

Kimberly Johnson - Assistant Vice Provost for Advising and Director, CMAE Advising

Congratulations graduates. I'm Kimberly Johnson, The Assistant Vice Provost for Advising and Director in CMAE.

You entered as students under unprecedented times and through your resilience you continued by achieving something remarkable. I know like so many of our students that came before you, that without challenges there isn't no success, no discovery, no grit gained that can help you achieve your next accomplishment or relish in the satisfaction to achieve.

Oprah Winfrey shared words that have always resonated with me about dreaming big and being successful in its connection to failure.

She said.

"It doesn't matter how far you rise. At some point you are bound to stumble... Because If you're constantly doing what we do, raising the bar, if you're constantly pushing yourself higher. Higher and Higher.... The law of averages, not to mention the Myth of Icarus, predicts that you will at some point fall. And in a few years at some point, like she did, you will recalculate."

And so graduates, when you have to recalculate, tackle something new, take a different direction, or just struggling with a transition from the classroom to a career or another degree. Treat every challenge as the thing you'll look back on as a lesson. Keep moving forward. Focus on your successes and journey, learn from that.

Graduates I want you to continue to push yourself higher. To dream big. To work hard so you can climb to your greatest potential, and I want you to lift others as you do.

So much has been promised of you by reaching this goal of a degree, so I know it might not be easy for a lot of you who are scared about what's next or still feel like you're figuring it. Let me fill you in, we're all still figuring it out, you're on this amazing journey of life and you have something significant to contribute to this world. You might just not know what that is yet.

So whatever is your story, You made it through. You are wiser. You are stronger. You are braver. You are unstoppable.

I know I speak for all of us at CMAE, when I say it has been our honor to get to know you and work with you throughout your time here at the University of Oregon. You have demonstrated you have the capacity and ability to achieve your goals. Never, forget this. As you leave the UO, we look forward to learning how you flourish in your careers and your communities. You have the power.

Congratulations to the Class of 2020!!!