



**Palm Institute
President's Address
Class of 2018 Commencement Ceremony
11th December 2018**

PROTOCOL

- **Representatives of Nene Tie Djanhene Korabo IV, The Queen Mother Elders of Manya Jorpanya**
- **Nene Narterh Wayo III & Elders of Kordiabe**
- **Fellow Members of the Clergy**
- **Members of Board of Trustees, Palm Institute**
- **Members of Board of Trustees, NAPE Foundation**
- **Distinguished Guest Speaker, Mr. Kojo Ohene – Founder & Chief Executive Officer, IFS Finance Group**
- **Prof. Anthony Panin, Dean of School of Graduate, Central University.**
- **Lt. Col. E. L. S. Gyedu, Commanding Officer, Army Recruit Training Camp, Shai Hills**
- **Mrs. Florence Hutchful, Managing Managing Consultant, at 2MB Consulting Services**
- **Colleagues Academics from Ashesi University, Central University & the University of Cape Coast**
- **Rotarian President, Mrs. Elvina Owusu Afriyie & Fellow Rotarians**
- **Directors, Faculty, Staff & Students of Palm Institute**
- **Family, Parents & Invited Guests**
- **Dear Class of 2018**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

Introduction

I wish to welcome you all to the 3rd Commencement Ceremony at Palm Institute.

This is indeed a memorable day in the history of this great Institution because it is our first Commencement Ceremony on our new campus grounds, here at Manya Jorpanya.

All though this phase of our development as a University, appears small today, it is to a large extent a dream come true. I know we have a long way to go but we are extremely grateful for how far we have come.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to express my sincerest gratitude first to God for his grace, strength and provision. But for the grace and strength of God, I do not know where I would have been.

Secondly, I would like to thank my beautiful wife, Mrs. Beth Okantey for her love and support. Beth is always on my side when everyone else gets tired of me and leaves. She has been a source of encourage and strength.

I would also like to thank all our donors in the United States and Ghana for their support and contribution during the construction of the first phase of our permanent campus. Thank you for your support.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it important that I take a minute to express my appreciation for my Family, The Okantey Family. My father David Okai Okantey and my siblings, Joseph, Albert, Cynthia, Rebecca and Miriam Okantey for their love and support over the years.

Most notably, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to pause for a minute to pay respect and show love and appreciation for my dear mother Evelyn Naa Amerley Palm of blessed memory whom this Institute is named after. I wish she was here today to witness this event and the work we have done, but I know she is with us in spirit. May her soul rest in perfect peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank all my Administrative and Support Staff for their support. They have worked very hard over the past several years to bring us to where we are today.

Mr. Michael Tetteh, Mr. Reginald Mills-Owoo, I thank you for your unwavering love and support for Palm Institute.

I would also like to thank all of you for taking time off your busy schedules to join in celebrating our dear Class of 2018.

Class of 2018, as the third batch of graduates of Palm, it is with great joy and honor that we celebrate you for such a momentous achievement on your life journey. Indeed, this is the commencement of your professional lives as the name implies. It marks the beginning of great and exciting things yet to come. Your parents, family and friends can attest to the fact that you diligently worked to get this far.

I therefore congratulate you and also take this opportunity to thank your families, friends and members of the Palm Family who stood by you and supported you through this amazing voyage.

This day undeniably marks the end of one phase of your academic journey. Today you have a tremendous opportunity to step out into the world and model the kind of education and training you have received at Palm:

- An education that is rooted in liberal arts tradition;
- An education that has empowered you to think critically without going through life as passive observers;
- An education that has prepared you to transfer the skills and knowledge you acquired from the classroom to the workplace;
- An education that has prepared you to appreciate the complexities and diversity of our world and its continuously changing environments.
- An education that has prepared you to lead and discharge your duties ethically and excellently.

This is irrefutably a promising and exciting day to experience because of the great opportunities that lay before you.

Class of 2018, before I share piece of advice with you, I would like to share a few words on Palm Institute.

Palm Institute

Palm has indeed made great progress in our quest to train ethical and excellent leaders in Africa.

Today is a typical example. The Institute was founded in September, 2012 and began academic teaching and learning in 2014 with 11 students, 8 faculty members and three diploma programs in Business Administration, Computerized Accounting and Banking Technology and Accounting – affiliated to the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX). We later added two diploma programs in Procurement and Materials Management and Agribusiness and Finance.

Between September 2012 and August 2018, we were operating from rented facilities in East Legon, Okponglo Junction to be precise.

As a result of our quest to introduce HND and Degree programs, we had to leave that location mostly because the National Accreditation Board for three consecutive years rejected our buildings in East Legon.

