First virtual graduation ceremony for Aga Khan Academy IB students

Tuesday May 26 2020

Ms Alison Hampshire, Head of the Academy, delivers her opening address during the virtual graduation for 67 students from different countries, which was watched by over 400 households across the globe. PHOTO | POOL

By WINNIE ATIENO
More by this Author

Sixty seven International Baccalaureate students were awarded diplomas at the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa during its 14th graduation ceremony, which was held virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic.

It was the the academy's first virtual graduation ceremony for class with students from more than 10 countries, including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan and India. The diploma is equivalent to Kenya's Form Four.

The graduates were also offered over Sh630 million in university scholarships and admission offers to attend prestigious institutions around the world, including the University of British Columbia, Cambridge, the Pratt Institute, Yale, McGill and Concordia universities.

ETHICAL LEADERS
Despite the prevailing uncertainty and increasing obstacles the students have faced over the past months, the Head of Academy, Ms Alison Hampshire, said the results of their resilience and hard work was manifested during the Saturday graduation ceremony.

"Today, we have a cohort filled with kind, confident, talented, globally-minded and ethical leaders, each of whom we are confident will lead and excel in their chosen career paths. We wish them the best of luck and success in their future endeavours. It has been a privilege to witness each and every one of these students develop both personally and academically over the past two years," she said in a statement.

The ceremony was watched by over 400 households across the globe.
"We celebrated the graduation of 67 exceptionally talented students from their Class of 2020, at a specially planned 'virtual graduation ceremony'. These new graduates, many of whom attended the academy with support from its financial aid and scholarship programmes, now join a growing legacy of global young leaders who have benefited from the Academy's unique curriculum and approach to education, hoping to effect positive change in their communities in the future," added Ms Hampshire.

"May 23 was a day that my cohort and I longed to experience for years. We had been planning and counting down to our graduation that was unexpectedly virtual due to the unprecedented times.

GRADUATION

However, on the day of graduation, my TV screen was radiating so much emotion, pride and happiness. I sat there with tears in my eyes and a heart full of joy. I am so thankful for the Aga Khan Mombasa community and the beautiful gradation they prepared for us," said Laiqa Walli, who was in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

With all learning institutions forced to shut down due to the global coronavirus pandemic, lessons shifted online. The school says the online lessons have turned out to be a learning experience for both students and teachers, as they discover the benefits and challenges.

"To make this virtual graduation ceremony a success, we had to compile videos from our students and staff, along with recordings of speeches on campus with the individuals who live in.

We wanted to hold this ceremony for our students as these times are unpredictable. A lot of our graduating students don't live in Kenya, so even if the school were to open, we were unsure whether all students could make it to the ceremony. By having it virtually,

everyone was together, celebrating together," the academy said.