

2018 Graduates Define Success

Date : June 21, 2018

Happy graduation to high school seniors around the world! We asked a few of you – a sampling of tomorrow’s leaders — to share your definitions of success. We hope more of you will add your perspectives in the comments section of this article (Our [Comment and Win](#) contest starts Monday, June 25!). Until then, enjoy reading the thoughts and ideas of other 17 and 18-year-olds.

[Sahil Lalwani](#), 17

Graduated From: The Emerald Heights International School, Indore, India

Future Plans: Colgate University, studying mathematical economics and computer science

“For me, success is using my work as a means to solve basic and yet, fundamental problems in society. As I aspire to be an economic advisor or policymaker, working closely with the government, I want to use economic policies to further macroeconomic stability, along with a vision to bring about a betterment in the credit lending policies and other basic financial problems in rural areas, thus bridging fundamental gaps at the micro level. As I leave high school, I am filled with a mixed feeling of excitement and anxiety. I am fascinated by the prospect of learning new skills everyday, networking and learning from people’s experiences, as well as developing a critical reasoning ability to have a holistic vision towards my future initiatives. At the same time, I am also filled with a feeling of nervousness at the uncertainty that the future holds, and the fact that it is a challenging journey I must lead alone. I want to be a person open to new ideas, and eager to connect with new individuals everyday. Professionally, I do not want to be limited to the traditional boundaries and restrictions of my jobs. Instead, I aim to learn and explore each passing day, and be challenged every day. I want to work in different teams among people with diverse viewpoints, and yet be a leader who can channel these viewpoints in the right direction. If I am able to do that, I shall consider myself truly successful.”

[Hannah Cronin](#), 18

Graduated From: York High School, Elmhurst, Illinois, U.S.

Future Plans: University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School

“Success means to be fulfilled in whatever aspect of your life you choose to put forth a large effort. Success is pretty subjective because someone may associate success with wealth and another person with helping others, so I think it is about achieving your personal goals, whatever they may be. I value academic and professional achievement, but I also value forming strong friendships and sharing exciting experiences with people. In the next few years, I aspire to really hone in on the aspect of business that I am most interested in, whether it be finance or real estate or retail, and to immerse myself in that industry. For now, as I leave for college, I am prioritizing finding a group of new friends with a variety of interests and backgrounds. I hope to be a balanced person; I want to achieve success in my chosen career in business while simultaneously loving what I do for a living and maintaining a vibrant social life.”

[João Felipe Paes](#), 18

Graduated From: St. Paul’s School, São Paulo, Brazil

Future Plans: University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School

“Success is achieving happiness by doing what you love and mastering it. It is also helping others to find their success in life. Fifty years from now, I would like to be a leader in the world investments, and consequently be able to contribute to my country in many ways: from its economy to social inequality.”

[Ajeya Shiva](#), 17

Graduated From: The Bronx High School of Science, The Bronx, N.Y., U.S.

Future Plans: Stanford University

“Success, as is commonly understood, is about rewards and recognition. While those do tend to lift morale from time to time, I have also come to realize how transient and insignificant they really are. After all, who would remember or care about those even in a few weeks’ time? Instead, success to me is about being a person of value. Living with integrity is what I value most, because that alone can truly set us free. I have experienced it personally a number of times in my life and strive to live by it every day. I aspire to lead a dignified and fulfilling life, acquire knowledge and skills to support myself and be of use to others. My top priority is about learning to deal with change and get comfortable with it. As I embark on my voyage of self-discovery in the months and years ahead, I am bound to face a great deal of change and my fair share of challenges. For the first time, I will be living on my own, far away from my family. That will be a new experience in itself. At the same time, I will get to meet and know newer sets of people, as well as learn new things and newer ways of doing things. I believe all that will be truly exciting and enriching to me.”

Sarah Ouslander, 18

Graduated From: Hopewell Valley Central High School, Pennington, N.J., U.S.

Future Plans: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to study biology, chemistry and statistics

“For me, success means positively impacting society while pursuing something I am passionate about. So far, I have found myself drawn to our epidemic of obesity, diabetes, and other diseases, and I would love to work at the CDC in Atlanta to conduct research and spread information to the public. Another interest of mine is neurology; I have always been interested in this field, but it particularly fascinates me now, as I was diagnosed with epilepsy at the beginning of my senior year in high school. Researchers work tirelessly to produce drugs that are successful in treating elusive neurological disorders such as Parkinson’s disease and Alzheimer’s, but I would like to help discover the causes of these conditions so we can focus on preventative medicine. In general, I believe there is a huge lack of focus on preventative medicine in the U.S. and I want to change that. I also hope to be politically active, especially with regard to health care and ensuring that people from all income levels have access to preventative medicine. In my professional career, I hope to be recognized as an individual that stays true to my moral and ethical beliefs, and in my personal life, I want to be loyal and dedicated to my loved ones. Aside from my work career, I hope I’ll remember to enjoy myself in the moment and be adventurous. I am such a driven person that, in high school, I was too focused on achieving. Now, I realize how important it is to continue reevaluating what makes me happy.”

[Uday Bansal, 18](#)

Graduated From: Delhi Public School, R.K. Puram, New Delhi, India

Future Plans: Working on a collection of Hindi and Urdu poems and deciding which U.S. school to attend to study journalism and political science

“I define success as the realization of one’s potential to the fullest. In this way it’s you who define success and not the society. I can’t emphasize enough the importance of setting one’s own goals and achieving them, rather than blindly pursuing the ‘symbols of success’ set by others. While the former approach gives you inner peace and satisfaction, the latter will only lead to frustration, fatigue and discontentment no matter how far one goes in life. Though there are many roles I may don in my life after high school, there is one rule I want to strictly abide by: to do everything with commitment, conviction and competence.”

[Rohit Roy, 17](#)

Graduated From: Ridge High School, Basking Ridge, N.J., U.S.

Future Plans: Carnegie Mellon University, Tepper School of Business

“To me, success is defined by the impact you make. Of course, being financially secure is important to living a

comfortable life and supporting a family. However, I hope to change society for the better, as well. I envision doing this by one day forming a startup that will focus on serving the economically disadvantaged and bridging the wealth gap in our nation and even across the world. I also hope to use my love of investing to make impact investments. I certainly value family a lot. I am very thankful for having such a loving and supportive family and strongly wish to help them out as much as I can. I also value kindness and helping others. As I mentioned before, I am in many ways driven to make society a better place and help out others who are in need. These are the values and aspirations that I hope to follow throughout my life.”