

Kellogg Certificate Program For Undergraduates Certificate Celebration  
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Ewelina Lewandowska, Managerial Analytics Certificate  
"Riding a Bike"

Think back to when you were first learning to ride a bike. No really..... do it. Do you remember falling a lot? Maybe you had scraped knees and elbows? Do you remember crying and wanting to give up, or feeling jealous of the kids who were zipping around your neighborhood on their bicycles while you struggled to stay upright? Or maybe you just got on and rode it on your first try?

Riding a bike may seem like magic, but there is a very simple secret to success: all you have to do is just keep peddling, just keep moving forward. It is only when you stop peddling and move too slowly that you lose your balance.

As students at Northwestern there was no such thing as slowing down! With all of the classes, sports, events, and meetings we are involved in, my Kellogg CU classmates are moving a mile a minute! I feel humbled to be addressing such an impressive crowd! We have case competition champions, students prized for their excellence in the Math and Economics departments, the ASG student life vice president, a student who won the 6<sup>th</sup> annual undergraduate Salon Award and celebrated with the manager of the New York Yankees, students who placed 4<sup>th</sup> out of 50 teams in the Rotman Trading Competition in Toronto, and so many more. Our seniors are heading off with jobs at the top finance, consulting, investment banking, engineering, and marketing firms, and several are prolonging their education in top graduate programs and even medical school. Clearly we are a group that has peddled ahead on the pathway of life.

However, there have surely been times that we have all lost our balance trying to ride our bikes. You might have ridden over a pothole, got caught up in looking behind yourself instead of ahead, or swerved a little too hard. When I was first learning to ride a two-wheeler, my dad attached the handle of a broom to the back of my bike and would run down the block behind me holding it, making sure I didn't fall over. Thanks dad. Although I can ride a bike very well now, my parents are still always there for me when I topple over, and I am sure you can all say the same about your families. They are a tremendous part of why we have achieved what we have achieved, and I cannot think of a more appropriate time than graduation to thank them for the support, love, chauffeuring, and tuition payments with which they have gifted us over the years. Thank you to all the parents here today.

One day, we will hopefully be the ones holding the broomstick as someone else learns to ride a bike. We will be running behind them, catching them when they fall and shouting with

excitement when they take off on their own. Like us, they will one day receive support from teachers, friends, mentors, and others on their journeys.

Until then, just keep peddling. We are about to merge onto a busy road where there may not always be a bike lane. Look out for potholes and dust yourself off if you fall. Wear a helmet if it happens a lot. Do not worry if the triathlon bikers pass you up. Wave to them instead. If a road is closed due to construction, trust the detour.

The “real” world is not always going to be as safe as college, and we must learn to move with the bustle of society. We ought to learn from those around us yet stay firm to our own dreams. At the same time, if we find that our lifelong plans fall apart, keeping an open mind may present us with even greater opportunities. We must be confident in our abilities and continue being as determined as we have been until now.

Whatever you do, just keep peddling.

Congratulations and good luck Class of 2011!