



REMARKS

BY

**THE HON. T. DESMOND BANNISTER, M.P.
THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

AT

**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
SCHOOL OF CLINICAL MEDICINE AND
RESEARCH**

MONDAY, 21ST JUNE 2010

7:00 PM

**BRITISH COLONIAL HILTON, WEST BAY
STREET**

SALUTATIONS:

The Honourable Hubert Minnis, Minister of Health;

Professor Archibald McDoanld, Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of The West Indies;

Dr. Robin Roberts, Director, UWI, School of Clinical Medicine and Research in The Bahamas;

Faculty and Staff of the School of Clinical Medicine and Research;

Distinguished Graduates;

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

It is my pleasure as Minister of Education to bring brief remarks on this auspicious occasion. I wish to firstly congratulate our graduates for their outstanding achievements and successes in completing their course of study, the final two years being in The Bahamas at the School of Clinical Medicine and Research.

I wish to commend your parents and those who have encouraged and inspire you as you applied yourselves to your goal. I am certain that you came to appreciate that you could not do it alone and you needed the support of family and friends to keep you focus and uplifted during your schooling.

The Government of The Bahamas has for many years made a significant investment in the education of medical students enrolled in the University of West Indies. We continue to do so because we believe that you have a contribution to make to The Bahamian people and that you will do so.

We believe that as more of our citizens venture into the field of medicine, it means that we as a country will have greater access to improved health care.

It was not too long ago that we celebrated the graduation of one Bahamian doctor because it symbolized our progress as a people. Today, we celebrate groups of twenty or more graduating from the University of the West Indies, and other medical professional individuals graduating from universities around the world. Additionally, we celebrate the fact that more of you are becoming specialists in various aspects of the medical field thus filling the gaps in areas that once devoid of any local expert.

This is testimony to our educational system and our democracy that students regardless of their socio-economic status can aspire to be a doctor in The Bahamas once they have the skills and the will to fulfill their dream.

Graduates, a major part of your service will be to provide our people with information that will enable them to avoid succumbing to the chronic non-communicable diseases (high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease and the like) that are more wide-spread today. Our people will need to know about healthy life-styles and the dangers of obesity.

You will find that studying was the easier part of your mission. The real test of your ability will come in prescribing regimens for the good of your patients and applying judgment never do harm to anyone.

You will also find that the field of Medicine has expanded in The Bahamas therefore only quality service will distinguish you as a leader in the pack. Quality service comes when you treat your patients with respect and dignity and not as a mere number.

Congratulations, once again and I look forward to you applying the skills and knowledge which you have acquired for the development of a healthier Bahamas.