

## **Commencement Address**

June 22, 2023

Delivered by Bradley Lane, Ph.D.

Good afternoon. I'm Dr. Bradley Lane and I'm so proud to serve as the Interim President of Seattle Central College.

It is a great honor to address the Class of 2023 at Commencement. I am thrilled to be here with you today.

It is remarkable that many of you began your studies as the world locked down during the pandemic. Virtual learning, online classes, social distancing, not to mention all the other stressors that come with being a student. It may not have been the college experience you imagined for yourselves, but it shows the resilience and the determination that you each have within you! You have already proven to yourself that you can do difficult things, and now that you graduate, you will keep on challenging and pushing yourselves as you tackle new goals.

It's so great to see almost 1,000 graduates to be out in the stadium. For many of you, this may not be an ordinary Commencement celebration. It's a happy reunion – an opportunity to see your favorite instructor once again. Or it's an introduction – your first chance to hug, high-five or elbow bump the friends you've made virtually.

Most of all, today is an opportunity to gather with your loved ones (also hopefully in person!) to celebrate you and what you have accomplished during your time at Seattle Central. Education should equip you with knowledge, skills, and the capacity to think critically. But our college takes immense pride in what our graduates do with their education. As change makers, Seattle Central graduates build bridges and dismantle barriers. As leaders, they speak up for those who have been silenced. And as advocates, they uphold justice when others seek to withhold it.

So as you prepare to receive your certificate, turn your tassel, and become an alumnus of Seattle Central, I urge each of you to imagine what your contributions will be.

The world you inherit is not without its challenges. We live in a time where division, inequality, and injustice cast their shadows over the possibility of progress. It is precisely in these moments, when the road ahead appears daunting, that I know your determination will shine the brightest.

I see the immense potential in every one of you. And I am so excited to see how you will shape the future, make a difference, and leave your mark on our community.

Congratulations, Tigers!