



Dear Graduates:

On behalf of the Rowan University Board of Trustees, I would like to congratulate you on your remarkable graduation achievement.

Graduation Day. I know this isn't what any of you imagined or dreamed about. For that I am sorry. I know that you are not sitting here live on a gorgeous, sunshiny day with your classmates, family and friends. For that I am sorry.

But, you know, I truly believe that every disappointing outcome builds something so important in each and every one of us—and that is CHARACTER.

Commencement 2020, although a little bittersweet, will build CHARACTER. The unorthodox and unprecedented virtual ceremony will build CHARACTER. You may not believe it now, but I promise you, it will.

Not only will you gain CHARACTER through this adversity, but you will also have great stories to tell your children and grandchildren. But, be prepared, as who knows what the future delivery of higher education will be and your children or grandchildren may not truly understand what you are saying.

I imagine it could go like this: You may be telling them of a time when you lived on campus in a dorm or drove to campus in your car for "in-person class instruction" and they may say to you, wait—what?—College was in-person, face-to-face with a professor? Or wait—what?—You lived in, what did you call it, a dorm? What is that? Did you say you drove a car? What is a car? And you had to put something called gas in that?

All of that aside, we as a Board are proud of each and every one of our Rowan University graduates. You have endured a rather tenuous time in these short three months—something I, nor your parents have ever seen before—an almost complete shutdown of our nation.

Our heartfelt prayers and thoughts go out to each and every family who has suffered a loss during this health pandemic. We also would like to thank and voice our deep praise and respect for all the health care professionals and emergency responders who were on the front lines of this crisis. They are true heroes and possess a tremendous amount of CHARACTER.

In closing, Class of 2020, I would like to challenge you to put aside your feelings and thoughts of "how this isn't fair." We as a Board know, your parents know, and President Houshmand knows that this isn't fair. But, I encourage you to embrace CHARACTER. Rise above it all. I know you can. I know you will. Rowan Proud, Rowan Strong.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in gold ink, appearing to read "Chad M. Bruner".

Chad M. Bruner
Chairman, Rowan University Board of Trustees