

Dharma Realm Buddhist University Celebrates 2024 Commencement

2024年法界佛教大學畢業典禮

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葉碧 中譯

On May 18, 2024, Dharma Realm Buddhist University held its commencement ceremony for the graduating class 2024. The ceremony was held in the Buddha Hall of the Sudhana Center in downtown Ukiah, California. The hall was full, with standing room only for all the family, friends, and community that gathered to attend this remarkable occasion. Many graduating students' parents traveled from afar to celebrate with their children. This year, five undergraduate students, eight MA graduate students, and five translation certificate students graduated.

Dr. Susan Rounds, President of DRBU, encouraged the graduating students in her speech: "You have studied texts that are storehouses of wisdom from many different times and cultures. But you also recognize that the truest deepest wisdom is inherent in you... This world desperately needs what you have learned at DRBU. It needs the people you have become. I know that the world will be a better place because you are in it, doing the work that needs to be done in whatever way it comes to you."

The keynote commencement speech was given by Nimo Patel, a world-renowned hip-hop musician, humanitarian, and self-described "ambassador of love and peace," and founder of the non-profit Empty Hands Music, which uses art and music to empower underprivileged children from India. In his inspiring speech, he offered advice to the graduates as they enter the world at large. He emphasized the virtues of kindness and service and finished by singing a hip-hop song of his own composition about generosity, selflessness, and giving oneself to others. To quote a few verses from it:

法界佛教大學（法大）2024年畢業典禮，於5月18日，在瑜伽市校區善財參學中心的佛殿舉行。現場爆滿，座無虛席。畢業生的家人、朋友和法大這個大家庭的成員，齊聚一堂，參加這場隆重的典禮。許多應屆畢業生的家長遠道而來，與孩子們一起慶祝。今年的畢業生計有五名本科生、八名碩士研究生和五名佛經翻譯碩士研修班的學生。

法大校長蘇珊·朗思在致詞時，鼓勵畢業同學說：「各位在本校所學習的，是許多不同時代和文化的智慧寶庫；但你們也體認到，最真實、最深刻的智慧，是你們與生俱來的自性智慧…這個世界迫切需要你們在法界佛教大學所學，也正需要本校培養而成的你們。我知道這個世界會變得更美好，因為有你們做著需要完成的工作，無論這些工作以何種方式降臨到你們身上。」

畢業典禮主題演講人是世界著名嘻哈音樂人、人道主義者、自稱「愛與和平大使」的尼莫·帕特爾。他也是非營利組織「空手音樂」的創始人，該組織以藝術和音樂幫助印度的弱勢兒童。在他鼓舞人心的演講中，他為畢業生走向世界提供了建議。他強調了善良和服務的美德，並演唱了一首自己創作的歌曲。這首歌講述慷慨、無私和奉獻自己給他人。其中的幾句歌詞如下：

*Let it all go
For everything changes
As you will come to know.
Every plan you make
And every seed you sow
Is impermanent.
Nothing is ever yours to own.
Once you realize this, you will see
The truth that you never were
The planter of your own fruits
But accept these gifts even
If you don't know from whom
And kindly pay it forward to those
Behind you 'cause ultimately what we take
Will always disappear, but what we give
Will live on for years.*

All of the graduating students were full of gratitude and inspiration. Several of them spoke of how, through the education they received at DRBU, they felt they had become people with more wholesomeness and connection to their inherent wisdom.

In his speech, graduating master's student, Kittisaro Weinberg remarked: "I cannot communicate the treasures I've received. I've been to Princeton and Oxford [but] my most cherished university time is Dharma Realm Buddhist University." In her speech, graduating master's student Shayue Wang said, "At DRBU, I experienced what real care and warmth are. Because of that, I can open my heart and return to my true and natural self here." Graduating bachelor's student and forest Theravada monk Ajahn Kovilo used his speech to guide the assembly through a gratitude meditation.

Later in the ceremony, Helen Woo was presented with a homage to celebrate her enormous services to the university as a longtime supporter. During this moving episode, it was remarked how Ms. Woo has always believed DRBU represents Venerable Master Hua's dharma and his belief that the problems of the world can only be solved through instilling virtue in the new generation of leaders.

The commencement ceremony ended with singing "Dedication of Merit," group photos, and a reception. ❀

放下一切！
因為一切都會改變，
正如你將知道的那樣。
你所制定的每一項計劃，
以及你播下的每一粒種子，
都是無常。
沒有什麼永遠屬於你。
一旦你意識到這一點，你就會看到
事實是你從來都不是
自己的果實種植者。
但接受這些禮物吧，
即使你不知道送者是誰；
並請發心轉送給那些
在你後面的人，因為最終我們拿到的
總是會消失，但我們給予的，
將繼續存在多年。

所有的應屆畢業生都充滿了感激，並備受鼓舞。他們中的一些人談到，透過在法大的教育，他們感覺自己已經成為一個更善良、更能與自性智慧相聯繫的人。

碩士畢業生基蒂薩羅·溫伯格在致詞時說道：「我（在法大）所獲得的寶藏無以言喻。我在普林斯頓大學，和英國牛津大學都攻讀過學位，但我最珍惜的大學校園時光是在法界佛教大學。」另一位碩士畢業生王莎月在致詞中表示：「在法大，我體會到了什麼是真正的關懷和溫暖。正因如此，我才能在這裡敞開心扉，回歸最真實、最自然的自己。」森林上座部南傳比丘阿姜·科維洛是本屆學士畢業生，他在演講中引導大家進行感恩冥想。

接著在畢業典禮上，表揚了胡果相（胡余錦明）居士長期對法大的支持、以及她對法大所作的重大貢獻。在這段感人的插曲中，胡果相居士表示，她一直相信，法大代表了宣公上人的正法，也代表了宣公上人的信念，亦即世界的問題只能透過向新世代領導人灌輸美德來解決。

畢業典禮在齊誦《迴向功德》、合影留念和招待會之後，畫下圓滿句點。❀