

Find your passion. Follow your bliss. Pursue your dreams.

Angel Chang

Dean Jacobson, Dr. Barton, Dr. Williams, distinguished faculty, administrators, family, friends, and, of course, the graduating class of 2010: Thank you for bestowing this honor upon me today as your commencement speaker. It is certainly a big day for you graduating seniors of the Indiana Academy, and I am truly honored to be a part of one of the most memorable events in your life.

As graduates of such a prestigious high school, my alma mater, you have amassed an incredible amount of knowledge during your years here. Last night, I had the pleasure of attending the Senior's recognition ceremony, and I saw just how accomplished you all have become at such an early age. You certainly know about being ambitious and achieving your goals.

As you are about to embark on the next journey in your life, I am here to show you the importance of, not only following your dreams, but also discerning what you want vs. what others expect of you.

As I walked up here this morning, I suddenly remembered that the last time I stood on this stage was when I was in your same seats - for my own graduation 14 years ago. The time before that, I was seven years tap-dancing a country hoe-down in a blue and white gingham tutu. But don't worry, I won't tap-dance today.

Speaking of performing, what do Wil Ferrell,



Matthew McConaughey, and Eva Longoria all have in common? They are prime examples of those who started on one path in their studies only to discover that they had another hidden passion. It took studying sports information, attending law school, or getting a degree in kinesiology before they found their true calling.

Perhaps you, too, can relate to the pressure of following a track that is expected and laid out for you - whether by your parents, your teachers, friends, or through societal pressures.

You see, when I was 14 years old, I envisioned growing up to become an orthopedic surgeon. It was an attractive career choice, it seemed to pay well, and saying "I am going to be a surgeon" was an impressive thing to say to adults. My mother promised to buy me a house in California if I went to Stanford Medical School, and the whole package just seemed like a pretty good deal. The only problem was that it was a future that looked good on paper...and it was a future that I thought I should do, not necessarily one that I desired in pursuing.

By then, I had already learned to sew and was making dresses for myself and friends during my spare time. It was more of a survival tactic than anything - because the offerings at The Muncie Mall were pretty bleak and to lessen the pain of summer boredom. Making clothes passed the time and satisfied any adolescent need I had to be inventive and create my own fun.

At this time, in the early '90s, we did not have

the Internet so my gateway to the outside world was through magazines and TV. I had a bookcase in my bedroom dedicated to my collection of Vogue, ELLE, and W magazines, and fashion spreads of Linda Evangelista plastered on my bedroom walls. Every Saturday morning, just like clockwork, I would turn on the TV to CNN and watch Style with Elsa Klensch reporting on the glamorous worlds of Chanel, Armani, and Lacroix.

And yet I was still insistent on becoming an orthopedic surgeon one day.

When I arrived at the Indiana Academy in 1994 and was placed amongst such high achievers, I, for once, became very insecure about my performance in class. I was horrible at writing essays, I was scared to talk in French class, I didn't understand calculus, and forget about physics!

It wasn't long before I realized that my strengths were in art & design, and my weaknesses, unfortunately, were in science, mathematics... and even the humanities. When it became obvious that medical school was not going to happen for me, I was still insistent on doing something in the sciences, perhaps in the soft sciences like psychology...not necessarily because I liked it or was good at it, but, quite simply, because pursuing the sciences was the proper thing to do. Parents liked it. Teachers liked it. Scholarship applications and college admission committees seemed to like it. Because of this, I convinced myself that that was what I also wanted to do.

However by then, I had developed a secret desire to become a fashion designer - a secret one because this was certainly not the socially acceptable thing to do. I mean, who applies to the Academy and thinks they will be taken seriously if they write "fashion designer" as their desired career path? It wasn't considered a noble profession and, I had never actually met any fashion designers in my life at that time. The idea of

becoming one could have been seen as terribly unrealistic by some, and akin to being a seamstress by others.

Yet, oddly, it was at the Academy where I found my true calling.

Back then, we still had Ms. Ney as our teacher and we were reading Joseph Campbell in her class.

One afternoon while I was telling my roommate how I longed to be a designer, she shared with me her reading from class...which I now share with you. In short, Campbell said that everyone has a passion in life -- what he called bliss -- and it is each person's goal in life to find that bliss and follow it with all their heart, or risk never being truly happy in life.

