Below is the speech by Los Angeles Southwest College’s Valedictorian Nnenna Ekejiuba of Inglewood.

Ekejiuba was the graduate with the highest grade point average in the 2014-15 class. She graduated in December 2014 with an A.A. in Liberal Arts: Natural Sciences and a 3.809 grade point average.

Dr. Linda Rose, as Valedictorian of the class of 2015, I accept your charge on behalf of the graduates.

Good afternoon, President Rose, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Administrative Services, Vice President of Student Services, our wonderful faculty, Board of Trustees representative and Platform guests. It is an honor and privilege to stand before you on behalf of the graduating class of 2015.

Our Commencement theme is “Remember the Time.” As we all know, time is very important but also very mysterious. Time can never be repeated; it can only be remembered. How we use time tells a lot about the path we will take. The poet Carl Sandburg said, “Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.”

Today, we celebrate the time we spent at Los Angeles Southwest College. We have proved to be individuals that used our time wisely. We did not betray the trust placed in us by the founders of this college. This graduating class includes responsible leaders, critical thinkers, and empowered human beings that have promised to keep the dreams of our founders alive.

As we celebrate our graduation, we remember the time we made the decision to start our journey at this college. We also remember the time we spent attending lectures, making sure assignments were turned in, and studying day and night for quizzes and exams. Today, our hard work is rewarded, and our community is once again enriched with individuals who have the potential and capacity to contribute to its well-being.
Graduation is indeed a commendable achievement because of the obstacles we had to overcome. We all have different stories and different challenges. My story is that while attending Los Angeles Southwest College, I had to work full-time and attend school full-time while raising two little children who constantly required my attention. But, in the mist of all the pressures from work and home, I was able to graduate with honors and become Valedictorian. Knowing that time is an important part of every accomplishment, I did not hesitate to enroll in the law program at Southwestern Law School.

Los Angeles Southwest College has provided me with everything I need to be successful in my career. I came to the United States nine years ago from Nigeria. Based on my experiences since then, I have realized that the pursuit of happiness begins with education; it is the key to a happy life.

I know you have your own stories, but the important thing is that this time we all have a common story, which is a story of self-improvement, academic achievement, and success. Our story will not end here. We must keep moving until we reach the peak of our respective careers.

We are thankful to Los Angeles Southwest College for creating a comfortable atmosphere for learning as well as giving every student equal access to instructive materials, counselling services and beneficial advice.

This college is unbiased, friendly and accommodates people from every race and background. This explains why an immigrant from Nigeria is on this platform today.

My fellow graduates, we must not limit ourselves. Let us not be intimidated by the challenges we might soon encounter. We have the ability to convert every stumbling block into a stepping stone. We did it today and we will do it again.
We have every reason to move on with hope and confidence because we have been equipped with the right tools to achieve great things.

Thank you, Los Angeles Southwest College, we will always remember the time we spent with you. Thank you to our families and friends because without the time you spent nurturing us we would not be here celebrating. To the graduating class of 2015, I congratulate you and urge you to continue to be time conscious.