

Mr. President, dear faculty, honorable guests, fellow colleagues and their adorable host families and relatives, Welcome to Graduation 2012. The structure of my speech will be as follows: I will start off with a joke. I will follow that with a cute anecdote. I will then tell you why Jacobs University is super AWESOME and why I will miss it so much. I will end this speech, for those who are still listening by then, with a few farewell words. All throughout my speech, I will also be thanking different people. So pay attention!

Everyone knows light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

And now I would like to thank all the people who made this event possible: That is all the wonderful people who work in the building we call RLH. Actually they have been helping us since the very beginning.

Speaking of beginnings, after an eventful first semester at Jacobs, I went back home during winter break. My high school counselor asked me then, after I told her about the tough curriculum, whether Jacobs was worth the money, the loans and the travel to a new country. To be honest, at that point I was not sure. Today, as I stand here, I can say with complete confidence that studying at Jacobs University is one of the best decisions I have made in my life.

Couple years ago a documentary was made about Jacobs University. It was a wonderful homage to all the “new elite things” we have to offer, like our amazing facilities and research opportunities; our global family-like environment, and our interdisciplinary course structure. Here I would like to thank the leadership and all the university donors present here for realizing the vision, and investing the time and money in making it happen. However, I think the documentary missed out on truly communicating two important aspects that set this university apart.

Education is the purpose of a university. Jacobs University has a very renowned faculty, and as I step into my career, I cannot thank them enough for creating in me an interest in their subject and imparting in me the knowledge which I need to persevere. It is these professors who take international students, used to different education and learning style, and prepare them for the real world. For their dedication, understanding, and for all the patience they have shown to us, I would like to thank all the professors.

However, there is another part to education than just knowledge. To quote Oscar Wilde:

*“Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught.”*

I certainly have gained a lot of knowledge here. But reason I believe Jacobs University has been such a good investment for me, is because it has made me a better person, made me a lot wiser and taught me life lessons which will enable me to be successful in the future.

With a midterm, two quizzes and a couple of assignments due on the same day, I truly realized the value of time management and discipline. Living on my own, having to do my own

laundry, cleaning and shopping and then cooking; made me an independent, self-reliant person. But the most important lesson Jacobs taught me was to appreciate and cherish the amazing people I am surrounded by.

If you look at world news, you could believe that world peace is impossible to achieve. Jacobs proves that wrong every single day. This is a place where 111 nations combine and always live in harmony. There are disagreements, but we overcome them.

It is full of people who do not care about nationality, race or religion but rather about the personality; people who would stay up all night to help a friend study, or will drop all their plans to accompany a friend to the hospital, even if it is a routine checkup.

It is full of people who will always be there to help you and guide you, to cheer you up when you are down, or to offer to kill the person who made you sad. And in the end, among the all nighters, all the coke and red-bull, among packed schedules, wild parties, lethal debating, long IRC sessions, it is my friends who made my time at Jacobs so special and who I will miss the most wherever they are. For this, I would like to thank every student at Jacobs.

Jacobs University strives to produce the leaders of tomorrow. Well dear guests, the students who are graduating here today are exactly that, and it is not because they have studied something that no other professor teaches. It is because of their reliability and their understanding of other cultures, their discipline, their punctuality and their ability to handle A LOT of work. And as the world gets even smaller, and more connected, I can totally see all of us becoming important people in our own fields and countries, and changing the world for the better.

The last group of people I would thank has no direct connection in regards to us graduating here now, unless they were your financial supporters. I know for my mother, it was torture whenever I had to leave home and come back to Jacobs, but she went through it because she wanted what was best for me. It is our families who give us strength and motivation to achieve what may seem impossible, and want us to be our best. For that I would like to thank the families of all of us here today.

And as I approach the end of this speech, I will keep it simple and say only two things to say to you:

Best of Luck

And Thank you.

Feven and Johanna

Musical Interlude