Dear Graduate,

It is with cheer and joy that I extend my most heartfelt congrats. College is not an easy undertaking. Many of you have moved mountains to 'stand' here today. Even now, we often take for granted that despite considerable efforts, the playing field is not level; that we do not all get an equal shot.

You must remember this fact, and remember to give yourself credit where it's due. The world will try to make you forget. Don't forget.

You must also remember that you do hold within you immeasurable and insurmountable power. Yes, that does sound like an Instagram quote. But it's also true. I think you suspect this. I think you already know what you are capable of. Hold on to this truth when you get knocked down, and please, stand back up. When the world is trying to cast you aside, stand your ground. Stay. You belong.

Stay grounded, but stay soaring.

Stay humble, but dare to be cocky.

Stay kind, but it's ok to be fierce.

And as you venture out to reshape our world, don't forget to stay in touch with your friends, but more importantly, the next cohort of rising scholars.

Good Luck!

Shireen Udenka