

## President's Address for Commencement Ceremony

Congratulations everyone!

I am delighted to deliver the congratulatory address to 15 graduates from the Faculty of Law and Literature, the Faculty of Education, the Interdisciplinary Faculty of Science and Engineering and the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences. I also welcome 11 graduates of the Master's program from the Graduate School of Human and Social Sciences, the Master's program from the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology and the Doctoral program from the Interdisciplinary Graduate School of Science and Engineering.

You enrolled in Shimane University with your own dreams, goals, and abundant motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Then, you acquired an education in a broad range of subjects, and solid knowledge and skills in your majors. Today, you are here to be conferred your degree.

Since the last academic year, our daily lives and study environment have been changed completely due to the infectious spread of the novel coronavirus. Digital transformation in education unexpectedly progressed through the introduction of online classes and blended classes, using online and face-to-face techniques. I realize the inconveniences caused to you by the restrictions on entering campus and in extracurricular activities in response to the COVID-19 prevention measures. For the international students, I believe you have spent many anxious days in Japan, an environment different from home country, amid the spread of infectious disease. I also can imagine that you must have been worried about your family members and friends back in your home country. Despite this difficult situation, you overcame many obstacles and have now successfully completed the program in your field of study through your continuous hard work and dedication and will be awarded your degree. For this, I am truly glad.

I would like you to treasure the connection with your teachers, friends and regional community who supported your life at Shimane University. Also, I ask you to always be thankful for your family members who have supported you and watched over your growth.

With regard to the realization of a future called "Society 5.0" that was proposed in the Japan's 5<sup>th</sup> Science, Technology, and Innovation Basic Plan in 2016, this concept was expressed as "a sustainable and resilient society in which each individual can realize diverse well-being" in the 6<sup>th</sup> Science, Technology, and Innovation Basic Plan formulated in March of this year. This also proposes that "social transformation through the convergence of knowledge" and "a virtuous cycle of investment in

knowledge and people" are necessary for realizing Society 5.0. The society of our time is experiencing a rapid transformation, leveraging digitalization, and the COVID-19 pandemic will further accelerate this process. The social structure is transforming at a high speed in and toward the era with and post COVID-19. With the aim of realizing Society 5.0, i.e., super smart society, science and technology will progress further, and our lifestyle will see drastic changes. On the other hand, serious global-scale environmental issues such as climate change and ocean pollution are becoming more obvious. As such, the activities to realize the SDGs and carbon neutrality are developing at a high speed.

As the COVID-19 pandemic proved, various phenomena spread instantly across the globe in today's world of globalization and borderless society. The above-mentioned social problems and issues we face are common to all people from all countries and regions. In both international and social situations of increased uncertainty, you, as a graduate of one of the highest seats of learning in Japan, are expected to design and create a new generation with global perspectives, and to contribute to the realization of a sustainable, better society. I encourage you to have a clear understanding of the present situation, look forward to the future, and courageously try something while understanding the risks. I wish you the best of luck in the creation of a bright new generation with your established identity, rich sensitivity, and flexible creativity. Please remember that it is most important to try your best, no matter the situation or your surrounding environment. Steadily working hard on what you can and what you must do now will open the door to the next path. I hope that all of you will boldly carve your own way.

Shimane University has a history of over 70 years since its establishment. Over 60,000 alumni are globally active at present. Now, Shimane University has alumni associations in six countries, in addition to those across Japan. I hope that you will join one of these associations and enjoy yourself with other alumni of Shimane University.

Shimane University will offer continuous support to you. As for your role, I would like you to support the classmates under you as well as become further invested in the future of Shimane University.

I hope all of you will have a bright future. Once again, I would like to extend my congratulations to your family members and the people around you who have supported your growth with high expectations.

My best wishes for your future!

September 17, 2021

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President of Shimane University