

# One of the most precious realities: the quiet and private satisfaction of duty faithfully done

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This is a day for celebration, dedication and congratulation. The congratulations are mainly focused on the new graduates. We congratulate you on staying with a long and demanding training which, as you note, is only the beginning. You actually DID IT!

Next we congratulate the faculty...also staying with a long and demanding curriculum, and we also congratulate the Micronesian and Samoan public servants for their keeping the faith in the program and for sticking their necks out when necessary. I used the term "public servants" advisedly because what we, from the medical school in Honolulu encountered, was indeed a commitment of SERVICE to the people of the islands.

Finally I want to congratulate all the friends and families of the graduates. Your faith in the graduates has borne the fruit and I can see the love and pride shining in your eyes even from this rostrum. Many of you traveled thousands of miles to be here for this occasion.

My charge to you graduates is to dedicate yourselves to the service of your fellow citizens as exemplified by my friend Dr. Eliuel Pretrick, and other veteran Medical Officers. You and your families need to be comfortable and secure, but you will find that the real rewards lie in the service you provide to your patients and their families. There will be rainy nights when you doubt this, but always remember that the sick child could be your child and you could be one of the frantic parents. Those

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parents can be enormously reassured by your obviously calm competence that you now have the training to deliver. For those of you fortunate enough to have a deep spiritual faith, you can regard every act of service as a cup of water for the dying Christ.

There are other rewards too. Several years ago I attended a meeting at the Fiji School of Medicine, and there were senior medical officers from all over the Pacific. I was greatly touched by the affection with which they greeted classmates of many years before from all those far-flung islands. If you are lucky, you have already made friends who will last a life-time.

You perhaps do not have any idea of the affection you have drawn from so many people...many of whom you have not even met. The truth is that young people who are dedicated and on track are truly irresistible. The club you now belong to

is your club. Be kind to each other and especially be kind to your teachers as their years catch up with them, their hair and their arteries. Most of all, be happy. Remember that the most precious realities are, curiously enough, not all "real" in that you can touch them or weigh them. I refer to the love of children, the esteem and

trust of your colleagues, and the deep satisfaction of the service you render your patients. It has been called "quiet and private satisfaction of duty faithfully done".

When you come to your recitation of the Hippocratic Oath you will note that some of its relates to the decorum of your day-to-day life. This does not mean you have to go around with a long face and no smile. Be yourselves, but be the selves that your grandmothers would approve of.

Finally I charge you to remember that most of you have had opportunities your parents and forebears could have hardly imagined. Inevitably, this will make something of a gap between you and them, but remember that your efforts have made the gap, and it is your job to build and maintain a bridge to all those people out there who are bursting with love and pride. □

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