

To the graduating Medicine Class of 2020,

On behalf of the Hippocratic Council and the medical students of the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, it is a true pleasure for me to congratulate you on the tremendous accomplishment of your convocation. While this day may not look anything like what you expected it to be, that does not diminish any of the hard work and dedication that led you to this day.

Providing this message of congratulations is a special honour of mine after having the privilege of knowing you all for the past four years. From first meeting you as you began medical school, you welcomed me wholeheartedly into the Schulich family as an honorary 2020. I quickly transitioned from being the spouse of one of your classmates to forming lifelong friendships with many of you. This is a true testament to the character of the 2020s as a whole. Your unwavering support for one another and the greater Schulich community, in addition to the commitment you have shown in advocacy efforts and contributions to student life, has made each of you an exceptional role model for current and future students. The class of 2020 truly embodies the meaning of the Schulich family.

While the past several months have undoubtedly been very demanding and filled with more questions than answers, you have continued to demonstrate the same commitment and support to Schulich and your communities that you have for the past four years. In response to the effects of COVID-19, so many of you rose to the occasion by contributing to and developing local initiatives to help our frontline healthcare workers and the greater community. From providing free childcare to healthcare workers, to leading and participating in public health initiatives, to volunteering to provide additional mentorship to Schulich students in this time of uncertainty, in addition to many other incredible projects, you have left an inspirational impression on our school that will not soon be forgotten. It has been a great honour for us to work, learn, and grow with you all throughout this time.

Just as your white coat ceremony signified the start of a new chapter in your lives, so too does today as you complete this four-year journey. As I shared with the class of 2023 as they began medical school this Fall, I would like to share with you some words of wisdom from a mentor of mine during this time of transition. In the words of Dr. George Kim:

“Let compassion guide your journey and ensure you have a deep bench of support around you. Our work is soul-draining at times, so you need a network outside of the work that refills your emotional bucket.”

Medicine is an honourable profession that will shape a large part of your future and identity, but it is my hope that you will always remember the other parts of you that make you whole.

During residency and beyond, I hope that you will continue to carry with you the memories and friendships that you have built at Schulich, and that you will always take time to allow the people and places that you love to refill your emotional bucket.

On behalf of our students, we look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish and the positive impact that you will undoubtedly have on the field of medicine as you embark on this next great adventure. We wish you continued success and happiness as you move on to the next stage of your career, and we remain excited for the next time our paths will cross. Lastly, whether you are here or across the country, there will always be a home for you at Schulich.

Sincerely,



Jessica Garabon
President, Hippocratic Council