

Faculty commencement speaker: "I believe in you"

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/27312/faculty-commencement-speaker-i-believe-in-you/>

The following is the text of the full University of Wisconsin Oshkosh 139th spring Commencement address delivered at the May 11 afternoon ceremony by Rachele Lancaster, assistant professor of nursing:

Dedication: To my Mother Diane Cholewinski, not one day has been the same since you left.

"Good afternoon, it is a privilege and an honor to be with you today on this, the 139th Commencement of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

"This is a story about believing. When I was 18, my Uncle David was visiting our home and said "young lady.... Go do something with your life... Go join the Air Force....I believe that you can survive basic training and serve our country. Go and join now... and know that I believe in you." I had barely graduated high-school and enlisted a few months later. I served nearly eight years on active duty and traveled the world. I was scared but took I took a chance, because *Uncle David believed in me.*

"After several successful years as an enlisted medic, I met a young captain who was commissioned in the nurse corp. One night, Captain Thomas said "you are a great medic but I believe that you would make an excellent nurse." We talked about career choices, family, active duty service and my fear of leaving a nearly eight year career. Kelly's words of encouragement resound in my mind. It was risky to leave the military, but I accepted the risk because *Kelly Thomas believed in me.*

"I separated from active duty service and a short time later came back to Wisconsin to attend school. During my last year of undergraduate studies, one of my teachers, Dr. Stephanie Stewart pulled me aside and said "I really see something in you. I think you would be an excellent teacher. You should think about going to graduate school." I received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from this University in 1999. Three years later, I found myself in graduate school working on my master's degree all because *Dr. Stewart believed in me.*

"The ink hadn't even dried on my master's degree and I returned to teach at UW Oshkosh. I knew this was home. I had barely moved into my office on the third floor when I met Dr. Sharon Chappy. Dr. Chappy encouraged me to not waste a second of time and pursue my PhD immediately, so I did. As I struggled through those last few semesters of doctoral studies, I knew I would make it. I knew that *Dr. Chappy* believed in me. I finished my PhD and I know that someday very soon I will be tenured. I know that my mentor and trusted counselor, Dr. *Jambunathan* believes in me.

"The four most life changing words that you can say to another person are, "I BELIEVE IN YOU."

"Graduates of the class of 2013, I am here today with your, teachers, relatives, friends, spouses, significant others, parents, children, grandparents and siblings to tell you that we believe in you.

"We believe that you, our graduates, will seek new and innovative ways to strengthen our economy, ensuring recovery and sustained growth. We believe that you will strengthen our future through positive enterprise built on meaningful relationships and community involvement.

"We believe that you will use your abundant creative capital to extend the arts beyond traditional view points into a world where all artists, writers and musicians challenge our beliefs about the everyday world. We believe you have courage and a clear sense of direction to cultivate creativity into action.

"We believe that you will empower people through teaching and counseling and lead educational transformation and social change in an increasingly diverse world.

"We believe that you will protect, promote, and optimization the health and well-being of all individuals, families, communities and populations.

"We believe that you will accomplish what you never thought you could. We believe that that we have given you the courage to believe in yourself.

"Believe that you are who you choose to be.

"Believe that the unbelievable happens every day and that you have the power to prevail.

"Believe in the strength that you have deep inside, trust there is no limit to the things you can do.

"Believe that as long as you believe in yourself- anything is possible.

"I believe that one moment can change your life. This is your moment.

"Congratulations Class of 2013."

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