

## **Graduate Speaker's Address 2019: FedUni Arts Academy & FedUni TAFE**

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Deputy Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, fellow graduates, University staff and guests. Welcome and what a thrill it is to be here. Federation University, and specifically the branches of FedUni TAFE and FedUni Arts Academy, could be referred to as educational 'institutions'. This would not be untrue. However I am sure I speak for all of us, staff and graduates alike, when I say 'institution' somehow seems too cold, too clinical a term. Federation University is a community. A community bolstered by the commitment, zeal and (dare I say) artistry of every lecturer and contributing university staff member. Thanks to the work of these individuals, we were provided the best possible environments in which to hone our crafts and our professions, and to learn and grow as businesspeople, tradespeople, artists and human beings. To those responsible for this, we extend our sincerest, gutsiest gratitude.

We also wish to thank our families, friends, partners, colleagues, pets; anyone and everyone who has provided encouragement and love over the course of our studies. Supporting a student isn't always easy. We have strange priorities, stranger sleeping patterns, and I'm sure each and every guest here has nodded along politely as we've attempted to explain exactly *what it is that we do* when we trundle off to Arts School or TAFE each day. Yet here you are, our selfless supporters, our audience, our advocates. We are so very grateful to you all.

And now here we are, our lives enhanced not only by our education and those who fostered it, but also by each other. Again, 'peers' seems too clinical a term – comrades, contemporaries and family fit the bill a little better. I will be forever grateful for the friendship and support of my fellow students and unforgettable memories we've made along the way.

So where to from here eh? Honestly, I don't know – no one does really. The exciting truth of it, is that no two of us will tread the same path. What I do know, is that each and every Federation University graduate stands equipped not only to lead rich and fulfilling lives, but also to enrich the lives of others, whichever their chosen field of study. What an absolute gift.

Let's, all of us, take this gift and dive into life, into the possibility-filled future; let's fail gloriously and succeed remarkably.

Congratulations graduates, and good luck. It's going to be scary and it's going to be wonderful. Thank you.