So it was at that moment, that I decided to follow my bliss and become a fashion designer -- no matter what others thought. I then headed to Bracken Library and hunted down the biographies of every designer name I could think of. I learned that Betsy Johnson graduated with top honors as a Phi Beta Kappa, so it was possible to be smart and creative. I learned that Ralph Lauren's real name was Ralph Lifshitz, so it did not matter where one came from; your identity could be reinvented. I learned that Bill Blass had played high school football in Fort Wayne and all he knew was that he wanted to "get the hell out of Indiana." In fact, I learned that many fashion designers grew up in Indiana: Norman Norell, Mainbocher, Halston, and Stephen Sprouse. They had all moved to New York to pursue their dream, and I knew that was what I had to do next.

But I was still a junior at the Academy. I had spent my entire life in Muncie, and this outrageous idea to move to New York to become a fashion designer was still just a dream. Since there was no one here to inquire about the profession, I did something very daring: I wrote a fan letter to my favorite designer at the time, Anna Sui, asking for her help. To my surprise, she wrote back a long 6-page handwritten letter filled with the most inspiring advice any aspiring designer could receive!

One month after graduating from the Academy, I moved to New York and, like a scene in a movie, I ran into Anna Sui at her boutique two weeks upon arriving in the city. She offered me an internship in her studio and that is how my career in fashion began.

The most amazing things happen when you follow your dreams! As Joseph Campbell explained in *The Power of Myth*, when you follow this bliss, "you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life you ought to be living is the one you are living. When you can see that, you begin to meet people who are in your field of bliss, and they open doors to you. I say, follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be."

Now, I am not going to tell you that following your heart will be easy. It is certainly scary to forge your path and wing it alone. Believe me, I have been there. You must be daring; you have to take risks; and you must start out with a great deal of courage. Additionally, if you work hard and are extremely persistent, things really will magically fall into place.

While on this path of pursuing your dreams, you will certainly experience failure. In fact, it is inevitable that you will fail many times. I have to tell you this because, as graduating seniors, you may not have experienced much failure yet. You may be accustomed to teachers telling you that you are the best and the brightest in Indiana - the "cream of the crop." If you get straight A's, high SAT scores, rack up a slew of extra-curricular activities and glowing teacher recommendations, you are set for life. And while that's all great - and something to be proud of - those achievements will only start you on the right path. It is up to you to build up from that foundation and seek out the tools to accomplish your goals. Even though I went on to receive a wonderful education at Columbia University, an Ivy League school could only take me so far. I had to go beyond my basic coursework and take the initiative to immerse myself in the industry that so interested me. Learning outside of the classroom was just as important as what I was studying in school. School can only teach you the basics; it's up to you to create your own education.

I am sure that each of you has a dream and, if you were anything like me in high school, you may not think it possible that your dream can become a reality. Well, I am here to tell you that it certainly can. I say "not only dare to dream," but "dream BIGGER." Do not be afraid to follow your dreams, no matter how impossible they may seem to you now. You still have to work hard, you will have to stay positive, you will have to overcome insurmountable odds and learn how to move mountains. But the rewards will make up for all the hardship and set-backs you will experience along the way. Do not give up. Stay persistent and success will follow.

While you are on your path, do not be scared to take risks. Each time I took a risk, I was generously rewarded for it -- either immediately or years later.



For example, it was a big risk to leave the familiar safety net of Indiana to New York where I knew no one. It was a risk to leave my job at Donna Karan and start my own collection and company when I was still an unknown designer. If that wasn't scary enough, it was an ever greater risk to participate in a television show where I was critiqued by one million viewers across America every week. Yet taking all of these risks, and even risking failure, was worth more than not doing it at all.

Graduates, this is the point where I am supposed to offer you sage advice as you venture onto the next adventure in your life. You may forget these ten points after today, so I will keep this brief and hope that you will remember at least one of these suggestions:

1. This first one is really one that I learned when I graduated and pass down from your teacher Mr. Watson: START A ROLODEX, or what you may refer to these days as just an address book. Keep the business cards and contact information of everyone that you meet.

