

20th Awards Ceremony, Polytechnic¹

Statement for the Press

Director of Ceremony,

Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia, Prof Tjama Tjivikua,

Distinguished Members of the Council of the Polytechnic of Namibia,

Respected Leaders of Various Sectors of our Economy

Valued Sponsors, Parents, Friends and Supporters

Distinguished Faculty, Management and Staff

Respected Parents and Relatives,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening to one and all. I am extremely honoured to be addressing this gathering tonight. Thank you Prof Tjama Tjivikua, Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia for inviting me to this glorious Award Ceremony. It is indeed a pleasure for me to address an event of this nature where best academic achievers are awarded for their outstanding performances.

It is said, "It is easy to sit up and take notice. What is difficult is standing up and taking action". Today we are celebrating the fact that someone stood up and took that action. They stood up and took the action to study just a little harder than the average student. Today we are celebrating enthusiasm, commitment and sheer hard work.

Enthusiasm is often mistaken as a force. However it is a quality that sets fire to the imagination in the most colourful way. Without it, there would be few achievements

¹ Statement delivered at the 20th Awards Ceremony, Polytechnic, Windhoek, by Hon. Sacky Shanghala, Attorney-General on April 15, 2015.

such as the ones we are honouring here tonight. It asks "What if?" and the results depend on the answer to this question. Today we are celebrating those who decided to answer the questions of what if I pushed a little harder in that Mathematics, Sociology, or Accounting module? What if I went to the library on a Friday afternoon after my classes rather than going home to rest? We are witnessing the rewards of good time management as well as hard work.

Today then, we are honouring those who asked those questions and committed themselves to not only finding the answers but to aligning their daily habits and activities to these answers. We are honouring those who worked late into the evening and early in the morning. We are about to present awards to the highfliers who wouldn't take "No" for an answer.

They knew, you see, that there were answers to be found and work to be done despite a "hectic" student life as we keep hearing. They understood that in the long and arduous study hours often there were often side turns and obstacles as is the case with all of us here.

Let us be under no misapprehension about this. They may have worked alone or in groups but they had, I am sure they will agree, the support and encouragement of family and friends and most importantly of their faculty members and others in the institution who played a role in their great performances. Certainly, without that back-up they would not have achieved this great milestone. They had also the example of many others who, through the years, have worked in their fields and who have given them enlightenment and inspiration.

Let us take a moment and applaud this wonderful support system.

Dear students, today we thank the various sponsors for their encouragement and support. They have given these awards because they know that your hard work brings meaning for the future for all of us. They have faith in what the Poly is doing and in what they hope the Poly will continue to do.

Getting an award of achievement does not mean that you have achieved it all and thus can now take a back-seat and relax. What it means is that your institution recognises your hard work and is awarding you so that you are inspired to do better and for those who are not awarded to also be inspired to work hard.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a world of scarce job opportunities, the pressure is on for students to set themselves apart and catch the attention of potential employers by scoring high marks. Every student should consider these academic awards as part of grooming for the future and must take full advantage of it by striving to be a part of the awards. Furthermore, the spirit of hard work should be translated in excellence in the workplace once employed and should not be left in your academic work.

Namibia like many other developing countries faces many challenges such as unemployment which primarily affects the youth our country. Majority of them are unemployed, or stay too long without a job after their graduation and thus become unemployable in the specific field of their specialization.

Therefore you cannot be mediocre in your studies or in whatever you do. Let us follow the shining example set by our former President. Strive to be the best and the most wanted and preferred candidate for employment opportunities by achieving highly in your studies.

Finally, I would like you to take as your motto the words of Thomas A. Edison who said, "There is no substitute for hard work."