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pundits on television and radio, seek out the information for yourself and construct your own point of view. When the company I work for was first conceived, the conventional wisdom was that our technology couldn't possibly work. Today we are a growing commercial operation with activity around the globe. We knew there was a risk of failure, but we believed in the idea enough to challenge the status quo and seize the opportunity, because we had our own informed opinion about what was possible.

When opportunity presents itself, be prepared to take risks and explore new ideas that haven't been tried before. Don't be afraid to fail, the role of failure in the quest for knowledge must be embraced. We are going to make mistakes when we try something new, that's how we learn. In the science and technology realm, we live in the world of failure because our failures generate the data that will tell us how to succeed where and when it matters most. It's critical we always carry the lessons from these experiences with us and pass this knowledge to future generations along with the tenacious spirit for scholarly pursuits. It is this spirit that leads to the innovations that solve the world's crises we all confront today.

However, scholarship alone is not enough to guide you in life. The resolve of good leadership cannot be lost as it takes the essence of leadership to turn innovative ideas into a reality. There are few things in life worth pursuing that will be easy. Successful leaders are not measured by their demeanor in times of ease; they are defined by their reaction to the hard times and how they overcome obstacles in the pursuit of finishing what they set out to do. Good leaders are forged by rising to the occasion and embracing their opportunities, your opportunities. There will be

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naysayers that doubt your ability, often because they themselves failed where you will succeed by learning from their experience. There will be risks to putting yourself out there that can promote your own self-doubt. Put all the doubt aside and go for it. Each one of you are capable of being tremendous leaders. You can be the doctors who find a cure for cancer, the

politicians who write the legislation that shapes the socioeconomic landscape, the educators that ensure the continued prosperity of future scholars.

In doing so you will encounter hard times, of this I can assure you. I recall some of my own experiences as a student and a working professional where my own commitment was challenged to the point that I couldn't see things getting better. There were biochemistry classes that seemed impossibly challenging and technical hills to scientific breakthrough that felt like mountains. These challenges weren't going away if I avoided them, they would be there whenever I tried to progress. In these moments you have to believe you can succeed and find the will to lead and finish strong, leaving nothing to chance.

Your leadership qualities will be essential in ushering in and expanding on the prosperities we enjoy today. That is the very basis of stewardship. Stewardship can be the most arduous tenet to uphold. It is grounded in the notion of continuity in quality throughout time. As stewards you are tasked with leaving this place better than how you received it. That can be an esoteric concept when we are young. I think this value is the one that becomes most clear with age. In preparing to be a father for the first time, I can see more clearly the importance of stewardship. I wish to provide the best future I

can for my son. That happens only by making good choices as an individual and as a community. As an individual, you are charged with maxing out your potential. You were born to this planet with a purpose that you are likely yet to realize. In fulfilling your potential and embracing purpose, you make society stronger and more robust, capable of meeting future obstacles.

While we all will have our own singular reasons for finding our purpose, we should remember there is a much bigger tapestry we contribute to as well. This tapestry is comprised of the relationships we cultivate throughout our lives that interconnect humanity at a global scale. In four years you have expanded your network of friends and through each of these friendships you are plugged into another network of people. As you go your separate ways next year, those relationships will travel with you as you continue to expand your circle that further tether you to society. These relationships are ultimately the foundation to the three previous core values addressed. In some of these peer networks you will find



the scholars that spark educational conversations, the leaders making the difficult decisions that move us in a positive direction, and the stewards that are delivering a brighter future to the generations yet to come. Your graduation tonight demonstrates your readiness to enter these worlds not just

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