Toastmasters International Lists 6 Memorable Commencement Speeches

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., May 10, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- With graduation season underway, commencement speakers are giving students one last lesson before entering the work force. The most effective speakers share their own life experiences and offer the graduates and their families 15 minutes of uplifting, often humorous and personal observations about what it takes to succeed in life.



Toastmasters International, which has helped millions of men and women learn to speak with confidence and poise in front of audiences, highlights six speeches below (in chronological order) as some of the most memorable commencement speeches.

- As he was facing his battle with cancer, Apple founder **Steve Jobs** reminded Stanford's graduating class of 2005 to follow their hearts. "Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart." http://bit.ly/1iDR0rG
- Speaking at Harvard in 2008, famous author **J.K. Rowling** relayed her experiences of failure and encouraged graduates to pursue their goals. "It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all — in which case, you fail by default." http://bit.ly/2oPn9Jm
- When educator **Erin Gruwell,** founder of Freedom Writers Foundation, gave her commencement speech to the University of California, Irvine School of Humanities in 2012, she addressed the anxiety of embarking on a new journey. "Each and every one of you get to rewrite your own ending. Some of you knew from the womb what you were going to do. And some of you are sitting there right now, thinking 'Oh my God, what am I going to do starting tomorrow?' I was that person. I'm still that person." http://bit.ly/2oZwbBG
- While speaking at Knox College in 2013, actor and comedian **Ed Helms** advised the graduates to embrace taking risks. "So long as your desire to explore is greater than your desire to not screw up, you're on the right track. A life oriented toward discovery is infinitely more rewarding than a life oriented toward not blowing it." http://bit.ly/2py5jL9
- Returning to Harvard, her alma mater in 2014, Facebook Chief Operating Officer **Sheryl Sandberg** addressed the issue of gender inequality. "The first time I spoke out about what it was like to be a woman in the workforce was less than five years ago. That means that for 18 years, from where you sit to where I stand, my silence implied that everything was OK. You can do better than I did, and I mean that so sincerely." http://bit.ly/1ji2CAy
- While speaking at Maharishi University of Management in 2014, actor **Jim Carrey** urged the graduating class to not let a fear of the unknown cause them to settle. "So many of us choose our path out of fear disguised as practicality. What we really want seems impossibly out of reach and ridiculous to expect, so we never dare to ask the universe for it." http://bit.ly/1hfnv3G

To schedule an interview with a Toastmasters leader about how to deliver a memorable speech, or why these commencement speeches stand out, email pr@toastmasters.org.

About Toastmasters International
Toastmasters International is a worldwide nonprofit educational organization that empowers individuals to become more

effective communicators and leaders. Headquartered in Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif., the organization's membership exceeds 345,000 in more than 15,900 clubs in 142 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people from diverse backgrounds become more confident speakers, communicators and leaders. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org. Follow @Toastmasters on Twitter.

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