

Governor Philip Rushbrook Closing Address

Lifelong Learning Awards Ceremony

St Helena Community College, Jamestown

8 January 2020

This has been a truly uplifting morning. To look around and see so many people of all ages from St Helena:

- Receiving qualifications in the core subjects such as Maths, English and technology;
- Achieving vocational recognition in the professional subjects of their choice; or
- Reaching a key milestone in your working life by completing an apprenticeship.

By being part of this Community College each of you, the award recipients here, have risen to the challenge of lifelong learning and shown by studying hard (I hope) and achieving your personal best you will succeed.

I remember being told some time ago *'it does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop'*.

By earning your award today you have done just that. You did not stop. In spite of the ups and downs during the course; the last minute dash to complete an assignment or two; the discipline of doing the revision; and overcoming the self-doubts, you kept faith with the learning until you got to the end.

The awards today are *exactly* the types of skills and knowledge we need to build up on our Island. Providing the opportunities for learning is the best way we have to ensure the right capabilities are developed within our working population. Capabilities needed to provide the services we require and to move forward our economy in innovative ways.

Now, those who have now finished here, I urge you to not let this be the end of your personal education and development. In your chosen career and pathway in life there will always be good reasons to increase your professional and personal skills. So, before we conclude this awards ceremony I ask you to quietly and individually make three pledges:

- First, *to never surrender to lethargy* or that pervasive state of mind of I-can't-be-bothered. If there is something you want to find out, to learn about or to advance your abilities, then do not hold back. Go out and seize the opportunity here in the College, online (remember the cable is coming) or elsewhere
- Second, *to use your skills to the maximum* in all your work and personal endeavours. St Helena needs all the capabilities it can muster as we venture into the uncertainties of the 21st Century
- Third, *to encourage those around you to take the opportunities* this College and through other channels have to learn and develop professionally and personally.

Each of you are now in the Island's frontline, the vanguard, in defining the future of St Helena. Knowledge, skills and increasing sophistication, I am sure you appreciate, are now an essential characteristic of every field of work and our daily lives.

Beverly Sills was an opera singer and she knew a thing or two about striving to be good at what she did. A remark she said still rings true today - *'There are no short cuts to any place worth going.'*

You have demonstrated this maxim with your awards today. I wish you individually every success in the next stage of your life and very well done for what you have achieved so far.

Thank you Awardees for learning. Thank you to the staff and tutors at the College for your hard work supporting the students. Thank you to friends, family and SHG giving the students the opportunity to learn.

I wish you every success in the future.

Dr Philip Rushbrook
Governor of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha