



8th Matriculation
27th February 2021
President's Address

Protocol

- Members of the Palm Council
- The Chair of Council, Prof. Anthony Amoah and Guest Speaker for today
- Members of Board of Trustees, NAPE Foundation
- Our Affiliate and Mentor University, University of Cape Coast (UCC)
- Colleagues from Ashesi University, our Mentor University.
- The Acting Provost, Mrs. Beth Lynn Okantey
- Our Traditional Leader: Nene Narteh Wayo III, Paramount Mankralo of the Shai Traditional Area and Kordiabe.
- Faculty & Staff of Palm Institute
- Matriculants, Parents, Guardians, Family & Friends
- Distinguished Invited Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen

Introduction

I would like to welcome you all to Palm Institute. We are grateful you made time to join us for our 8th Matriculation Ceremony here at Palm Institute. I cannot find the right words to express my level of gratitude for being part of this historic matriculation rite. This ceremony formerly welcomes into our midst, Freshmen who have taken a firm decision to join us to be educated in a vibrant liberal arts environment. This historic event happens to be our first matriculation for our first batch of four-year degree student since we became an accredited full-fledged University College in Ghana in May 2020.

Our matriculants officially arrived on campus barely four (4) weeks ago for their Freshman Orientation and Registration of courses for the first semester of 2021/2022 Academic Year. The Freshman Orientation lasted for three days (1st through 3rd February) and lectures commenced the following week, 8th February 2021.

Although they have been oriented and have started attending lectures, they are yet to officially be made legitimate members of the Palm Family. Our matriculants become legitimate members of

the Palm Family after they have signed the Matriculation Register and have sworn the Matriculation Oath administered by a Provost. This moment publicly transitions our matriculants into the Palm Family.

Colleagues and distinguished guests, I would like to express my appreciation for the confidence parents and guardians of our matriculants have reposed in us by releasing their children to us to be educated here at Palm. Thankfully, amongst us today is a team of distinguished and dedicated faculty and staff and our Council Chair, Prof. Anthony Amoah to welcome you and to assure you that you made the right choice for your child.

With these academics and professionals behind Palm, I can certainly assure you that your children are in the hands of some of the best and finest you can find in any reputable university in Ghana and around the world. They are here to welcome you, but also to assure you that the choice of Palm at this moment of your lives, is a strategic choice of a University. Riding on the back of that assurance, I am very thankful to say today that the Palm University vision is still alive and well.

Palm Institute

Ladies and gentlemen, since 2012 Palm Institute has been at the forefront of educating and raising competent, trustworthy leaders with integrity. Our mission has been to educate ethical and excellent leaders in Africa, and we are very much dedicated this agenda. In order to realize the above mission, we have taken frantic steps to set up systems and structures that would ensure that we realize our mission. We have taken steps to recruit and employ qualified faculty to teach our students. Our faculty hold doctorate degrees, Ph.D, Mphil, and MSc. degrees. They are very experienced and dedicated to the work they have signed up for.

Their passion is to see our students succeed in their chosen fields of study. As part of ensuring Palm graduates are employable, we have built Career Services into our overall curriculum. The Career Services Department and Career Services Center facilitates required/compulsory internships for all Palm students. All our students are required to complete at least 40 hours of corporate internships every summer before they graduate.

In essence, all Palm students are expected to complete at least 120 hours of internships before they would be considered for graduation. We have setup a Corporate Coaching and Mentoring Program for our students to interface with corporate professionals whilst they are in College.

This was formerly launched on the on 18th February 2021. Our mentors are from some of the finest corporations in Ghana, African and the world. We have professionals from Deloitte, Republic Bank, Moore Foundation and Enlight Afrique Consult. We have already secured internship destinations for our students in some of the top corporation in Ghana and globally.

Corporations like Deloitte, Fan Milk, Ghana Limited, EAI Information Systems and Reroy Cable Company have accepted our proposal to host our students as interns. In order to ensure our students are mathematically successful in their academic career at Palm, we have setup the Math Center to help them build their mathematical and numerical skills. We all know quality writing and research is a major problem for most students and Ghanaians in General.

Palm has setup a Writing Center to provide regular support for our students with their writing, research projects and assignments.

We also appreciate the fact that sometimes students go through the vicissitudes of life and would need the support of professional counselors. We have therefore set-up the Palm Counseling Center within the Career Services Center and have engaged the services of professional counselors, Mrs. Benedicta Ashiagbor and Mrs. Beth Okantey who would engage with our students on social, emotional and spiritual issues during their time here with us.

We have also scheduled Academic and Career Counseling sessions for all our students to ensure they are supported every step of the way on their four (4) year journey at Palm.

Our ultra-modern teaching and teaching learning facilities ensure that our students experience a state-of-the-art level of teaching at Palm. Our library is well equipped with both electronic and hard copy textbooks for the benefit of our students and faculty. We have very reliable and fast speed internet on campus for students, staff, faculty and visitors. We believe a fast speed internet service will enhance students', staff and faculty ability and desire to conduct quality research to satisfy our quest and thirst for currency across board and all fronts.

