



PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

12TH MATRICULATION CEREMONY

Theme: Educating Leaders with Integrity in Ghana, Is It an Illusion?

- **Council Members**
- **Distinguished Guests**
- **Faculty**
- **Staff**
- **Parents**
- **Students of Palm University**
- **Matriculating Graduate Class of 2026.**
- **Matriculating Undergraduate Class of 2028**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I would like to welcome all of you to the 12th Matriculation Ceremony of Palm University.

This matriculation ceremony marks a historic and significant milestone in the history of this august institution of higher learning because it is our first matriculation with a class of graduate students.

We started with two-year diploma programs in 2012 in East Legon with **six students**.

In 2020 and 2021, Palm received **affiliation and accreditation** from the University of Cape Coast and the then National Accreditation Board, now Ghana Tertiary Education Commission, respectively, to run degree programs.

Gracefully, we started with a degree program in Business Information Technology in February 2021, also **with six students**.

Today, Palm University has **nine undergraduate and graduate programs**.

Our student numbers have gradually risen from **six to over one hundred**.

Class of 2026 and 2028, I congratulate you for taking this bold decision to become Palmers!

You have made a very firm decision to be educated within a community of scholars who uphold the values of **Integrity, Leadership, and Excellence**.

A community that pledges the pursuit of integrity through academic honesty and ethical conduct.

A community that believes in TRUST.

A community that leads and serves with humility and firmness.

One that strives for the highest standards and excellence.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to express my profound gratitude to all parents and guardians gathered here today for the confidence you have demonstrated in us by releasing your children to us to be mentored, nurtured, and educated here at Palm University.

As I have always intimated, amongst us today is a team of faculty and staff to welcome you and assure you that you made the right choice for your child.

To our graduate students, I would like to assure you that you made the right decision by choosing Palm University.

With these academics and administrators behind Palm, I can certainly assure you that you are in good hands.

Ladies and gentlemen, in our own small but significant way, we have been dedicating all our resources toward educating ethical and excellent young African leaders who will help turn the tides of Africa's development with speed and accuracy.

The University has put in place programs and services that ensure the daily success of our students and their ultimate career and entrepreneurial success within a community of trust.

We have a very strong emphasis on career and academic services.

Every Palm student is assigned an Academic and Career Advisor who ensures that they avoid the pitfalls of academic and career life.

Depending on the student's level of diligence, they are paired with corporate mentors who are intentionally recruited from corporate Ghana and professionally vetted to mentor and nurture our students in their chosen career and entrepreneurial paths.

Our students are encouraged to nurture a spirit of giving back, hence the emphasis on **Community Service and Internship**.

All Palm University students are required to complete a minimum of **180 hours of community service** and **480 hours of internship** before graduating.

Apart from learning on the job at their internship destinations, our students are encouraged to give back to the company destinations for their internships and the community as a whole.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in our quest to change the African story of corruption, Palm University has embraced the tenets of the Honour System and Examination Honour Code.

The communal decision to embrace and adopt the Honour System and Examination Honour Code was informed by our quest to build a community of trust and to ensure we fulfill our mission to educate and graduate incorruptible African leaders who would step into positions of leadership across the continent to bring the change we all wish and desire.

The other day, I asked our freshmen whether they think building a society of trust is possible in Ghana.

I was amazed by the fact that most of the class thought it was impossible.

Very few of them said it can be done.

The question is why does the majority of the class of students think it is impossible to build a just society in Ghana?

To most Ghanaians and Africans, educating and graduating a generation of young Africans who would uphold the values of integrity in community, corporate, national, and continental leadership is virtually impossible.

The simple reason is that for over seven decades, the continent has been besieged with the menace of corruption.

Ghana is inundated with so much corruption that Ghanaians have very little faith in the possibility of building a community and a society of trust.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we here at Palm think differently.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we here at Palm think differently because our work here is designed to help train, educate, and graduate leaders with integrity.

Apart from our matriculating and freshmen and graduate students, all Palmers have subscribed to the Honour System and Examination Honour Code.

These Palmers have been writing examinations without invigilators.

They have returned money and items that belonged to others without stealing them.

As our young Palmers practice the tenets of the Honour System and the Examination Honour Code, which has to do with doing the right thing when no one is watching, they will develop what I call, “Integrity Muscles” to help them do the right thing when no one is watching.

In essence, they will be able to say no to cheating, bribery, and corruption when no one is watching.

Ladies and Gentlemen, all of us here are mobile because most of our muscles are healthy and functional.

In the same vein, if our young Palmers who have subscribed to the Honour System and Examinations Honour Code keep upholding and practicing acts of doing the right things when no one is watching, they will develop the required muscles to say no to corruption and all that the continent is struggling with today.

Ladies and gentlemen, the quest to educate and graduate leaders with integrity will, therefore, not be an illusion if we all commit our hearts and minds to making it a reality.

Ladies and gentlemen, the great Confucius once said and I quote, “The strength of a nation derives from the integrity of the home.” – **Confucius**.

The strength of our country and our continent are tied to the kind of young men and women we are raising in our homes, schools, colleges, and universities.

It is said that “charity begins at home.” Parents, guardians, communities, villages, this country, and the entire continent of Africa have a role to play in the education and training of leaders with integrity.

I, therefore, want to use this platform to call on all stakeholders to join this quest to educate and graduate leaders with integrity in Ghana and Africa for that matter.

My dear matriculants, as you matriculate today, Ghana and Africa await your solution to its challenges with corruption and lack of integrity in our society.

I would like to encourage you all to begin the journey of building your integrity muscles today.

Build the strength you need to say NO to doing what is wrong and acquire the ability to say YES to what is right even when no one is watching.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to end by thanking all of you for your thoughts and prayers for Palm University.

On this note, I would like to state that I accept the pledge and promise of all our matriculants to uphold high ethical standards and walk the path of integrity as we all journey together over the next four years.

I formally welcome all our matriculants to the Palm Community. Welcome!

Thank you!

Dr. Peter Carlos Okantey

Founder & President

Palm University