



**King College Prep graduation with First Lady Obama
June 9, 2015**

Good evening and thank you, and congratulations to the Class of 2015!

It is my pleasure to share the stage tonight with First Lady Michelle Obama, who I've been privileged to know for many years.

It seems like a lifetime ago that I was a second-year law student at the University of Chicago, taking a course on Current Issues in Racism and the Law from a professor I greatly admired – Barack Obama.

We developed a friendship that year and remained in touch while he was writing his first book – Dreams of My Father. One summer day in 1995, he and I met for lunch near campus and he told me he was planning on running for public office.

I said to him, "That's the dumbest idea I've ever heard. Why would you want to turn your back on a perfectly good legal career?"

Needless to say, President Obama had a different plan for himself. And I think it has worked out for him – and for our nation.

What we celebrate here tonight is one important step in your life's journey. But there are many more steps to be taken.

There will be challenges, and triumphs. There will be moments of great joy and times when you feel as though you have lost your way.

But as you move toward your dreams, I hope you think about how your life's work will impact the community around you.

Take a lesson from our President, who realized that serving your community is perhaps the greatest gift you can give yourself.

We have but a limited time on this Earth.

All that we can ask of each other is that we use that time to share our gifts – to rise above the challenges we face – and to work to solve the problems we see around us.

That we use our collective strength to make this world a more compassionate, respectful and loving place.

So, congratulations Class of 2015! Go out and leave your mark on the world!

Thank you.