

Chancellor, Mr Stephen Gerlach, Vice Chancellor, Professor Barber, Professor Kidd, Professor Worley other dignitaries, graduands, your families, partners, friends and especially those of you dragged along for what you suspect will be the longest two or so hours of your life, good afternoon.

I, too, would like to pay my respect to the Kaurna people and their elders past and present.

I wish to thank Flinders University for this award of Doctor of the University Honoris Causa and for the generosity of thought and spirit that goes with it. I am now, more than ever, in debt to Flinders University.

Without Flinders I would not have been a doctor. It's as simple as that. Without Flinders being innovative, imaginative and bold, I would not have been a doctor. These traits, which it showed from the very start of the development of the School of Medicine, continue until today. The Medical School in Darwin, the successful rural programs are just two more recent examples of Flinders being innovative, imaginative and

bold.

I was in the first intake in 1974. I came from Victoria, I was a graduate. In those days there was a different, although understandable, attitude to offering further degree opportunities to graduates. It was felt in those days that those already with a degree should be ranked behind those who were still looking for their first opportunity to undertake university studies and preferences were also given to home state students. Flinders, in its first and subsequent intakes, offered a quarter of its places to interstate students and to those with degrees.

I was offered my place in December 1973 - without an interview. Now they were the enlightened days! No UMAT, no GAMSAT, no interview.

Gus Fraenkel, the first Dean of the School of Medicine, assembled a Faculty of talented, energetic, diverse and brilliant teachers from all over the world and I would like to acknowledge them all.

I had the pleasure of seeking the wisdom and advice of Professor Doug Henderson a few weeks ago. A world renowned expert on diseases related to asbestos, he freely gave his time to me then and subsequently as I sought to steer a way forward to both educate and protect the public in regard to asbestos in our homes. This subject is a matter of high level difference and debate. Doug Henderson spent almost 40 years researching asbestos related diseases and is a world authority on the subject.

Whatever has kept him as part of FUSA/FMC all these years, I can assure you it is not the view from his cramped, crowded office! The directions to find his office demonstrate his humble situation. "Down the first corridor, turn left, fourth door on the left, then behind 2 sets of doors."

The Flinders course had points of difference from other medical schools throughout Australia from the very start. We saw patients in our first week, electives were offered throughout the course, the final year was a student intern year based in that most marvellous of hospitals, the Repat at Daw Park. In how many hospitals would

you see the Director of Nursing use a scooter to get around? And the marvellous food!

Michael Kidd told me just last week that this graduation ceremony will be the last of the BMBS Course (even that was different, all other offerings were MBBS). The MD is to follow from 2013.

This makes today's event particularly special for me and for Chris Xu. By the quirk of the alphabet, we will be the bookends of this BMBS course which has spanned 34 years. Chris was born in China, has a 1st class Hons BSc from Auckland, and graduates with a wife and child (like me). Unlike me, he has the aptitude for fine surgery and is keen to be a plastic surgeon

We will be available for photo opportunities later - they will be collectors' items!

I would like to publicly thank Drs Adams and Anderson for their noble gestures in deferring during their training so that "Baggoley" could graduate first. I was one of 42 (there are 130 graduating today) who included Dr David Wattchow. David won the University Medal and who, as

a highly respected surgeon, has been serving the Flinders Medical Centre and University communities and particularly the southern population of Adelaide with distinction all these years. And he earned his Doctorate the hard way!

To all of you who have earned your doctorates following years of research, I acknowledge your hard work, your persistence and your brilliance and the very wide gulf between us and the difference in these awards. I do understand the term 'Honoris Causa'. Thank God for Google! Recollections from my year 5 high school Latin didn't quite get me there.

To all of you, from Science, from Engineering and from Health Sciences, who are also graduating today, congratulations on your achievements. In particular to those graduating BMBS - welcome to a career of endless possibilities and opportunities.

As you all look forward to the opportunities that today provides you, let me share a few thoughts regarding the next 20, 30 or 40 years and how you might make the best that you can of these years.



I spoke with a senior public servant last week at an end-of-year function. He told me that he had just returned from being guest speaker at the speech night at his former high school in a town in regional Queensland and from which he had graduated 32 years ago.

As he looked forward to their future careers he reflected on those characteristics in his own make-up which had a positive impact on his own career. Hard work was a given, but sincerity in all he did, as well as an ever-abiding curiosity were the two main traits he considered made the difference for him. That word 'curiosity' has stuck and resonated with me since then. It would fit well with those who remain in the same career, or to those who change careers entirely. Constant curiosity, a willingness to listen to others from all walks of life and to respect them and their opinions will invariably lead to an enriching, fulfilling and beneficial life.

Medicine, particularly in my interest of safety and quality of health care, looks to disciplines and practices adopted in industry, in commerce, in other professions, even in entertainment to improve its performance. Such

curiosity is providing great benefits.

In addition, I have found that paying respect to those with whom you work and whom you serve will reap benefits for you and for them. The single best idea that was adopted when I was seeking to improve patient flow at the RAH Emergency Department came from those who volunteered to provide patient care and comfort and did so for many hours over many years. The silent observations and ideas of the Lavender Lads and Ladies had not previously been sought. I sought them, and the impact of their observations and ideas when implemented, was most impressive.

And let me provide you with another tip, while I'm in the mood for free advice. When you resign your job, as inevitably happens many times throughout your career, do so with style and grace, regardless of your inner feelings. You may need to apply to that institution or to that person, again and they will remember a departing spray !

And always be polite to those people who are junior to you. Not only one day might they be considering whether to refer patients or business to you, but you never know,

but they might one day be your boss!

I would like to finish (as would the Vice Chancellor like me to finish) with a few words regarding family and those who are close to you. I am honoured to have my wife Barbara, one of my children, Rosemary, and Anna, my mother-in-law, with me today. My father turns 90 tomorrow and I will return to Melbourne for the celebrations. I have made a mockery of the notion of work - life balance and have abused their support, care, generosity and patience throughout my entire career. Apologies and thanks are inadequate recompense but they are all I have!

All who are graduating today have had a great deal of support from family - for those international students who do it tougher, this has been from a distance - and from your friends. I know that for Chris Xu, the support of his friends, family and mentors has been most important to achieving his graduation today. Be kind and generous to them today, because I am sure that you shall need them very soon again as you start your new careers.

So, to Flinders, the university and the community, I very much appreciate this honour you have bestowed upon



me today. It is one I shall always treasure.

Thank you