

What an honour it is for me to welcome all of you to celebrate UBC's graduating Class of 2014.

Today is about the graduates and what you've achieved – through countless late night study sessions and dreaded 8:00 a.m. classes, sacrificing sleep, not to mention personal space just to get here on the B-line. This occasion is about what you've achieved through hard work, determination, and moments of creative inspiration.

Graduation is a time to imagine your future and the world to come. When you think of the road ahead, you may gain perspective by looking back to where you've been and even further back to understand the experience of previous generations.

I recognize that at this moment, you may be more preoccupied with looking forward than with reflecting on the past. And I don't blame you. If you can believe it, I actually still remember what it was like to be a recent

graduate. I won't say what year it was, but when I received my undergrad degree the unemployment rate was at 12%, the highest since the Great Depression. Faced with this stark reality and a quickly dwindling bank account, I did the most logical thing I could think to do. I stayed in school.

Back then—and *this* is really dating me—a fax machine was considered high speed and Apple had just introduced the Macintosh Portable, a 17-pound laptop (imagine lugging *that* around

in your backpack!). We were just starting to send email and using something that eventually morphed into the World Wide Web. I

graduated with a PhD in Computer Science, but I doubt any of us “experts” came even close to imagining how much the world would change because of the IT revolution.

I think it’s safe to say the only constant in your life is change, and the rate of change will continue to accelerate as yesterday’s innovations become today’s museum pieces.

Just think of the advances in communication technologies that have occurred during your time at UBC. Some of you may have started here without a smart phone, but I'm willing to bet that most of you have one now. You'll probably update your status as soon as you leave here! Since you've been at UBC, Facebook has gone from millions of users to over a *billion*. And just when I figured out how to tweet, my daughters tell me that Twitter is "so yesterday" and that something called instagram or insta-

vine or snap-something is the next big thing. I can't keep track but ... for you it's second nature – changing how you communicate and relate to each other is as natural as, well, as breathing.

I have frequently called this the “empowered generation.” You quickly adapt to technology, access any information instantly and then debate and exchange ideas on a global level.

The possibilities for sharing, innovating, and connecting across continents and cultures have

become limitless. You carry the sum of all human knowledge in your pocket and you have the opportunity to use this connectivity to better the world at a scale unlike any generation before you.

Now I don't mean to minimize the challenges you will meet and the obstacles you must navigate. Collectively we face climate change and sustainability. These are just two examples of unprecedented social issues that will require the entire databank of world knowledge

married to the creativity of humankind – to
your creativity.

The rapid change we are seeing also extends to
job markets. Those who have the capacity to
tolerate ambiguity, consider information
systematically, and innovate are best placed to
succeed in the jobs of today.

And if we've done it right, we've given you the
gift of a great education. A UBC education goes
beyond knowledge in a particular field, or
training in a specific skill. A UBC education

cultivates critical thinking, nurtures creativity and inspires a global perspective. A UBC education prepares students to succeed in the jobs of today and of tomorrow, jobs still unknown and even unknowable from our current perspective. We've given you the best tools we can for a lifetime of success.

I'll leave you with one last thought and a challenge. Being an expert is a noble pursuit, but adopting the role of lifelong learner is what will steer you through uncertain times. Take

today not as an occasion that marks an end to your learning, but as a beginning of a quest to learn more about yourself and about your world. UBC's motto, *Tu-um est*, translated from Latin means "it is yours". The education you got here is yours forever. And we hope to continue to engage with you as alumni as you travel forward to new adventures.

Congratulations, Class of 2014, and my very best wishes for you all.