

TCP World Academy Graduation



May 20, 2011

Ms. French, faculty members, family and fellow graduates, today is a day to be thankful and inspired.

First we have to be thankful. Here at TCP World Academy we have received a top quality education. Thanks to Ms. French's leadership and the tremendous teachers she has put in place we have benefited in so many ways. Due to their combined effort we are now fully prepared to move on and to take on whatever challenges come next in our lives.

Fellow graduates, I want you to know what a great gift being as prepared as we are is, because that cannot be said for all schools. At TCP we have not only received a high degree of academic excellence that is second to none, but learned life skills that will aid us in all future endeavors. Moreover the friendships and social experiences will benefit us for the rest of our lives. At TCP the teachers make learning fun and relative to real life. I could not have imagined attending any other school.

Life is not just about where you start, or where you are at now, but more about where you are going. What is next for you? Since we all have the capacity for self awareness, and to affect the future and those around us, I am hoping that we look inward and consider these three suggestions:

1. Know and live your values
2. Use both your brain and your heart
3. Remember that people DO matter.

Mr. McCoy once said, **“There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different than the things we do.”** What we believe in are called our values. Our family and teachers have helped navigate the challenges of growing up. They have provided us with all the necessary tools to be successful and that begins with finding out who we are. Thomas Jefferson wrote, **“Do you know who you are? Don’t ask. Act. Action will delineate and define you.”** Prioritize your values, put them into action, then see what happens.

The second thing to remember is that we have been given a brain and a heart and we must choose to use both of them in life. Nelson Mandela wrote in his memoirs in his long imprisonment, **“A good heart and a good brain is a formidable combination.”** What does it mean to have a good heart? It means to take time to care for others. It means to become passionate about people in life whom you care about and who care about you. It means to dream big and dream small and to put as much emotional effort in as you can to make them come true. I have always been inspired by Mahatma Gandhi’s words, **“In a gentle way, you can shake the world.”** You make not shake the world all at once with your heart, but you shake it one person at a time with your kindness, your faith, and your compassion. When you lead your life with both your head and your heart, good things will follow.

My third and final point has to do with the people in our lives. When you ask people what is important to them, they talk about the people they have met in their life’s journey. Simply put, people DO matter to us. Think of your family and how they impacted our development as a person, Think of the relationships that we developed with our teachers. Think of the friendships we formed with each other. We are not the same person today as when we were in kindergarten. People play an important role in who we become and in the life we live. Cultivate relationships and you are sure to find a more meaningful, more powerful life.

We can also be thankful for our families. These past years have presented us with a lot of ups and downs and it is good to know that we had our families in our corner, supporting us along the way. Thanks Mom and dad. I would not be here without you.

Finally, we can be thankful for each other. The friendships that we have made here will last a lifetime. In the same way we have helped each other to survive, in other ways to support build each other up to reach their potential. We have become a family for life. I know that I now have 32 brothers and sisters that will be there for me forever to help me in all future endeavors!

Now, what can we be inspired by today? Personally, I am inspired by each and every one of you. This has been such a special class in so many ways. Many of us have already tested into Walnut Hills and still others are going on to other academically prestigious schools. That is no small thing. Through hard work, guidance and a willingness to become self motivated learners we have all achieved greatness. I am inspired by our family bond that has been instilled in us and is now part of our moral fabric. Whenever, I get a little down about something that didn't turn out just the way I wanted it to, I remember the support that you, my classmates, have provided and given me. Thank you for that, congratulations and all the best.

Often on graduation day we look outside for heroes, but I see them right here among us. Our parents are the real heroes. I have seen in my years at TCP World Academy that we don't have to look far for inspiration and that we each have the potential to make an inspiring contribution to others by being true to our values and committing ourselves to loft goals.

When you leave here today, celebrate what you have accomplished but look forward with an eye toward how you can be an inspiration for others.

Congratulations Class of 2011

Valedictorian,

Kyndal Fletcher