2. This next one comes from my parents, and that is to TRAVEL. Go beyond the borders of Indiana and explore different cultures around the world. Even if you are a poor student, you can find a way to travel. Travel as often as you can and it will open your eyes and mind to the world.

3. KEEP A JOURNAL. It is a good way to chart out how you will fulfill your dreams. When you need to vent it is cheaper than getting a therapist.

4. TRY NEW THINGS & EXPERIENCES, even if you dislike them. It is when you try something new, and feel a little uncomfortable in the process, that you know that you are growing.

5. BE PERSISTENT. Persistence is nature's way of separating those that are merely interested in doing something and those that really want it. Keep trying, and you will eventually get it.

6. LISTEN TO YOUR GUT and you will always make the right decision.

7. STAY POSITIVE & NEVER REGRET the choices you have made.

8. ALLOW YOURSELF TO SAY NO sometimes. It can make you appear more desirable.

9. RULES ARE FLUID, DON'T BE AFRAID TO BREAK THEM. Or as Bill Cosby once said, "Civilization had too many rules for me, so I did my best to rewrite them."

10. DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE DIFFERENT; AVOID THE SAFETY OF CONVENTION. As the photographer Cecil Beaton once said: "Be daring, be different, be impractical, be anything that will assert integrity of purpose and imaginative vision against the slaves of the ordinary."

Or more simply, as my hero Coco Chanel would say, "In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different."

Last of all, remember Joseph Campbell: Find your passion. Follow your bliss. Pursue your dreams.

Thank you very much.

張安麟將隨同北美音樂巡迴演奏團在美加巡回演出

(本報訊)俄亥俄州立克里夫蘭大鋼琴系主任張安麟教授, 應邀參加 2010 年北美音樂巡迴演奏團, 擔任鋼琴演奏。該團以 " 星球大戰: 北美巡迴音樂演奏會 " (STAR WARS: IN CONCERT-2010 North American Tour) 為主題, 由一百多人, 擔任各種樂器及歌唱的綜藝演奏, 特別邀請格萊美獎得主張安麟擔任鋼琴演奏, 以壯聲勢, 將由六月十七日開始, 至七月二十六日, 為期六週, 到美國和加拿大的二十三個城市, 舉行三十六場的演奏會, 其日程及地點如下:

六月: 在美國

十七日在加州 Fresno 的 Save Mart Center;
十八日及十九日在明尼蘇達州華盛頓州的 Spokane Arena;
二十日愛達荷州 Nampa 的 Idaho Center;

六月: 在加拿大

二十二日及二十三日在溫哥華的 General Motors Place;
二十六日在 Calgary 的 Pengrowth Saddle-

dome;

二十七日在 Edmonton 的 Rexall Place;
二十八日在 Saskatoon 的 Credit Union Centre;
二十九日在 Winnipeg 的 MTS Centre;
三十日在 Regina 的 Bradt Centre;

七月 在美國

三日在威斯康星州 Green Bay 的 Resch Center;
五日在愛荷華州 Des Moines 的 Wells Fargo Arena;
七日在伊里諾州 Moline 的 Wireless Center;
八日在威斯康星州 Madison 的 Illant Energy Center;
十日在威斯康星州 Milwaukee 的 Bradley Center;
十一日在明尼蘇達州 St. Paul 的 Xcelo Center;
十四日在密西根州 Grand Rapids 的 Van Andel Arena;

十七日在華盛頓的 Verizon Area;

十八日在北卡羅萊納州 Raleigh 的 RBC Center;
二十日在賓夕凡尼亞州 Hershey 的 GIANT CTR;
二十一日在紐罕什州 Manchester 的 Verizon Wireless Arena;
二十二日在康乃狄克州 Uncasville 的 Mohegan Sun.

七月 在加拿大

二十四日在安大略省 Hamilton 的 Copps Colliseum;
二十五日在安大略省 London 的 John Labatt Center.

二十六日結束

張安麟將代表她父親印地安納州立爾大學政治學張德光教授, 沿途問候友好及祝福。她在今秋將到洛杉磯演奏。她擔任格萊美 She serves as a Board Member and Chairman of Classic Music. So that she is busy for teaching, performing and professional service.