Miraculously, the NAB approved of our new campus location as a suitable location for tertiary education this past October, 2018. We are therefore going through the required processes to mount our HND and Degree Programs as a university-college.

This new facility houses **5 Lecture Halls, 6 Administrative Offices, a Large Faculty Area, a Computer Lab, a Kitchen & Cafeteria, a Library, an Infirmary.**

Hostels & Faculty Residence:

We have as part of our short-term plans to build hostels and a faculty residence to house our students and faculty on campus.

I strongly believe this will help facilitate effective teaching and learning at Palm and will help drive the Palm Vision of “Educating Ethical and Excellent Leaders in Africa.”

I would therefore like to call on all stakeholders and investors who believers in the Palm vision of raising ethical and excellent leaders in a conducive liberal arts environment to partner with us to construct our first hostel and faculty residence.

As a growing private liberal arts university-college, we will steadily work towards growing whilst keeping the needs of Ghana and Africa in mind. We will endeavor to expand our facilities and tactically add relevant programs to our menu of programs to diversify what we offer to our clients.

We will not relent in our pursuit of giving our students the most convenient environment for teaching and learning. We will not look to the left or right in our commitment to educating ethical and excellent leaders in Africa.

I will now turn my attention to our dear Class of 2018.

Class of 2018, as you leave Palm today stepping into the world, some of you will establish your own companies, others will start working for companies and various organizations. Some of you will pursue further education and other exciting journeys.

As a result, you will find yourself working with diverse individuals, teams and groups. My advice to you is to consciously strive live a life of **Self-discipline**. Your commitment to a **life of discipline** will make a difference in the trajectory of your life and the people you interact with. It will determine your **level of success or failure in life**.

Class of 2018, thousands of books and articles have been written and published on the subject of **success and achievement**. It appears as though the reason for these accomplishments have been discussed and written for thousands of years in every imaginable way. However, one quality that most philosophers, teachers, experts and professionals agree on is the importance of **self-discipline** when it comes to the subject of **success and achievements**.

Class of 2018, Self-discipline is the key to **personal greatness**. It is the magic quality that opens all doors for you and makes everything else possible. With self-discipline, the average person can rise as far and as fast as her talents and intelligence can take her.

But without self-discipline, a person with every blessing of background, education and opportunity will seldom rise above mediocrity.

Harry E. Fosdick once said “... No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated and disciplined.”

Class of 2018, Self-discipline and self-motivation go hand in hand. A person who practices self-discipline takes control of their life. Such a person has no element of discontent but rather full of motivation because she is striving towards her life goals.

Class of 2018, the individuals, teams, organizations and nations you will interact with you after this Commencement Ceremony will make great strides galloping into development, advancements in industry, technology, governance and eventual success if each of you decide to **live a life of self-discipline**. **Self-discipline** will help you develop and maintain the desired qualities of leadership needed to drive Ghana and Africa to its desired future. **Self-discipline** will build in you a determination to achieve excellence. **Self-discipline** will build in you the ethical standards and integrity you need to manage your dealings with individuals and organizations.

Class of 2018, I would like to leave you with the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.:

Dr. King, in his speech to a group of students in Barrat Junior High School in Philadelphia on the October 26, 1967 encouraged the students to have a “Life Blueprint.”

Dr. King told them that before a building is constructed, an architect is engaged to draw a blueprint, and that blueprint serves as a pattern and a guide, and that a building is not well constructed without a good, solid blueprint.

Dr. King told the students that each of them is in the process of building the structure of their lives and the question he posed to the students was whether they have a solid and sound blueprint for their lives.

I know without a shadow of a doubt that each of you seated before me today is in the process of building the structure of your life.

Dr. King suggested two things that should begin their life’s blueprint which I would like to share with you.

He said:

- Number one in your life’s blueprint, **should be a deep belief in your own dignity, your worth and your own “somebodiness.”** He said, “don’t allow anybody to make you feel that you are nobody. Always feel that you count. Always feel that you have worth, and always feel that your life has ultimate significance.
- Number two, in your life’s blueprint you must have as the basic principle the determination **to achieve excellence in your various fields of endeavors.** He said, you are going to be deciding as the days and the years unfold what you will do in life. – what your life’s work will be. And he said, “Set out to do it well.”

Therefore, Class of 2018, as you step out of Palm today, I would like to encourage you be determined to grow great by staying focused and dedicated no matter what comes your way.

Seek to design and build a blueprint of self-worth, dignity and excellence. But above all, strive to live a life of self-disciplined.

I thank you for being part of the Palm Dream. Thank you for believing in us. God Bless you! God Bless Ghana! God Bless Africa! And God Bless Palm Institute!

Thank you!

Dr. Peter Carlos Okantey