

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

NMSU-Alamogordo Commencement Ceremony May 8, 2009

Dear Graduating Class of 2009,

Congratulations!

You have put in the time and effort to earn a degree. In the process, you have developed skills that will help you throughout your life. You may not fully realize right now how valuable an investment you have made. The full benefits of higher education do not always come all at once. But trust me, they will come.

Many of you have served in the military, and most probably have a friend or relative serving now. You know that service can be a life commitment.

For those of you who do not turn the military into a career—and even for those who do—I want to remind you that service can be a standard of behavior as much as a life path. You leave these walls able to contribute so much to your community and your country. With that ability comes responsibility. Whether or not you pursue a life of service, you can meet this responsibility every day. In the details of your life—the way you treat your neighbor and support your community—you can make a contribution.

You will be capable in your job, so do it well. You have the skills to be a thoughtful and conscientious citizen, so be one. And you have the knowledge to make your mark on this country we are blessed to call home. So make your mark, whatever that may be.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Udall". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tom Udall
United States Senate