

Commencement Speaker Sonia Manuel-Dupont  
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Thank you President Albrecht and members of the Administration for the opportunity to address this audience today. Welcome graduating students, families, friends and supporters. It is an honor and a privilege to share this happy occasion with you.

I want to add a special welcome to my mom who has traveled across the country to be in the audience with my family. Because we are never too old to need our mom's, dad's, grandparents', spouse's and children's support, I want you graduates to use American Sign Language to thank your mom or someone else in the crowd today who has supported you through your studies. The sign for thank you is \_\_\_\_\_. You make this sign and point to the recipient.

Today I want to explore two topics with you—a description of the world that you are now entering as an educated professional and the role that you can play in this world as a productive and skilled citizen scholar.

Luckily for you, this is a short talk—about 15 minutes—so we won't have quite enough time to translate anything into Hualapai, analyze the syntactic structure of the utterances or derive any equations. And those of you who have taken one of my classes before, will be deeply disappointed to see there are no 10-pound handouts, accompanying the lecture. However, you aren't completely off the hook

To actually get that diploma you are here to receive, you are going to have to participate in this talk by taking one last test to demonstrate to your family, friends and relatives that you really have been going to classes and learning important things over the past several years. So, sit up, and pay close attention. It would be a shame to go down in flames on this, your final final exam.

Here are the directions: Valedictorians—you will stand when your college is announced and you will face your colleagues. I will ask one question and give you four possible responses. Your colleagues will have 5 seconds to gleefully and knowledgeably state the answer to you. At the five second mark, you will then turn to face me, and repeat the correct answer. Your colleagues will maintain complete silence as the answer is evaluated. The time restrictions are absolutely binding. The answer must be delivered within 6 seconds for the college to pass the exam.

All of these questions will be taken from a book written by David Smith, called, If the World Were a Village. The author begins his story with an explanation that Earth is a very crowded place. In fact, as of 2002, our population was 6 billion 200 million people. Now, David Smith postulated that a number that large would be difficult for most non-mathematicians to visualize. So he suggested that we shrink that number to something more manageable--such as 100. Therefore, we will be talking about a global village of 100 people who represent the same diversity as the larger world of 6 billion plus.

Let's begin this final exam with a question for the College of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences. HASS Valedictorian—Steven Stoddard—on your feet and face your colleagues. Here is the question:

In this global village 22 of the 100 people will speak which language?

- A. English
- B. Chinese
- C. Hindi

#### D. Spanish

The correct answer is B-Chinese. As monolingual Americans we often forget that the world at large does not speak English. In this global village of 100—22 speak Chinese, 9 speak English, 8 speak Hindi, 7-Spanish, 4-Arabic, 4-Bengali, 3-Portuguese, and 3 speak Russian.

College of HASS—you pass.

Valedictorian for the College of Business—Bryan Cook—on your feet and get ready. If the entire wealth of the global village were divided equally, each person would receive \$6,200 per year. However, we all know that communities are made up of Haves and Have Nots. The global village mirrors our own situation. A few receive much more than \$6,000 a year. The poorest earn just \$1 a day. Here is the question:

How many of the 100 in our global village will not earn enough money to buy basic necessities such as food and shelter?

- A. None
- B. 60
- C. 90
- D. 100

The correct answer is B—60. In this global village the average cost of food, shelter and other necessities for one year is \$4,500. Clearly many do not have enough money to afford food and housing.

College of Business—you pass.

Valedictorian for Education and Human Services—Brooke Sorenson, is the next speaker. So to take the pressure off of her, I am asking Dean Strong to answer for her. Dean Strong—get ready. We all know how important it is to get a good education. However, getting that education is predicated on being a proficient reader.

So, College of Education and Human Services, in this global village, how many will be illiterate?

- A. None
- B. 17
- C. 88
- D. 100

The correct answer was B—17 individuals will be illiterate. In our global village there are 38 school aged children, but only 31 of them will be allowed to go to school. There will be only one teacher. The 7 who aren't allowed to receive an education will be female.

College of Education and Human Services—you pass.

College of Science Valedictorian—Maria Horrocks—face your colleagues. This is a geography question.

Five of the 100 villagers will come from which countries?

- A. China
- B. Canada and the United States
- C. France
- D. Ethiopia

The correct answer is B—Canada and the United States. While many of us complain about development and unrestricted growth in our communities, in reality, we live in areas of wide open spaces compared to many of our global neighbors.

In our village, 61 villagers will come from Asia; 13 from Africa; 12 from Europe; 8 from South American, Central America and the Caribbean; 5 from Canada and the US; 1 villager will come from Australia, New Zealand and the islands of the Pacific.

College of Science—you pass.

Valedictorian for the College of Engineering—Brandon Boldt—stand and face your college. Engineers—I realize that since your graduation gowns don't have pockets, this may be the first time in several years that you have participated in an academic event without your calculator. Just do the best you can. And the question is:

In our global village, how many individuals will have access to computers?

- A. none
- B. 7
- C. 66
- D. 100

Once again, the correct answer is B—7: 24 of the villagers will have televisions, 14 will have telephones, 42 will have radios. More importantly though, are those who have none: 24, nearly 1/4 of our entire world, will have no access to electricity.

