



5-2-2021

Commencement 2021, 10:30 AM Invocation

Shruti Pattekar 2021

Ivana Valencia 2021

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/commencement_docs



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Ivana: Good morning, family, friends, faculty, and most importantly graduates. We are gathered here today to celebrate the overall success and achievements that the class of 2021 has performed during these turbulent times. It is at this moment that we should acknowledge everything that has brought us here; every dream, every hope, and every faith.

Shruti: There is an ancient Sanskrit saying that states our knowledge comes from four different places. A fourth comes from our teachers. A fourth comes from our peers. A fourth comes from our own intelligence. And a fourth comes only with time. Growing up as a Hindu, I was taught that knowledge is wealth. I grew up praying to knowledge itself and understood that one of the primary purposes of our life is to be on a constant journey to gain more knowledge - about the self and the world around us, and I believe this can be applied to all of us.

Ivana: We, the class of 2021, have faced head on the belly of the beast, confronting hardship, discomfort, and even vulnerability. Yet it is these moments that not only enlighten us about ourselves but our ways of being. We have finally made it to the end of our undergraduate journey. As we continue on to whichever direction we take, let us continue to gain not only knowledge, but also wisdom. Let us integrate these concepts not only in our lives but in our communities as well.

Shruti: The few years that we have spent in this bubble have given us more knowledge than we believe. Until we reflect on our experiences, we will never truly understand how much of an impact IWU and its people had on us. Let us take a few moments to skim over the past four, or however many years we have spent here, and think of a moment where we were pushed to think of something from a new perspective. Whether it was because of a professor, a friend, your own consciousness, or purely time. Something that made us say to ourselves, “Well that is a unique way of thinking about this!” Let us take a moment to simply reflect.

Ivana: As someone who was raised as a Jehovah’s Witness, I have encountered many moments of reflection that had not only impacted me but my own perspective of the world. I hope that like me, you were able to think of at least one of these moments. Let us constantly encourage our minds to think in a different way, to challenge ourselves. To think from the perspective of another: a friend, a foe, an elder, a child. To continue on this journey of gaining both knowledge and wisdom.

Shruti: Let us treat others as if they are us and we are them. Let us continue to gain knowledge in every which way. Let the goodness inside of us radiate every single day. Let us persevere through the rest of our lives. Let us fight for what we truly believe. Let us not only learn from our mistakes, but also change our behaviors. Let us not simply jump over our obstacles, but actually push past them.

Ivana: As we all close this very chapter of our lives, I'd urge you all to take a moment, whether you believe in one God, Multiple, None, or questioning, to unite for the finishing statement that my friend Shruti will give.

Shruti: In Hinduism, there are several paths to the same goal, the same destination. As we graduates continue on our unique journeys, let us hope that we all eventually reach the same destination: whatever we define as success. I want to finish with a short universal Sanskrit mantra . Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah. Sarve Santu Niramayah. Sarve Bhadrani Pashyantu. Maa Kaschidh Dukhha Bhaag Bhavet. Om Shantih Shantih Shantih. May all be prosperous and happy. May all be free from illness. May all see goodness and auspiciousness in everything. May no one suffer. Om Peace, Peace, Peace.