Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, members of the College, Ladies and Gentlemen, and especially, those graduating today.

To YOU, I offer hearty congratulations!

It is an honour and a great pleasure to be invited to share this very special occasion with you.

Today, is an exciting milestone where graduands, friends and family, and College staff, can savour a sense of real accomplishment.
As you embark on your future career, I challenge you to take what you have learned in this great university, and embrace your future careers, with passion, with high hopes, and with what might now seem to be, IMPOSSIBLE dreams.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to tell you a STORY:

My father died when I was 9.

My mother, who had not had to work for 25 years, went back to teaching, to keep together the body and soul of a surviving family of 9.

She did a marvellous job, and without ever, a single word of complaint! But financially, things were tight - very tight! So, if I wanted pocket money, I had to earn it by weeding other people’s gardens, and washing other people’s windows.
That’s when my business training began, and by age 15, it had progressed to where I was selling advertising on commission, and earning up to $380 pounds per week, during school holidays.

Later, I trained as a teacher, and taught at Port Adelaide Primary and I coached the football team. So I can truly say “I coached the Port Adelaide football team also!”

Unfortunately, I had the doubtful distinction of never having won a single match in 3 years!

I left teaching to go full-time into commission selling with an older brother, who had been my friend and mentor, after my father’s death.
It was during this time, that we started selling portable coolers. 18 months into doing this, my brother passed away very tragically, at the age of 35, leaving a wife and 6 children.

This meant that at 27, I suddenly had the responsibility of providing for 2 women and 10 children.

Having built the business to a million dollars turnover – which in 1972, was a good sized business, - I had the rug pulled from under me. So my wife, Kathy, and I decided to make our own coolers!

In year 1, we made 1000 coolers.

In year 10, we made 150,000!

In year 3, we had TWO factory fires in 5 weeks!

In year 17, we had $5 million US dollars worth of
product stolen from us.

That was when interest rates were at 18%.

Our then bankers decided to inflict a further penalty rate of 7%, so we were paying 25% interest!

You know, it’s said that bankers give you an umbrella when the sun is shining, and take it away, when it starts to rain! However, I am pleased to say that I have seen no such propensity with our present bankers!

Why am I telling you all of this? It’s not that I crave sympathy – it’s to demonstrate that in the school of hard knocks, it’s the bad things that bring out the best things in us – provided, we have the right attitude – which is, and I quote ”an attitude of GRATITUDE!”.

St Paul had it – he said, “in all these things we more than conquer through him that has loved us”.
And that’s the only way that we have survived what life has thrown at us, over the past 46 years!

So you, who are all about to become graduates – welcome to your next new challenge! Whether you’re headed for academia or industry or commerce, or public service I wish you every success.

HOWEVER, achieving that success, will depend entirely on how you FARE, as an over-comer, in transforming PROBLEMS into OPPORTUNITIES in the Post-Graduate School of LIFE.

Once again, hearty congratulations to all of the wonderful new graduates.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in
acknowledging every one of them again!

Applause

Thank you very much, I will now be able to say that my speech had unanimous and tumultuous applause!

Ladies and Gentlemen, one final thing. I am delighted to announce the **Seeley International HVAC scholarship** of $5,000 dollars per year. You will hear more about this later.

Thank you Ladies and Gentleman