

## Convocation 2022

Sheridan College: 18 October 2022

### Valedictorian Speech

**Kawther Ramadan: Faculty of Animation, Arts & Design**

Good Afternoon

Thank you, Dean Braggins, faculty members, family, friends, and the graduating class of 2022; today is a day to be grateful and inspired.

We have much to be thankful for. Here at Sheridan, we have received a great education that equipped us with knowledge, creativity, and critical thinking. We were lucky to be surrounded by student-focused professors who were able to inspire hope, kindle the imagination, and root the love of learning.

I moved to Canada with experiences in media and civil rights advocacy in Egypt and the Middle East, but as a recent immigrant and woman of colour, it was not enough for my work and worth to be seen here, in my new home. As a mid-career professional and mother, there are many challenges, such as age, race, language and cultural barriers I had to overcome. As Noam Chomsky once said, "If you want to achieve something, you build the basis for it." Sheridan and my journalism program were that base.

**Fellow graduates**, when I was young, I thought that journalists were superheroes who had a gift that made the world a better place and gave voice to people who were otherwise silenced. Actually, you are the superheroes because you reached this milestone despite the challenges of Covid 19, adjusting to virtual learning and mental wellness struggles. I want you to know what a great gift it is to

be as prepared as we are. Here at Sheridan, we have had creative, inclusive, and unique learning experiences that will benefit us whether we start our professional career or intend to continue our education.

Thank you to the faculty members who've walked this academic journey with us.

Thank you for empowering us to greater academic heights than we would have imagined possible. Your understanding nature and continuous support were essential to our academic victory today.

I was inspired by many people here at Sheridan, but a special shoutout to my partner and classmate Ossama Soffar, whom no one knew I was married to until halfway through the second year. The joys of online learning!

A final thought going forward: graduation has already shown us how capable we all are of accomplishing our goals. Now, it is our turn to pay it forward, be an inspiration, and give hope to others.

Congratulations, Class of 2022!