On internationalization, ladies and gentle, in order to ensure our students and faculty are internationally exposed, we have taken steps to formally sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Oklahoma State University (OSU).

Our students will have the opportunity to study at OSU for a semester or two should they decide to do pursue such an undertaking. We would also at a point in time have OSU faculty and staff come and teach Palm students and train faculty and staff at Palm. They will also engage in community projects when it works for the schedules of both institutions.

The Honour System

Ladies and gentlemen, everything I have outlined so far will be an illusion if we graduate these matriculants at the end of their four-year journey and they join the existing culture of corrupt leadership out there. As part of our quest to educate ethical leaders, we are taking steps to introduce the Palm Honour System and Examination Code. It is system that would facilitate the preparation of our students to write examinations on their honour without invigilation or proctoring. The Palm Honour System will help encourage and empower our students and graduates to act with integrity wherever they find themselves.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we cannot achieve our mission of educating ethical leaders if our students and graduated cannot be trusted to act with integrity.

Africa remains inundated with the debilitating effects and impacts of corruption because of unethical leaders. Our country and the people of Ghana are confronted with the devastating effects of corruption every day their lives.

We see it all around us. Dishonest people, bad roads, lack of basic social amenities, ill equipped schools, hospitals, in some cases the absence of schools and hospitals in our communities, the absence of electricity and basic amenities such as potable water in communities across our country, graduate unemployment, misuse of our national resources for selfish and personal gains, the list goes on and on...

Ladies and gentlemen, I firmly believe that if we say we are educating ethical leaders at Palm, then our students must be trained and educated in a way that they can be trusted with doing the right thing when no one is looking.

Until our universities and colleges are able to confidently demonstrate our ability to educate and graduate leaders with integrity, Ghana and Africa for that matter will continue to wallow in the misery of the debilitating effects and impact of corruption.

Palm Institute is absolutely dedicated to the mission of educating ethical leaders in Africa. Ethics and values are part of our everyday conversations at Palm. Our students have been engaged in several conversations on the topic of ethical practices and dilemmas over the past four weeks. Such conversations are eminent and will continue for the next four years and beyond. We trust such honest conversations will facilitate the building of the required foundations needed for ethical actions on the part of our students. It is my earnest and sincerest prayer that our students and the entire Palm Community will embrace the Palm Honour System and Examination Code.

Scholarships through NAPE Foundation

Colleagues, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, all matriculating six (6) students are on 80 percent scholarships. This was made possible through the relentless work of NAPE Foundation. NAPE Foundation was founded in 2006 and has been awarding scholarships to Ghanaian students since 2009. The Foundation is footing the 80% scholarship bills of all six (6) students. The Palm vision has thrived over the past 16 years because of the work of NAPE Foundation. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Trustees of NAPE Foundation, USA and my immediate and extended family and all the people who have stood with me through good and bad times.

First, I would like to thank Mrs. Beth Okantey, my dear wife for her unrelenting support for this work. Your love and support have carried me through the years.

I would also like to thank the entire Board of Trustees and Advisory Board of NAPE Foundation for their continued support. I also want to thank all our donors and supporters in the United States of America and Ghana who have stood with us all these years for their support.

I would like also to thank the Palm Council Chair, Prof. Anthony Amoah for his support. Prof. Amoah has been an avid supporter of Palm Institute over the years. Thank you, Tony, for your continued support. I would also like to thank Dr. Nene Tei Djahene Korabo IV, Chief of Manya Jorpanya for his continued support. Nene Narteh Wayo III, thank you for your continued support. You always make time to join us when we call on you. We are grateful.

Ladies and Gentlemen, at this moment I would like to turn my attention to our Matriculants. As we matriculate you today, you must strive to manage your time effectively. As you can tell your timetable packed with lectures, seminars and webinars designed to prepare you for the world of work and entrepreneurship.

I suggest you spend your time judiciously studying and preparing for examinations and for the purpose of applying what you are being taught to your lives, entrepreneurship and other endeavors in lives.

Preparing for the known

Dear Matriculants, finally, I would like to encourage you to prepare for the journey ahead. COVID-19 has taught us that we must always prepare for the unknown. The impact of this pandemic on countries, organizations, businesses, individuals and families can never be underestimated. Just as COVID-19 has taught all of us, there would many twists and turns ahead of you. You will go down into the valleys of life and will be required to climb the mountains of life. There are rivers and oceans ahead of you that you must cross. Yes, there times you will find yourself on level grounds.

The only way you can rest and be assured of survival through the difficulties and challenges ahead is to build the required inner strength and tenacity. You need inner strength and tenacity to survive the storms ahead. You must promise yourself and your family that you will not drop out of school no matter what happens.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, I would like to thank all Council members, faculty, and staff who are here today for your hard work, thoughts and prayers. On this note, by the powers vested in me as President of Palm Institute, I officially welcome all our Freshmen to our beautiful campus and to one of the vibrant liberal arts Universities in Ghana today. Welcome!

Thank you!

Dr. Peter Carlos Okantey

Founder & President, Palm Institute