

ايها الحفل الكريم.

Good evening, and welcome to RHU's 2026 Commencement.

Dr. Nazek Rafik Hariri, President of the Rafik Hariri Foundation, and the Chairperson Rafik Hariri University Board of Trustees, **welcomes you all to this commencement.**

25 years ago, RHU opened its gates.

25 years of teaching.

25 years of educating Lebanon's man and women.

25 years of innovation.

25 years of impact.

25 years of making a difference.

25 years of **building what others have destroyed.**

Relentlessly, 25 years of survival during Lebanon's upon and down periods.

Bravo RHU, Bravo RHU.

Dear 2026 graduates.

- Today is your moment.
- The results of your hard work have enabled you to win a seat at this year's commencement.
- We at RHU we want you to know:
 - You are world-class.
 - You are our ambassadors for the next 25 years and beyond.
 - You have been equipped with the finest quality education and skill sets to survive out there.
 - You have added responsibilities on your shoulders.

- Wherever you go, stand tall, shoulder high, and tell the whole world that you are a graduate of an (ABET) and (ACBSP) - accredited university.
- The burden is upon us all (Faculty, staff, students, alumni, trustees, RU partners) **to lay the foundation of a better and brighter RHU.**

This is something.

- As a former Hariri Foundation Scholar, I recall the words of late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, when he used to address.
- He always repeats this statement **“Success is not a product of luck or privilege”**.
- It is the result of hard work, effort and unwavering commitment.
- Your hard work lays the foundation, **but it is your actions that build the future.**
- What are the actions that Prime Minister Hariri talked about?
- Listen carefully these are the words of the Prime Minister **“May you all radiate the *highest ethical values and professional integrity*”**.

In that spirit, I am going to say it as it:

If you want to succeed in life and you want to become an achiever, remember two things:

Hard work and determination.

Hard work is the single most common predictor of success.

Determination is the second most cited predictor of success.

Hard work and Determination far surpassed other possible success factors, such as: **talents, knowledge, skills, and competencies.**

My Message to you:

- Do not perceive yourselves as “entitled,”.
- Go out there and challenge yourself to achieve
- To make somebody out of yourself
- Things such as|: **Status, family connection, who you know, may land you a job.**
- **But, Your career advancement, monetary and material rewards come only through hard work.**

Virtues such as hard work and determination are not new.

- **The wholly Bible says:**
- **فِي كُلِّ تَعَبٍ مَنَفَعَةٌ**
- **لم يقل الانجيل المقدس في كل راحة منفعة**

Year 598 AD

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
{الكهف:110}

اي لقاء رب العالمين يتطلب عدم الاساءة في العمل

Now,

Dear 2026 graduates.

I want to RISE and look your mom and Dad in the eyes and say,

“Thank you.”

No, No, No, Give Mom and Dad a hearty RHU Thank you.

I want you to look your faculty in the eye and say, “Thank you.”

Without the contributions of your parents, your faculty, and your efforts, you all would not be here.

- I want you to remember this encounter for the rest of your life.

This is where it all begins.

PLEASE BE SEATED

To the graduates:

- As you stand on the brink of graduation, remember that RHU has been instrumental in your journey.
- We have given you the knowledge **to broaden your horizons.**
- Be critical thinkers and value-adding individuals.
- Dare
- Exit your comfort zone
- Challenge yourselves to become better individuals.
- Make intelligent, wise, and informed decisions.
- As you embark on your professional journeys, I want you to know that opportunities, luck, and fortunes will scroll in front of you.
- Some of you will capture it and some of you will not.

Now, what is going on at RHU:

In the spirit of Innovation, RHU has been reinventing itself and making an impact:

1. In the last 25 years, **4613** students have graduated from RHU.
2. **70** students have completed their PhD, **585** have completed MBA or MS., **54** entrepreneurs.
3. RHU continues to provide substantial financial aids and scholarships to bright and needy and distinguished students.
4. RHU is embarking on a university-wide accreditation (NECHE)
5. RHU has aligned all its curriculum with the WEF 2025 recommendation
6. AI, digital literacy, quantitative skills, oral, written and communication skills are all embedded in our curriculum
7. All RHU degree programs lead to professional certifications, CCNA, CPA, CFA, CMA, CQE. On a positive note, **65 students have already passed their certification exams, and have become**

CCNA certified. Other students are getting ready to take their CSE or SAP-ERP exams.

8. New degree programs are on the way (BS in AI, Industrial Eng. Nursing, Nutrition and Dietetics, and Hospitality and Tourism Management).
9. RHU Graphic design, Mechatronics, Computer and Communication Engineering, Marketing, and Biomedical engineering students have won multiple national, regional, and international awards.

We are rocking. We are moving and shaking. We are turning things around.

As a closing remark:

Dear graduates;

As you end your time here and head out on your next adventure,

Here is a set of **virtues passed along to us by our founder Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri that we want you to live by:**

- Live a purposeful life.
- Let *Hard work* and *determination* guide your journey.
- Embrace the finest ethical and moral values
- Read
- Listen
- Ask yourself, “Is it right? Is it ethical, is it moral? If yes, do it.

If not, “do not do it.”

- As you move on, make sure to move up.
- Move faster and smarter.
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Smile through the pain **and keep on going.**
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Always Remember

As you exit these gates you have three currencies.

1. Knowledge
2. Will
3. Time. Use any two and you will succeed in life.
 - You will not just survive. You will thrive.
 - Keep on pushing. You can achieve your dreams, because you are worth it.
 - Do not just **imagine your future go and earn it.**

Whatever you do, wherever you go, RHU is always with you.

- Long live RHU. Long lived RHU.