

President's Address for Commencement Ceremony

I am delighted to deliver the congratulatory address to 18 graduates of five faculties, 4 graduates of master's program of Human and Social Sciences, 8 graduates of master's program and 3 graduates of doctoral program of Natural Science and Technology, and 1 recipient of Doctor of Philosophy (by dissertation). On behalf of the board members, faculty, staff, and current students at Shimane University, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations.

You selected Shimane University as a place of study to fulfill your dreams and aspirations. For those who were involved in the COVID-19 response while enrolled at university, I believe that this period has had a significant impact on their studies and student life. However, you maintained your interest in your majors and strong motivation to study, overcame many obstacles, and have now successfully completed the program in your field of study through your continuous hard work. I hope you also enjoyed your university life as it gradually returned to its original state after “with corona”. Today, you will be awarded your degree. For this, I am truly glad and respectful.

The international students who have completed your master's and doctoral programs this time have come to Matsue-Shimane in Japan, far from your home countries, to study at Shimane University, and have studied hard in order to fulfill your own dreams and to use the results of your learning to solve problems and contribute to the development of your home countries. I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to all of you, Japanese and foreign graduates for successfully compiling your unique research into paper and obtaining your degrees, and for the efforts you all made in the process.

You are here on the day of graduation through the support and involvement of people around you, including your supervisors who guided you during your studies, your friends with whom you discussed your future, shared problems, and studied hard together, the regional community who supported you in various aspects, and your family members who watched over your growth. Please continue to walk your new path, never forgetting your gratitude to those who have supported you up until now.

There is no doubt that the specialized knowledge and skills you have learned at university and graduate school will serve as the foundation for your future. On the other hand, in the course of your studies, I believe that you have realized that even if you pass the exam, you have not learned everything, and even if you have written your thesis, there

are still many issues that remain. I believe that one of the most important things to learn at university is to realize that the more you learn and research, the more you have many things to learn and research.

Expert knowledge and technology are being updated every day at an accelerating rate. However, there is still so much left that we need to know. In the first place, we cannot actually explain why we are here. Of the energy in our universe, less than 5% can be explained by ordinary matter, and 95% is tentatively named dark matter and dark energy, but in short, we do not know anything about it, not yet. Furthermore, it has been theoretically shown that the universe is not a universe but a multiverse, that is, there are countless universes. If more than 95% of this one single universe is unknown, how much fundamentally different and more advanced can we say that the current cutting-edge situation is compared to when the geocentric theory was advocated?

From the story of space, this time I will talk about the individual level using my specialized field of anatomy. Just as it is natural that each person's face is different, in fact, each person's bones, internal organs, and muscles are also all different. Medical students through anatomy training experience and realize this uniqueness which is the most fundamental understanding when working with incomparable patients in future clinical settings. I always told medical students that textbooks only show one example of all human beings, from the birth of humanity to its extinction, and that all the answers lie within each person's body. It is miraculous that each individual can see, hear, feel, speak, think, and move just like we are doing right now, and we still have essentially no explanation of the body and mind that make this possible.

The amount of information is increasing day by day, but the cutting-edge is only the cutting-edge of that era whether it was 100 years ago, now, or perhaps in the future, and what we know is limited. No matter what path you take, no one knows what the true answer is, so keep reminding yourself of the "knowledge of ignorance" over and over again throughout your life and humbly continue to learn every day.

There is a concept called "Roppou Yoshi: six way satisfaction". As you continue to learn throughout your life, you will keep this in mind in order to realize a sustainable earth and society as advocated by the SDGs in today's era of confusion and uncertainty, where human civilization is exceeding the limits of the earth. "Sampo Yoshi: three way satisfaction", known as the philosophy of Omi merchants who were active throughout the country during the Edo period, is "good for the seller," "good for the buyer", and "good

for society”. This was an idea that valued the interests of buyers and social contribution, rather than pursuing only the interests of the seller or himself. The “Roppou Yoshi: six way satisfaction”, for realizing a sustainable society and a living environment on Earth, includes three additional elements: “Good for craftsman”, “Good for the earth”, and “Good for the future”. In order to think about all the people who are directly or indirectly involved, and to pass on the earth that nurtures abundant life to future generations, please always keep in mind “Roppo Yoshi: six way satisfaction” and proceed on your own path.

Unfortunately, the world is deepening in confusion due to conflicts and divisions. In such times, let us reaffirm that the communication and mutual understanding of each individual, both domestically and internationally, is the most fundamental and crucial foundation for realizing a peaceful and sustainable world.

Shimane University has a history of over 75 years and has produced over 68,000 alumni. Even after graduation, please continue to be involved with Shimane University and Shimane Prefecture, valuing the connections you have made with alumni, faculty and staff, and the local community. Shimane University has alumni associations in various parts of Japan, including Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka, and Hiroshima, as well as alumni associations in twelve overseas countries at the moment. Please participate in the alumni association and take advantage of Shimane University's network that transcends faculties and age groups. Furthermore, as a senior who studied at Shimane University, I would be very grateful if you could support the further development of Shimane University for the benefit of your juniors.

I hope all of you will have a bright future. Once again, I would like to extend my congratulations to your family members and the people around you who have supported your growth with high expectations.

My best wishes for your future!

September 19, 2025

OTANI Hiroki

President of Shimane University