

President Toyoda's address at the 2021-22 Toyota Technical Skills Academy Graduation Ceremony

Congratulations to all of our graduates.

Although your families could not be here and instead are watching a livestream of this ceremony as part of prevention measures for COVID-19, I'm sure that through the cameras they are sharing in the joy of this proud moment.

To all the family members, allow me to congratulate you on this occasion.

As I gaze out at the graduates gathered here, I see individuals seated with straight backs and bright eyes looking towards the future.

The nervous faces from the entrance ceremony are nowhere to be seen. They look like different people; stronger, more dependable.

I believe this is wholly due to the support of their families, for which I express my sincerest gratitude.

Dear graduates, those of you in the High School Course had to spend two of your three years of school life dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, while those in the Professional Course had to spend your entire year under these conditions.

Even so, instead of looking down in defeat, you thought about what you could do now and took action.

Out of your desire to give back to the local community supporting you, all of you in the High School Course cleaned up parks and riverbeds while students in the Professional Course worked on cleaning assembly halls and hillsides.

Despite the heat and rain, you cleared away overgrown weeds using unfamiliar tools, making the areas look unmistakably beautiful.

When a local community magazine covered these activities, the writer ended the article by stating, "I feel the students not only cleaned the public spaces of our community that needed care during the pandemic, but also cleaned our minds."

The article stated why: the students greeted everyone cheerfully and energetically, even though they must have been tired after walking for over an hour to the location. Everyone lined up in a row, working earnestly and cleaning thoroughly, demonstrating good teamwork and dedication.

The writer with you on location was moved to tears of gratitude seeing everyone's serious attitude.

Thank you very much for working so hard for the benefit of others.

You also steered the student council in a new direction.

Students must push themselves to learn and grow, and you proposed a new name for the student council, Gakusei Kai, which reflects both learning and growth. Such a change had never been suggested in the academy's history.

Along with the name, your ideas will be passed down as part of the academy's tradition.

Thank you for leaving a valuable legacy for those who will come after you.

For both cleaning the community and transforming the student council, I sensed that these actions were guided by Toyota's philosophy, skills, and behavior, which you have thoroughly learned and practiced at the academy.

The Toyota philosophy is about the mission of "Producing Happiness for All." Achieving this requires a strong and kind spirit that drives us to act always for the benefit of people other than ourselves.

By "skills," of course, I mean TPS, the system through which we continue to improve, always seeking better ways of working to make someone's job easier.

And finally, the behavior corresponds to the Toyota Way that all of you have embraced. "Work with Integrity," "Show Respect for People," "Thank People." I believe that leading your life in this way is crucial to acquiring the philosophy and skills.

I hope you will continue to cherish the three pillars of the philosophy, skills, and behavior each and every day in your new workplaces.

Please strive to become strong, kind individuals who work for those in need. I'm certain you will.

Thank you to all the families for entrusting your precious children to us.

Rest assured that I will do everything in my power to ensure that, as indispensable Toyota people, their lives with Toyota will be filled with smiles and happiness.

Finally, I would like to close by once more expressing my gratitude and congratulations to everyone here today, and sincerely ask for your continued support.

Congratulations to you all!

END