

MENTORING SESSION FOR SIXTH FORMERS

Below is a summary of comments mentors gave to Sixth Form students during a reception, hosted by Governor Lisa Phillips, at Plantation House on Tuesday 27 September 2016.

What advice would you give to your 18 year old self?

Whatever you do, you must be able to look yourself in the mirror. For me that means working hard, doing the right thing, making the right decisions, and where possible, with a smile.

Have an open mind. Never rule anything out. It is about having the confidence and aspiration that anything and everything is possible.

There is a huge investment being made on our Island today, so you and future generations of Saints will have a brighter future. You can do, and be, anything you want to be, but you need to work hard to achieve this. You are our leaders of tomorrow, your journey has begun, embrace the challenge. Good luck!

Never stop learning. This does not have to be the traditional scholarly book-based learning, but take advantage of any opportunity for new experiences and learn from others.

Believe in yourself and stand by your principles. Self-doubt is common in teenagers and this makes them vulnerable to peer pressure and underachievement.

Life is like a journey and yours has already begun. There will be ups and downs, so it is important to stay focused on your end goal, but keep an open mind. In this regard, take advantage of the many learning opportunities you have, as both academic learning and life experience will mould you into the person you want to be. Why? You are a part of St Helena's future - someone who could make a difference.

Before others believe in you, you have to believe in yourself. You can be whatever you want to be, if you accept what life offers, acknowledge your weakness, build on your strengths, learn from your mistakes and above all, respect those as you wish to be respected.

A few small but significant changes in the way we think and aspire to the future, can pave the way to great personal success.

Be honest, be respectful, be law abiding. Be trustworthy, be punctual and take every opportunity to further your career.

Don't be afraid to fail.

Learning is a lifelong journey, not a destination. We should always seek to discover more, develop our understanding and continually expand our knowledge,

wherever life takes us. There are amazing opportunities all around us, so never stop believing in yourself, or your ability to realise your dreams and ambitions. Seize the day and make the most of every situation you encounter, no matter what. Whenever you look back, take the time to reflect on what you've learned along the way, and the difference that this has made.

'Follow your dream', as I have found, if you aspire to, or want something badly enough, you can make it happen, and in terms of a career, where a large part of your life is spent, it would be far more fulfilling.

Work hard and take advantage of the opportunities available. St Helena is a much better place than it has ever been and once the Airport becomes fully operational, opportunities will become much greater. Keep out of trouble - criminal convictions can damage your future in coming years.

Make the best of every opportunity that comes your way.

Make the most of the opportunity given to you now, so that at the end of it all, you can look back on your time and say, 'I have no regrets, I have given it my all and done the very best that I can'. Remember, every obstacle you overcome makes you a little stronger each time. Don't be afraid to step off the beaten track to experience something you never have before.

Plan wisely for the future, but not too much. Don't worry if you haven't always got a plan either. Be open to unexpected opportunities - they can offer some of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

Always embrace change. You grow and learn new things every time something changes. You discover new insights about different aspects of your life. You learn lessons from unexpected changes that did not lead you where you wanted to be.

Aim high and follow your dreams. You can do it!

Pursue your academic interests at University - you can decide your chosen vocation later!

Keep your career options wide in the short term, but then zoom in for the long term. If you need to move around to get experience, and move up, then do so! You can afford to take those risks and opportunities. Remember, nothing ventured, nothing gained, but don't be foolhardy!

Follow your own path wherever it takes you - you can always go home someday but you may as well see the world for yourself!

Become a professional in whatever you choose to do. Professional standing brings job satisfaction, security and earning power!

27 September 2016