



SPEECH

BY

GUEST SPEAKER

Prof. P. K. NAIR

**DURING 3RD GRADUATION CEREMONY OF
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU**

ON

FRIDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

- The Cabinet Secretary; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology,
- The Chancellor, University of Embu, Prof. Paul Musili Wambua
- Chairperson of University of Embu Council, - Dr. Margaret Gikuhi
- Vice-Chancellor, University of Embu, Prof. Daniel Mugendi Njiru
- Chancellors of Sister Universities present
- Vice-Chancellors of other Universities present
- University of Embu Council Members
- University of Embu Staff
- Students
- Graduands, families and friends
- Distinguished guests
- All protocols observed
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning!

Thank you Prof. Mugendi for the kind introduction.

I will start by thanking the University of Embu for finding me worthy of invitation to be the Guest Speaker during 3rd Graduation Ceremony. This is indeed a great honor for me.

Today is indeed a day of great joy and celebration as we recognize and reward the hard work of the students as well as that of Management, Staff and all the Stakeholders who have made their contribution to see this great University grow from its humble beginning to where it is.

It feels so good to know that you have achieved what you set out to accomplish in a relatively short time. I share in your pride and joy and that is why I quickly accepted the invitation without hesitation.

I take this early opportunity to congratulate, my former student at the University of Florida, Prof. Daniel Mugendi Njiru on his appointment and installation as the pioneer Vice-Chancellor of the University of Embu.

I commend the University Council for the decision to select and recommend, Prof. Daniel Mugendi for appointment as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Embu, through a democratic and transparent selection process.

In my view, you could not have made a better choice. I know Prof. Daniel Mugendi as one person who has immense experience and many qualities. He has over the years demonstrated extraordinary effort and commitment towards strengthening excellence in higher education, research and scholarship in Kenya and internationally.

I have read the profile of this University and I fully appreciate the strides that the University of Embu has made over the last few years of its existence in pursuit of excellence in training and research for service to humanity under the leadership of Prof. Mugendi.

I am confident that he will lead this University to even greater heights of success following his appointment and installation as the Vice-Chancellor.

My heartfelt congratulations to you Professor and I wish both you and the University all the success in your endeavors.

To the Graduands;

This is a moment to savor the glory of your success and to celebrate your accomplishments with your lecturers, colleagues, family and friends. It is a time to find the necessary inspiration for the life that lies ahead of you in the words of wisdom that you will receive throughout the ceremony, the parties, luncheons and dinners that have been lined up to congratulate you today. This is not the end of the race but the beginning of the race of life. It is a moment when one door closes and another opens into a whole new world of opportunities and possibilities.

I congratulate you for your achievements and as you conclude this important phase of your lives and start a new journey, this is the time to pat yourself on the back and also take time to appreciate those who have contributed to your success. Remember the tremendous support you have received from family, friends and benefactors who altogether, have made it possible for you to make this remarkable academic journey.

Mr. Chancellor Sir;

Allow me to share some thoughts with the graduands.

The main objective of going to university is not only the acquisition of academic knowledge, but also to get the opportunity to develop analytical and problem-solving skills which in turn become very critical in our lives as we deal with the problems that we encounter in our daily lives and in the Society.

The ultimate result of university training should be to acquire an intellectual capacity for reasoning, understanding and building the resilience and life skills

that will enable you to withstand the challenges that lie ahead. For you to live a meaningful life, you need to have the versatility and creativity of mind to take appropriate control of your destiny and your environment. I am sure that the University of Embu has given you the opportunity to embrace these skills in preparation for life as from tomorrow.

Remember that the Degrees you will receive today and for which you are being celebrated, are only paper qualifications. The Degree's real value will depend on how you apply the knowledge you have received to make a difference in your life and that of your community.

I must tell you that to succeed in life; you will need to have a strong desire to better yourself coupled with the passion to attain that long term dream that has enabled you to reach this stage of your journey. The personal skills and societal values that you have cultivated along the way, if well applied, will perfect you into becoming the all rounded, well-groomed and responsible individuals that your country and the global community needs. I am talking about values such as honesty, team spirit, commitment, resourcefulness, patriotism, respect for human dignity, patience, and humility. These values will eventually shape your attitude to life and empower you to become successful.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me briefly highlight 3 things that I consider very important to all of us in the journey of life and especially for our new graduands;

1. CHANGE

The first is change. As the saying goes, "*Change is the only constant thing in the world.*" We must always prepare and be ready to face and accept change

as the norm in our lives. Many people find it difficult to accept change as an inevitable part of living. It is worth keeping in mind that part of growing as a person requires you to accept that life is constantly changing.

So as you leave the University today, you will experience constant change everywhere you go and as I said earlier, you should use the powers and skills that you have gained from your University experience to deal with and overcome any challenges that may be brought about by change in the course of your career and your life.

2. OPPORTUNITY

Opportunity is simply a time or set of circumstances that makes it possible for you to do something or to get something that you have been yearning for; Synonyms for opportunity include - appropriate time, chance, luck, best timing, golden opportunity, favorable occasion or as many people exclaim it is “the moment I have been waiting for”.

I call upon all the graduands and all of us gathered here today to always be ready and prepared to grasp or grab every opportunity that comes your way. You never know, this may be the only moment that the opportunity may ever show up at your door step. Challenge your limits to the fullest and never miss the opportunity because sometimes when it’s gone, it’s gone!

There is always something to learn from every opportunity. You will in turn come out better and more experienced for the next opportunity.

3. MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Finally, every one of us can truly make a difference in our own life, and the lives of others, if only we paid attention to the moments that inspire us to share our ideas or be innovative, to lend a helping hand, to be more empathetic, to contribute in a team or even just provide a shoulder to lean on for someone in distress. Making a difference in whatever you do or wherever you are is a basic human instinct. It fulfills our need and desire to find a meaning in one's life and creates a sense of significance.

This is now the time to use your knowledge, skills and talents to make a difference in your life and the lives of others.

CONCLUSION

So in conclusion, I urge all of us today to;

- ✓ Go out and change peoples' lives with the good ideas and skills that you can offer to society.
- ✓ Be unsatisfied with being ordinary.
- ✓ Be explorers out there looking out for opportunities to grasp whenever they present themselves
- ✓ Accept and embrace change as an opportunity,
- ✓ Make a difference in the world!

I wish you all the best on your journey into the future as you search for opportunities to help you reach your full potential

I thank you for listening to me. Congratulations, once again!

Thank you.