



# Monday Messages to Students from Alumni



**From Yukthi Gunasekera, Class of 1995:** *My dear fellow Berean, congratulations on pursuing your studies online in these unprecedented times! I have every confidence, and no doubt, that you will emerge stronger from this pandemic. Just permit me to share one thought with you. One of the things that can make us stronger in these bleak times is to reach out and help a person or persons who may be less fortunate than we are. During the shut down in Sri Lanka (my home country where I live now), I organized - with a whole bunch of enthusiastic youngsters around your age (Interactors and Rotaractors) - the distribution of essential food items to 215 families in 20 locations across the country. That single action made me feel good because I felt that I could make a difference - however small it may be - in other people's lives. My professor at Berea, Dr. Michael Berheide once told us, When we do good, we feel good. In this spirit, I wish you will do something, however small, to lift someone up. Perhaps you too will join a group or organisation to do this. The main thing is to do something. Just do good! Your fellow Berean.*

**From a 1970s Graduate:** *I graduated from Berea in May of 1970. My graduation present was a draft notice. There were several things happening simultaneously in the mid 60s and early 70s that stressed our country nearly to the breaking point. Political divisions caused by the Vietnam War and racial tension led to the murders of Dr. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. Young were pitted against old, Democrats against Democrats, Democrats against Republicans, SDS & the Weatherman Underground against The Man, students against college administration, Black Power movement, etc. There lots of violence and resultant casualties. Despite all this, between 1966-1970 a man set foot on the moon & returned safely to Earth, N.O.W formed, the EPA began operations, the first ever Earth Day was held, Intel Corporation formed, the first African American justice was appointed to the US Supreme Court. the first African American federal cabinet secretary was appointed, the gay rights movement began, the Voting Rights Act became law, the summer of love in San Francisco, the Woodstock Festival (No, I didn't make it to either event, dammit!), African American & Feminist Studies programs began & 250,000 Americans marched in DC for peace. The only thing we didn't have was a pandemic, but HIV/AIDS was already about. Somehow, the vast majority of us survived and things changed. I was naïve and didn't understand most of this. I just tried to treat people well. So, adapt, improvise, overcome. You have more knowledge, better tools, a good ethic. Be well & do good.*

**From Camille Williams-Neal, Class of 1975:** *My dear Berea Family, I pray that as you navigate through these unparalleled times, you keep holding firmly to the Truth that the One who has begun a good work in you will bring this unique work in you to completion (ref. Philippians 1:6). One of the great lessons that I learned at Berea and have built upon is, that for Every obstacle, problem or challenge, there are Always resources that can be searched for, explored, and reached for. In Seminary I learned that no matter what, there is usually at least one thing that I or perhaps someone else can do to make things better. Sometimes this is as simple as changing the way I think about a situation. So, may all of us look with confident expectation at the many challenges facing us, and may you remember that you are each an important part of a Family that is more numerous than can be imagined, that is cheering each one of you Every step of your journey.!! Yours in Confident Joy.*