

Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, fellow graduates, University staff and guests.

There is a native cherry tree in our garden. It is old but bears the most abundant fruit. A little antechinus planted this tree from a tiny seed long ago. Cockies and bats come to feast in it when the fruits are ripe. Kookaburras laugh and magpies sing in its branches.

Now I would like you to imagine for a moment that in this old tree there are many new seeds carrying the potential for new trees. Seeds that need help for spreading so they too can grow into big trees.

My dear colleagues, we are about to leave this building for the last time. We have learned the Four Ps, Five Forces and Six Thinking Hats. We are mistaken if we think our work is now done.

No, my dear colleagues, our work is only just beginning. There will be much hard work. It will take us from Melbourne to Malaysia, from Sydney to Singapore, from Churchill to Hong Kong, from Ballarat to Bairnsdale. It will challenge us and throw many obstacles in our way, and we may not live to taste the fruit.

It does not matter if we are in our active wear or in a suit. It does not matter if we are bankers or principals, mothers or fathers, farmers or entrepreneurs. What matters is that we pull up our sleeves with purpose and stride with absolute equanimity, knowing what we do will spread the seeds and thus serve the world.

I believe we are ready for it. The tree needs us. The world needs us. How lucky, we are equipped with the best education fit for this challenge.

On behalf of all the graduates here today I would like to thank those who have helped us in some way to support us through our journey thus far.

To our family, friends and mentors, thank you for your support throughout our studies. Many of us experienced obstacles along the

way, your love and support has contributed to us being here today.
Thank you.

To the wonderful lecturers and FedUni staff, thank you for making it possible for us to achieve and be here today. The support and guidance has been invaluable. Thank you.

To those who have gone before us and paved our way, nurtured the old cherry tree and looked after the land we are privileged to stand on today, the traditional owners, the Gunaikurnai people, thank you.

And finally I thank those who steadfastly stand beside us as we stride into the future.

Together we will serve the world; together we will grow new trees.

Thank you.