

*This speech was created for presentation at a high school graduation ceremony in June of 2012.*

Philosopher and educator Mortimer Adler once said, “The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as we continue to live.”

There is a common misconception that after completing our many years of education, there’s little reason left to explore the unknown - to grasp unique concepts or expand our minds based on ideas or beliefs we may not understand.

Such a misconception breeds ignorance and bias in a world filled with an abundance of information still left to learn. It’s time we all adopt the notion that learning does not cease once we leave the comfort of the classroom.

Continual learning builds character and strength; it unites people from all walks of life to be respectful and tolerable of our differences; it ignites our dreams and supports a brighter future not only for ourselves but the society we’re all a part of.

Some of you will seek a higher education, while others will admirably enter the working world. Regardless of your path, never forget that “the purpose of learning is growth”. For as Benjamin Franklin once remarked, “Being ignorant is not so much a shame, as being unwilling to learn.”

Thank you and congratulations to all the graduates of 2012.