

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2020 VALEDICTORY SPEECH FOR THE 64TH GRADUATION CEREMONY – 11TH DECEMBER 2020.

**Madam Chancellor,
Cabinet Secretaries,
Chairperson and members of the University Council,
Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice Chancellors,
Principals of Colleges,
Deans and Directors,
Your Excellencies the Ambassadors
Our beloved Lecturers,
Parents,
Fellow Graduands,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Good Morning!

**My name is Eunice Muthoni Kariuki. A graduate from the
College of Health Sciences, School of Pharmacy.**

It is one of the greatest honors of my life to speak on behalf of the graduating class of 2020 in the 64th graduation ceremony of the University of Nairobi.

Today, for most of us graduands, is a sign of victory. Proof that even amidst tempest and storms, we can still rise. Today speaks hope louder than any voice most of us have known. Being finalists in the middle of a pandemic, we were forced to revert to new and initially challenging ways of learning; online lectures and online exams, but here we are. We made it!

This day we take a moment to remember. To reflect on the tragic loss. Of family, friends, lecturers; events that life does not prepare us for. Our hearts break for our fallen giants, but we still rise, strongly, bravely; what a better way to make our pain count?

Our success can be imputed to the ethics, attributes and values instilled in us throughout the course of our stay at this great University. We have had sleepless nights, group discussions and great lecturers who guided us throughout our academic journey. It has been years of constant hard work and now we get to reap the fruits.

We started painting our canvas the moment we joined this prestigious University years ago. With every stroke of the brush we defined our goals and took steps towards achieving them. With each year we adapted to the system and further built ourselves into qualified members of our respective professions. Now our painting is done and it is a beautiful one. Congratulations class of 2020.

This is indeed such a huge achievement for all of us. It is closing one door and opening an infinite number of doors with endless opportunities. It is a gateway to the start of our

professional journey. Now is our turn to make an impact in our respective fields by serving our beloved nation Kenya.

I would like to thank God Almighty for His countless blessings. I also acknowledge the administration, our lecturers, technical and support staff who worked tirelessly to shape us into the professionals we are. Your dedication is much appreciated.

No amount of words is enough to express our gratitude to our families; parents and guardians who accorded us an all rounded support from the moment we joined this university up to now. They have cheered us on and yes, we made it to the grand finish line thanks to their support that augmented our hard work.

During our voyage through this great University, we have made some of the greatest friendships. Friends who turned into family over the years. We've grown together and shared beautiful memories that will forever be engraved in our hearts. Special thanks to everyone who cheered us on when we were about to give up.

People who reminded us how strong we are and who refused to let us give up when things got tough. Those who put a smile on our faces when we were stressed out and at the brink of tears and those who replaced our doubt with renewed hope. We are forever grateful.

To my fellow graduands, we have been through fire and ice. We have been forged into the most resilient lot that ever graduated from this prestigious University. When we go out there, we will have different experiences. We may encounter more NOs than YES. We will have doors shut in our faces and rejected applications. But like my beloved dad loves to say,

when hit with disappointments, rise up and forge ahead. Never give up, never give in.

Though 2020 may have been a troubling and tragic year, allow me to echo the words of Author Irvin Yalom, “If we climb high enough, we will reach a height from which tragedy ceases to look tragic”. Let us go out there and keep climbing!

I would like to conclude with a quote from the former US president, Barack Obama, “Don’t just get involved. Fight for your seat at the table. Better yet, fight for a seat at the head of the table”.

Congratulations class of 2020. Thank you and God bless you.

EUNICE MUTHONI KARIUKI

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

11TH DECEMBER,2020