

Grace Hajinazarian
RHSON Student's Commencement Address
June 3, 2021

Good evening everyone,

President Fadlo Khuri, Interim-Dean Dr. Laila Farhood, esteemed faculty, family members, and fellow graduates.

I dedicate this speech to the American University of Beirut Hariri School of Nursing, class of 2021.

It has been an honor to learn, practice, and grow with supportive colleagues. Most of the valuable lessons we have retained over the years have come from each other, as well as our motivation to always continue, and do better.

We are here today, because we chose to be. We were not pushed, nor persuaded, nor encouraged to pursue this profession. By becoming nurses, we willingly decided to immerse ourselves in the service of others, and to live by the professional standards that have been set by nurses before us.

Our nursing school has taught us beyond nursing theory and practice. It has allowed us to discover our strengths and weaknesses, and to improve accordingly. It has encouraged us to trust, and to seek help when we need it. It has shown us how to communicate with respect, and how to be a team player. Most importantly, it has constantly reminded us of why we chose this profession in the first place.

We will miss the days when we used to gather in our garden and lobby at HSON. We will miss running from HSON to the main campus to make it on time for our electives. We will miss waiting in a room for hours without our phones before an OSCE. We will miss coming early to class, only to be entertained by our colleague's singing sessions. Most of all, we will miss being all in the same room.

The past year has shown us how important our role can be in our community, neighborhoods, and families. We are not just nurses; we are educators, counselors, advocates, and leaders. The challenges and pressures we have faced shaped us into resilient and determined individuals, capable of overcoming all that stands in our way.

We became activists, capable of fighting for our rights, as well as supporting causes we believe in, and resisting all injustices and discriminations we witness. We became community builders, by being active participants in numerous projects and plans directed towards the recovery of communities affected by the August 4 explosion.

We became front liners, as some of my colleagues volunteered at AUBMC when COVID-19 cases continued to rise in Lebanon.

By embodying the values, ethics, and principles of nursing we have been taught at HSON, we will continue to be noticed for who we truly are. I look forward to seeing you all excel in your careers, and achieving all your goals.

I would like to thank AUB for providing an inclusive social and academic environment, where each student was able to speak, participate, and contribute; and feel heard, seen, and valued.

I would like to thank the HSON faculty and administration.

Thank you to our professors, advisors, and preceptors. You have allowed us to discover our true potentials, and have guided us on a path we will surely follow and complete.

I would like to thank our class representatives. Thank you for being our voice, and for dedicating your time for our class.

Lastly, thank you to our parents, families and friends watching and cheering for us tonight. We cannot wait to celebrate our accomplishments with you.

Our undergraduate educational journey is complete. Nevertheless, our duties and roles as nurses have just started.

Thank you