College of Engineering—you pass.

Valedictorian for the College of Agriculture—Camille Walker—stand and face your colleagues. In the past two years all of us have become aware of what natural disasters can do to a nation's food supply. With tsunamis, hurricanes and earthquakes we have seen the devastation these events bring and many of us have even gained first-hand experience with struggling to meet the basic human needs of those affected by these events. However, how aware are we of the daily struggles of our fellow human beings in non-disaster areas?

So, College of Agriculture: How many of the 100 villagers in our global village will have enough to eat every day?

- A. 1
- B. 24
- C. 80
- D. All of the above

The correct answer is B—24. In this global village: 60 are always hungry, 76 of these villagers go to bed hungry many nights, 26 are severely malnourished, 25 of them (mostly women and girls) spend all day every day walking miles to and from their homes just to obtain potable water, only 24 have enough to eat every day.

College of Ag—you pass.

And finally, Valedictorian for the College of Natural Resources—Alan Luce—stand and be ready. In Cache Valley we have actually had some personal experiences with air pollution. Over the past three years, we have had several days each winter when health advisories have warned the elderly, the young, and the sick to stay inside. So we know what a "red" burn day is.

Now, on a global basis, in our village how many people will be exposed to air that is unhealthy to breathe every day of their lives?

- A. 20
- B. 32
- C. 88
- D. 100

The correct answer is B—32. In addition 40 have no access to clean water, 40 have no household sewage disposal, the average life expectancy is 63, only one person in the village is over the age of 79.

College of NR—you pass.

Congratulations graduates—the examination portion of this talk is now complete. Your parents and families can let out a collective sigh of relief that they have not come all this way in vain. And for those of you who keenly noted that this was a poorly constructed multiple choice test, (all the answers were B; others were not possible) you may now apply extra credit points to your score.

As our test takers have just demonstrated, our global village has many challenges to face. And as a member of that village, we must determine how to address these issues for the collective welfare of all involved.

In the beginning of this talk I described you graduates as citizen scholars. I think we all understand the “scholar”, part of that phrase, but do we understand the responsibilities attached to being a citizen of the world?

I hope you found it both shocking and unacceptable that we live in a world where the Have Nots represent a substantial number of our neighbors. One half of the human world that we inhabit battles daily with issues of hunger, poverty, housing, sanitation, the lack of potable water, lack of appropriate medical care, and the lack of literacy.

In comparison, even on our most horrific days—what problems do we actually face? More importantly, when those problems are devastatingly real, do we face them day in and day out for an entire lifetime—or are they fleeting in light of the 80-90 year lifespan that we all now enjoy.

So, let’s take a brief look into one day in the life of a “have-a lot” in our village. Our day is laid out in meticulous detail in our Black Berrys. Electronic beeps on our watches and computers remind us to go to meetings, to get committees organized, to attend classes, to remember Mom’s birthday and our kids’ soccer games, and to pick up a gallon of milk on the way home.

In the mornings we wake up to electronic music or news which follows us to our vehicles for the morning commute, which is replaced by headphones and ipods for the time we spend walking between destinations, when we are not emailing or Iming someone. We emerge from work or school in an electronic haze, and return to our homes where TiVo, the X box 360 and plasma screens take care of our information and entertainments needs.

In our world it is easy to become educated. We are surrounded by information 24/7. We can start and end each day with a rundown of the major events of the world in news summaries. However knowing the levels of e-coli in the contaminated waters running through the streets of New Orleans is not the same as doing something about it.

I’m not saying that it is not important to “know”. What I am proposing is that we, representatives of the “haves” in our communities, too often stop at knowing. And Knowing is not doing. As Ghandi reminds us that there are 7 Deadly Social Sins: Politics without Principle, Wealth without Work, Commerce without Morality, Pleasure without Conscience, Education without Character, Science without Humanity, Worship without Sacrifice. In just looking at the latter part of these statements, we get a pretty good picture of what doing might look like: work, morality, conscience, character, humanity, sacrifice.

But I’m not Ghandi, you may be saying to yourself. I am one lone individual in a very large world of 6 billion people. What can I do?

My admonition to you is this—Continue to learn and strive to be an educated decision maker. Then, find that one thing that is meaningful to you, that allows you to give back to the global community who has given you so very much, and use your heart, hands and mind to make a change.

Karen Kerney has some more concrete advice to give. In building a Global Community, she suggests that we: Turn off your TV, leave your house, know your neighbor, look up when you are walking, greet people, buy from local merchants, share what you have, support neighborhood schools, fix it even if you didn't break it, honor elders, pick up litter, read stories to someone, help carry something heavy, start a tradition, bake extra and share, turn back the night, mediate a conflict, know that no one is silent though many are not heard and work to change this.

Choose one item from this list or start your own list. Remember that you are not a mere participant in this process. You bring advanced skills in research, leadership, problem-solving, communication and conflict resolution to the task. You are a scholar already—now it's time to earn your citizenship.

So in conclusion, I leave you with one final thought: The difficult we can tackle at once; the impossible takes a little longer. So find your passion and start making the impossible possible NOW.