it takes a community to transform and adult. Luckily for me, my community has been filled with wonderfully supportive and loving people and I always say that when God knows you are going to battle, he sends his best warriors. I would like to thank some of the warriors. Number one on the list is God, the commanding officer of this army. He is all I have ever needed; and I thank Him for positioning the warriors in the battle field. Second are the first executive officers in the battalion, my late father and my mother Mr and Mrs Mapili, brothers and sister. Special mention goes to my mother, Benter Mapili, for being there for me as I grew up. Thirdly, to the platoon leaders and dedicated soldiers who joined me in the battle for my life – University of Nairobi staff- thank you for the opportunity you gave me to be part of this institution and for the support, the skills and knowledge you impacted in us. I would also like to recognize my classmates and other students, friends and relatives for their support and encouragement. I also thank Nairobi Lighthouse Church for allowing God to use them in my transformation. Finally, to the countless names and faces that God sent to help me along this journey, the numerous people who have come and gone throughout the years but never the less contributed in some way into turning my life around. Although you remain nameless, you are in no way insignificant in my life.

Before I conclude, I would like to congratulate all my fellow graduands and share with them some words of encouragement. William James said “the greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings

can alter their lives by altering the attitudes of their minds". This is true because, as you think, so you shall be. I would like to encourage all of us that as we go out there, we should believe in ourselves, always picture success and no matter how badly things seem to be going at the moment – always be positive.

We should always expect the best and with God's help, we will attain the best – don't believe in defeat. Also in whatever we do, we should give it all we have got because people are defeated not because of lack of ability, but the lack of wholeheartedness in what they do. We should also cultivate friendships with hopeful people and surround ourselves with friends who think positively and contribute to a creative atmosphere. This will keep us stimulated with faith attitudes. In short, hardwork, positive thinking, fair dealing, right treatment of people, right company and prayers will take us places we have never imagined. And now to our parents, relatives, friends and the government, I would urge you to continue with your support and encouragement through this transition because transitions as we all know are not always easy and we need people to hold our hands.

Finally, we may never meet in person again but I pray God will help you. So believe and live successfully!

I thank you all and may God bless you.