



## PHARRELL WILLIAMS

## DON'T BE INVISIBLE

https://youtu.be/t6P BxhGINk

Hi everybody. I'd like to start by thanking President Andrew Hamilton, Trustees and the New York and the NYU students and the faculty for welcoming me into your halls last year and letting me have an experience that I honestly could have never imagined.

And I want to thank all of you for this humbling experience today. This is major. It's super heavy. And I am grateful. My mom is a lifelong educator so this is gonna be a very good look for me.

To be a part of a group like this is unimaginable.

To speak on the behalf of our group is an honor that I am not sure if I am qualified for.

Their accomplishments...

The body of work represented on this stage is staggering.

We have history-makers.

Miracle-workers in their own way.

If their names aren't on buildings yet, they're totally gonna be.

I'd like to say that I am forever a student, and its people like this that I'll forever grateful to learn from.

They are fearless, they're boundless, multi-disciplined and multi-talented.

They break down barriers and embody the focus and dedication that this planet needs – even if, for Mark Kelly, it means leaving it from time to time.

Some may call them public servants, but their work is actually in the service of humanity and standing with them here today... and it's totally mind blowing.

In this day and age, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that it's the people who serve humanity, that make our world really go around. Most social media and media itself would lead you to believe otherwise.

But this group's work doesn't fuel gossip.

Sadly, it doesn't generate a lot of clicks amongst a sea of headlines designed to bait. Their work is often too important to be boiled down to just a quick headline.

Their work has never been more important, yet as a society, we seem to celebrate less important achievements far more frequently.

I am glad to be a part of a moment that recognizes these people.

The real moves and shakers.

Think about it... these great scientists, public servants, and activists cannot be bothered with building their Instagram followers.

Or how many views they get on Youtube.

But they are the real influencers.

Their work makes us healthier, safer, more enriched, and more intelligent.

Their work is designed to improve the quality of life for all people, not just themselves.

They are not motivated by attention. But rather, they're motivated by the idea of creating change – for the better.

I personally find that incredibly inspiring.

I hope you guys do as well.

NYU – The school you all chose to attend is going out of its way to honor this distinguished group.

What will they honor you guys for someday?

What will they honor you for someday?

Speaking to you guys today has me charged up.

It really has.

As you find your ways to serve humanity, it gives me great comfort knowing that this generation is the first that understands that we need to lift up our women.

Imagine the possibilities when we remove imbalance from the ether because it's unbalanced right now.

Imagine the possibilities when women are not held back.

Your generation is unraveling deeply entrenched laws, principles and misguided values that have held women back for far too long and therefore, have held us all back – the human race.

The world you will live in will be better for it.

This is the first generation that navigates the world with the security and the confidence to treat women as equal.

You guys and girls are the first ever. I'm gonna say that again:

You guys are the first ever.

Our country has never seen this before. It makes some people uncomfortable.

But still I say: just imagine the possibilities.

Today is in many ways a celebration of higher education.

I am forever a student as I said before, I believe it is a trait – a trait we all share.

Yet we live in a time when a great education is harder and harder to come by.

But like anything in life, if there is enough demand, somebody will supply it.

So to the graduates, you might think your time in education is done, but after you leave here today, I am asking you guys to let your actions out there in the world; fuel the demand for better and accessible education.

Engage and inspire – whether on an individual level or loudly within your communities.

Talk about your accomplishments.

Talk about your accomplishments.

It's very important.

Talk about your accomplishments.

Be humble, but not too humble. Don't be invisible.

Sidebar... The days of being an anonymous activist or participant are over.

How can we inspire if we are only behind the scenes?

How will an anonymous donation ever inspire another? That was the way of previous generations. No disrespect. But don't be like them.

Let your actions serve as an endorsement for education and watch the demand rise.

Shine in a light on a group of individuals like these on this stage also helps fuel the demand. It's why all of us standing here do what we do.

That same gene – those same feelings and adrenaline that fuels us, is inside all of you as well. Just like you, these recipients are brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters.

We put all of our pants on one leg at a time.

We all have a daily commute, but we do so with an eye towards something bigger. Serving humanity.

There is no humanity without education.

There is no education without demand.

You are all walking endorsements for education. So please, embrace that.

Thank you again to the students and faculty at NYU. Thank you to these remarkable individuals that I am up here standing with.

For your service, leadership and inspiration.

We are all forever grateful. And I know that somebody out there right now in this class just might occupy the White House one day.

And let me be clear, not red and not blue but maybe purple like NY – U.

Thank you.

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