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Graduates, find wisdom in successes

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Congratulations, Graduate!

Finals are over, you've got your degree and you never have to go to class again. You've just completed an amazing journey and are looking forward to a bright future.

But before you show up for your first day of work, before you enter the ranks of the work force or start thinking about graduate school, consider these pearls of wisdom from some of Northeast Ohio's most successful people:

C. Lyonel Jones, who has spent 39 years as executive director of the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, wants you to be especially grateful for your college education -- something only 16 percent of the U.S. population age 25 and older can boast of, according to the 2000 census. In Northeast Ohio, only 15 percent of residents 25 and older have bachelor's degrees.

But to whom much has been given, he said, much is expected. "Never lose sight of your obligation to use your education to make the world a better place."

"Always remember to make time for community service," especially if it enables you to use your many talents to help those less fortunate and more needy, he added.

Few people know that better than Jack Seelie, who spent 17 years as a lawyer before discovering his true passion.

Seelie opened Once Upon a Time, an upscale educational toy store in Rocky River, in 1985.

"Find out what you love doing and become the best there is at it," he said. "Don't let money be the primary motivation, because you can be very wealthy and very unhappy. Or you can have a modest income and be as happy as can be."

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