



**Chancellor's Remarks
Commencement
December 16, 2017**

"Good afternoon and welcome to Texas Christian University's fall commencement.

This is a wonderful day of celebration:

- for you, our graduates,
- for your families and friends,
- and for this University, now in its 144th year.

To the extraordinary Class of 2017, I offer my heart-felt congratulations.

Some of you are the first in your family to graduate from college,

and a number of you hail from a long line of Horned Frogs.

But I think I can safely say that none of you are the same person you were since the days of Frog Camp, Freshman Orientation and the Chancellor's Assembly, where many of you gathered—in this very spot—to share the light of knowledge.

Just like the Ed and Rae Schollmaier Arena where we gather today, you have also undergone an amazing transformation these past few years.

A transformation designed for the future. Your future.

I hope you have taken a little time to reflect on your college days... and nights... to remember your TCU experience and the connections you've made with other students and faculty.

It's been a remarkable journey worth looking back on.

Your college career likely began on a hot August day when you met your first professor in that very first class.

That was the start of many more classes, labs and projects that challenged you to reach your full potential and purpose, semester after semester, finally leading to this moment.

Many of you wasted no time getting involved here on campus. You:

- Held internships.
- Tried new things.
- Became part of a team.

- Created something on your own.
- Joined an organization.
- Started an organization.

You met people who were not just like you, and engaged in conversations that shed light on a different perspective.

Nearly a third of you left the country to study abroad, and broadened your understanding of people and cultures.

You cheered for the Frogs. And you cheered for each other.

You supported your fellow students, and you felt uplifted and supported by their encouragement.

We hope you found your TCU family, and that our campus became like home.

Maybe you fell in love--with a person, or a new major, or an idea.

Or a cause that became important to you.

You learned to juggle multiple priorities and manage your time. And what a time it was.

During your time here...

Our campus was visited by a former United States President and First Lady, an astronaut, and about a third of the cast of Saturday Night Live.

The Broadway musical Hamilton combined hip-hop and American history, winning a Pulitzer Prize and a record number of Tonys.

(I have no idea but...) I am told Bruno Mars' "Uptown Funk" was the Song of the Year at the Grammys.

Record Town celebrated 60 years on University Drive. Which means the TCU Class of '67 enjoyed it too.

The Horned Frogs won the Alamo Bowl in a dramatic comeback and proved that a loyal TCU fan will never change the channel or leave a TCU football game early.

Speaking of comebacks...Our men's basketball team defied all odds last season under Coach Jamie Dixon and won the NIT championship in New York City. And I was just hoping we would win a few games!

In addition to the arts and athletics, new businesses have been launched and new approaches have been introduced to enhance our daily lives.

Amazon announced plans to use drones for delivery. (And since everyone "trusts" Amazon to deliver just about everything, they have extended that "trust" to deliver hot food with Prime Now.)

3-D printers debuted on campus and made your BIG ideas come to life.

Crowdsourcing and ride-sharing connected us as never before. Most of us snapchatted, shared memes and tweeted.

While the popular culture landscape has evolved over the past four years, so did our campus home.

Permit me to take a moment to thank you all for putting up with Texas Construction University and all of the physical changes on campus. Some call it “construction.” I like to call it “a renaissance.” Regardless, we know you have been troubled with noisy machinery and blowing dust. We hope you will agree it was worth it.

In Worth Hills, Marion, Clark and Hays Halls opened, providing more on-campus living options to students. There are also new places to gather—like King Family Commons—and park—like our new “Garage Mahals.”

We developed the Intellectual Commons on the east side of campus, connecting the beautifully re-imagined Mary Couts Burnett Library to the innovative learning spaces of Rees-Jones Hall.

You immediately took to those places and showed us the writing on the wall, gathering together to study and exchange ideas.

The gift of a sundial became a new campus landmark, a marker to remind us of our place in the world and beyond.

I know that many of you will be taking pictures today at special places all around our beautiful campus.

As our campus has grown and improved, so too has the reputation of the University.

- TCU has been recognized as “One of the Best Colleges in the West” by the Princeton Review.
- We were rated as a “Great Place to Work” for the past seven years by The Chronicle of Higher Education.
- Our position has solidified among the top 100 colleges and universities —out of some 3,500— in America.

We continue to raise the academic profile and reputation of TCU – and you are part of that.

Your legacy is a commitment to what defines this values-centered university:

- To never stop listening, learning, growing and sharing.
- And to make a positive difference in the world.
- With spirit, creativity, knowledge and an unceasing willingness to contribute to the greater good.

The TCU Student Creed calls upon students to “commit to excellence by serving with respect, learning with passion, and leading with integrity.”

These principles will serve you well throughout life.

- Serve with respect.
- Continue to learn with passion.
- Lead with integrity.

If you keep these touchstones with you always, we will have met our mission “to educate ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community.”

The journey to this day was not made alone.

I congratulate the family members and friends who have stood by these graduates, supported them, maybe nagged them just a little, and today celebrate with them.

I know you are so proud . . . and relieved. Thank you for being part of the extended TCU family.

As befits this occasion, I feel it is important to close with a few words of advice to our graduates.

- Be bold and seize opportunities.
- Be on time.
- Whatever you commit to, see it through.
- Send a handwritten note once in a while. It will amaze and please the recipient. And it will set you apart, in true Horned Frog fashion.
- Be kind and treat others with civility and respect. (Of all the things you remember from my message today, the most important thing is to be kind and treat others with civility and respect. Make room in your life for people who may have a better idea than you. Be open and you will be rewarded three-fold.)
- Stay in touch with TCU and come back to visit.
- And finally, keep a purple article of clothing handy to show your Frog Pride wherever you go.

I am so proud of each of you. I cannot wait to see what you accomplish as you chart new paths and continue on your journey. You will succeed at "adulting."

Thank you for choosing Texas Christian University. We will continue to work hard to make you proud and increase the value of your TCU diploma.

Godspeed on your way."