

R. Diane Campbell
Doctor of Civil Laws
Acadia University

- Graduates of 2020, I am honoured to be accepting a doctorate from Acadia University. My ties to the university have stretched far beyond the years that I attended Acadia, all of which helped to shape who I am today.

To have graduated in an unprecedented year that ended prematurely and did not allow for a proper graduation was, I can only imagine, strange and disappointing.

Despite the difference in our ages, this past year we are all experiencing something for the very first time. Though it is easy to see the negatives, it is my hope that you will see the glass half full and recognize the opportunities as well.

Very much like your university years, this experience will help to shape who you are and the direction in which you will head. Perhaps some of you have already joined the workforce or are continuing with your studies. For others, it has possibly been more difficult in light of the current circumstances.

In life you will be thrown curve balls, just like this pandemic and there will be ups and downs. Adversity often provides opportunity, so keep your eyes wide open and try to be positive. With each hurdle, you will build resiliency. With each success, you will build confidence and find motivation. I wish each and every one of you, the very best in life.

And I hope that your career journey is a rewarding one. Finding your passion in life is essential to full satisfaction. Over the years, your path may change. Be true to who you are at every stage of your journey and you will always land where you were meant to be.

If your work is fulfilling and you maintain a good work life balance, you will have achieved something very special. I graduated from Dalhousie Law School in 1967, was admitted to the bar in 1968 and practised law with Daley, Black, Moreira and Piercey until 1975. At that time, I became interested in some family businesses and found that business was a much more rewarding experience for me than the practice of law.

In 1994, I bought the Berkeley Retirement Residence in downtown Halifax. And since then, we have built four additional buildings, the last of which, we'll be opening next week here in Halifax. So, at 77 years of age, I continue to be active in my business every day and I have absolutely no desire to retire.

So, I have one little message of advice to each of you and that is be passionate about your work, and if you are, you will never work a day in your life.

Thanks so much for the opportunity. I have really enjoyed having the chance to speak to you and good luck in your future.