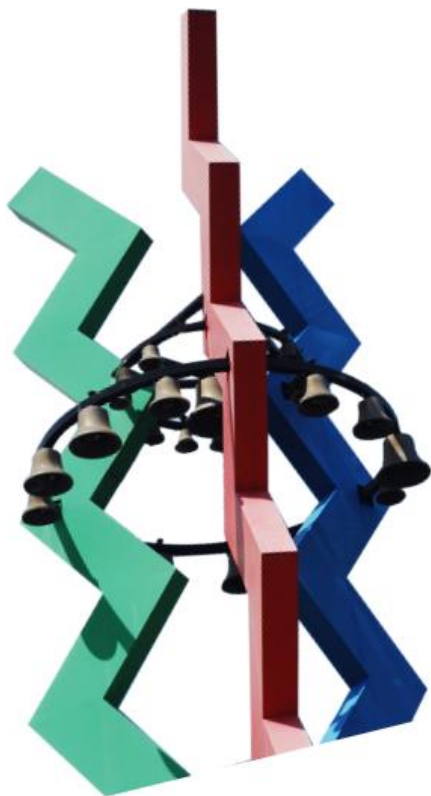


ITTP Commencement Message (Aug.23)

Formula for Success in the New Global Environment



KAIST

신 성 철 총장

President Sung-Chul Shin

Graduates, distinguished guests, faculty, staff, family, and friends.

Thank you for joining us on this meaningful occasion.

To everyone who came to KAIST to celebrate our graduates, welcome to KAIST.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to His Excellency, Ghana Ambassador Joseph Agoe, Mrs. Lyudmila Fen, spouse of Uzbekistan Ambassador Vitali Fen, and many other dignitaries for taking time out of your busy schedules to attend this commencement.

To our graduates, I offer you my sincere congratulations on the long journey you have been through. I also extend my deepest gratitude and congratulations to the families and friends who have supported them with love and devotion. We are also indebted to the faculty and staff members who have worked with the graduates. Please give them a big round of applause.

Now you become the newest members of a group of 58,000 proud KAIST alumni, many of whom have been key players in technological breakthroughs and innovation.

As the first alumnus president of this prestigious institution, it is quite a pleasure to welcome our twelve new alumni today. Congratulations!

The Global IT Technology Program was launched in 2006 to educate elite public officials from diverse countries on information and communication technology. This program has played a vital role for transferring Korea's advanced information and communication technology to many countries whose industries are in the budding stages.

Over the past years, the ITTP program has graduated approximately 170 public officials from over 50 countries and the program has expanded to cover diverse areas of ICT and grown into a global network of ICT leaders abroad.

As you may have experienced, Korea is a very dynamic country. We achieved industrialization, informatization, democratization, and globalization in only a half century.

Back in the 1960s, Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world. Korea's GDP stood at less than 100 US dollars. Through it all, Korean companies are now taking the lead in the global high-tech market, emerging as movers and shakers.

This success story has inspired many global leaders. Many countries are benchmarking us now and many foreign leaders frequently ask me what made this phenomenal success possible.

I answer that "VIP" changed it all. In other words, visionary leaders, innovative ideas, and passionate people all combined to make the difference in Korea.

Back then, the Korean government's leaders envisioned growing the nation's economy through the advancement of science and technology. Their innovative ideas to establish a science and technology research university became a reality when KAIST was founded in 1971 with a six-million dollar loan from USAID. KAIST was mandated to educate the nation's manpower to prepare for its industrialization and the government has fully supported the institution since then.

Passionate faculty and students responded to the government's support with unwavering effort, pursuing innovation and technological breakthroughs. With the combination of those three driving factors, KAIST has fulfilled its mission faithfully, paving the way for the industrialization and information revolution of Korea.

KAIST has graduated 11,700 Ph.D.s since the foundation. About 23% of them attained leadership positions in industry, academics, and research institutes in Korea. Approximately 45% of our graduates are working in industry; specifically about 20 percent of our graduates are CEOs of venture startups. They are leading tech-based startups and in the IT industry such as at NAVER, making a new role model for entrepreneurs.

As Korea has grown, KAIST has also emerged as a world-class university and a center of entrepreneurship. Thomson Reuters selected KAIST as the most innovative university in Asia-Pacific region for the last two years.

However, things are changing. The new global industrial environment of the Fourth Industrial Revolution is rapidly approaching. New missions and challenges are engulfing the world once again.

The speed and scope of the transformation the Fourth Industrial Revolution will bring about is beyond our imagination. How should we respond to these new waves of changes?

I would like to share a new formula for success with our graduates, who will soon begin a new ambitious professional journey in your countries, which is made up of "ICS," innovation, collaboration, and speed. I believe this formula will work in the private and public sectors as well.

In this new era, without innovation in every sector, it is hard to retain sustainable growth wherever you live and work. In particular, the younger generation should be educated in a fashion that is creative enough to prepare them to lead their countries and survive despite global competitiveness. An innovative educational paradigm in this new industrial environment will be the key to the future of each and every nation.

When I took office in February, I took up innovation initiatives in education-

I am revising our curriculum to meet the growing demands of fostering young people who are creative, collaborative, and willing to converge across inter-multidisciplinary disciplines. In a word, I want our students be inter-functional with a deep understanding of basic sciences along with a broader spectrum of social science, humanities, and ethically conscious. On top of that, soft skills and team play are prerequisite for them.

Next is collaboration. Since today's industries are complex and moving beyond a single discipline, with whom you will work is more important than what you will do. Try to establish collaboration with the right partners whether they be in the government, industry, or university, beyond borders and across disciplines. This will be one of the best ways to realize more creative as well as competitive outputs. For collaboration, you should first be competent enough to draw investment and find qualified collaborators.

Finally, speed is critical. Every decision making procedure should be done speedily through streamlined governance. Red tape and regulations should be addressed in a speedy manner to make things happen correctly and help them to improve more rapidly.

As evidenced by the fact that we are now graduating the most elite foreign public officials, KAIST is now not only serving for Korea. We are serving the world to create global value that can benefit the world beyond Korea.

Many of you are responsible for serving your nation better and helping it to improve and develop. When back home, I hope you will work hard to uphold the legacy and spirit of KAIST, which has made the difference for Korea. Even further, you must also work for your global partners as KAIST has done for you. That will be the legacy that defines the true value of a KAIST education.

Last but not least, I would like to give you advice especially for public servants. Always be sincere wherever you work and whatever you do during your service. If you keep this value while serving your people, you will be remembered as a person who was credible, never failing, and the one who always did their best.

For my doctoral study, I left for the US in 1980. Today I am addressing you as the first alumnus president after 37 years since I left my country. It is my sincere wish that many of you will be leaders in your institutions or countries after about 20 or 30 years in the future and will share the story of today. If so, I couldn't be more proud of each and every one of you.

I hope you will continue to make your family, your country, your people, and your alma mater, KAIST, proud.

Please accept my best wishes for your happy and successful life and career.

Congratulations once again.

Sung-Chul Shin
President, KAIST