

VIEWPOINT

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UCLA lays solid foundation for future

By Albert Carnesale

Commencement is an important and unforgettable event in your lives. It honors a significant accomplishment: the successful fulfillment of the requirements for your degree.

It also signals the end of a very special and formative period, and it marks the beginning of the great future you have been preparing for while at UCLA.

UCLA's foremost role is preparing leaders who will guide our communities, our state, our nation – and indeed, our world – into the future. Here is how we



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accomplish this crucial mission: We begin with leaders by admitting only the most capable and promising students. While you are at UCLA, we offer you extensive opportunities for intellectual and personal growth and discovery.

We prepare you to excel in your chosen professions. Then we take credit for the many wonderful things you do as UCLA alumni.

It has been said that commencement is the springboard for life in the "real world." To prepare you for the unprecedented challenges that lie ahead, UCLA has incorporated much of the real world into your education.

You have had access to the vast extended classroom of the Los Angeles region. You have been encouraged to be an innovator, a problem-solver, an explorer and a leader – in the classroom and in the laboratory – and to engage in extracurricular activities and service to the campus and the

broader community.

These experiences have helped you to acquire both depth and breadth of knowledge. By providing this scope and introducing you to interdisciplinary concepts, UCLA has taught you the most valuable thing of all – how to learn. I encourage you to make lifelong learning a priority as you continue to discover, to learn, and to grow, both professionally and personally.

Whatever you do next – whether it is graduate or professional training, entering the workforce or taking some time to explore your options – you can proceed with confidence. As UCLA students, you have already proven there are no limits to what you can imagine or to what you can achieve.

A UCLA education provides a strong foundation for whatever you choose to do next. It has helped prepare you to face life's challenges and to enjoy its

rewards.

As for your next steps, I will share with you my own theory of career planning. It's quite simple.

When faced with a choice among alternative career paths, choose the path for which you have a passion. If something excites you, that is the best reason in the world for doing it. Do not be overly strategic about planning your future.

Do what you love. I guarantee you will do it well, and that will lead to success and to personal fulfillment.

We are immensely proud of all you have accomplished at UCLA. Your future achievements will also give us cause for pride. I urge you to embrace the spirit of service that is a hallmark of this university and to help ensure that the many benefits you have enjoyed as students will be available to those who follow you.

I encourage you also to

continue to nurture your friendships and the many connections that you have made during your time at UCLA.

Your extended UCLA family will prove to be one of the most valuable resources you can draw upon in the future, and it will continue to be a source of support for you.

As you look forward to beginning a new chapter in your lives, the members of your UCLA family join me in wishing you the very best, now and in the years ahead.

The world is a different place now than it was a few years ago, but I am confident that your UCLA experience will enable you to enter the "real world" with well-founded confidence and enormous potential for continued success.

Congratulations, Class of 2004!

Carnesale is the chancellor of UCLA.