

Ayman Shoukari
FHS Student's Commencement Address
June 5, 2021

President Khuri, Dean Sibai, esteemed Faculty members, family and friends watching us live on social media platforms, and fellow graduates, I am honored to be standing today on this stage giving this speech.

First and foremost I want to thank Associate Dean DeJong and the faculty member representatives for choosing me as the Penrose awardee for this year and for the trust of the Faculty in me

As I reflect back on the past three years my journey at the American University Of Beirut provided me with all the resources and factors to flourish. This transformative journey pushed me to overcome the obstacles that have been holding back my potential and masking my capabilities.

In a nutshell I have realized that it's really hard to accumulate my three years' experience in just 5 minutes as it was full of ups and downs. I know that in the last one year and a half things were hectic for many of us as we experienced a disruption in the normal flow of our daily life activities. Experiencing this pandemic, along with a crisis, and the catastrophe of the Beirut blast was not easy for any of us. Please allow me to take this chance to honor the souls who were lost and to thank those who are still fighting this pandemic especially front liners in the medical team.

On the personal level, this pandemic has taught me more than it broke me. I have gained new skills like resilience, flexibility and finally I came to understand that "smooth seas don't make skillful sailors".

My fellow graduates I want you to realize that you are an exceptional cohort that was able to overcome many hardships.

In our success in surmounting these challenges let's make our achievement today meaningful. Let us go to the world and be exemplary, active, creative, honest and eager to learn more from others and share with them our knowledge and experience.

Class of 2021, I wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Before closing my message I want to acknowledge and thank my second family the MasterCard foundation for providing me with the opportunity of receiving higher education.

Congratulations again, the future is truly in your hands, so make the most of it.

Thank you.