

**The Hon. Justice Murray Sinclair
Doctor of Civil Laws
Acadia University**

- Well, thank you very much, Mr. President, Chancellor, members of the Board of Governors, members of the Faculty and Staff, Acadia University, parents and friends of the graduates, and my fellow graduates.

Thank you for this great honour that you've bestowed upon me. And thank you for allowing me to be part of this very important day that all of you will hopefully never forget, I certainly won't because this now puts us into a category of people who are always going to be connected. And I look forward to the opportunities to meet you all personally, instead of through cameras like this in the future.

As you go forward from this day, I want you to think about a few things. One of them being that just look around you for a moment and you've already, of course, acknowledged, I'm sure your family, your friends, those people in the community who supported you and brought you to this point, but I do want you to look around at your classmates. And I want you to remember that those classmates that have been with you through this journey are the people upon whom you are going to rely in the future and feel free to rely upon them because they will feel free, I hope, to rely upon you.

From time to time in my profession as a lawyer, as a judge, and even as a Senator, I've called upon my former classmates just to get their views about things, whether it's on the law or whether it's about just matters in the public interests, matters of public policy, because they are my weathervane. They were the ones who helped me make decisions.

They weren't the ones who necessarily whispered in my ear, I have a wife for that, I have daughters for that, and also my late grandmother is constantly by my side whispering in my ear about what is right and what is wrong. And so those important influences never leave us but your friends, they're the ones who will help you make those important decisions as you go forward.

And so never forget them, be sure that you remember them and be sure that you make a commitment to them as well that you will be there for them when they need you because I'm sure that they will need you.

This is an important day in everybody's life right up there with getting married, having a baby, with losing somebody important in your life and finding a way to deal with that and move on. But this is a day for celebration.

This is the day when you will hopefully use this as an opportunity or as a key to a room filled with opportunities, that you will either be able to take advantage of or you will find that maybe you don't want to take advantage of it because some of those opportunities may not be really what you like to do. But somewhere in that room is something that's waiting for you. So feel free and, in fact, look for it, look hard for it because at the end of the day, when you get as old as I am right now, and you look back at your life, you're gonna say to yourself, "I'm sure glad I did that. I'm sure glad I went in that door. I'm sure glad I answered that phone call. I'm sure glad I went and saw that person." Because that's important.

At the end of the day, it's your life and what you do with it and how you influence it, and what you do for others with it, that is really important. So, thank you for sharing this day with me and thank you for letting me be part of your life and I'll leave it for you to figure out how you can get a hold of me when you need me, too. Thank you. Have a great day.