

Dearest students, family and staff

Congratulations.

During your time here in Haugland, the small municipality of Fjaler has hosted a piece of the great, big world. It is impossible to put a value on having a school such as yours here. The school makes the world look to Fjaler, but more importantly, it makes us look to the world.

This year's graduation is somewhat special to me because I am also here as a host family for Fabiana who graduates today. My experience as a host family has made me reflect on what it means for the Fjaler community that so many of our inhabitants year after year host students from UWC:

In my earlier speeches about UWC I talked a lot about what this school means to Fjaler, but I now see that the host family arrangement is so much more important than I have been aware of.

On an individual level, it affects our community by changing each and one of us from within. Added together, it makes us a more open and including community.

This is also a special graduation because principal Richard Lamont, is leaving us. And Larry, you're the best!

Thank you for your inspiring presence here in Fjaler.

Thank you for your profound contribution in giving the school a stronger regional and local foundation.

You've worked hard to ensure that UWC is not an isolated universe, accidentally situated in Flekke, but instead that different sectors and environments would discover this school's value - locally, regionally and nationally. In this work, UWC Connect is a vital milestone. Establishing own county-wide student places in collaboration with Sogn og Fjordane fylkeskommune is another. Getting a UWC-education, is a unique opportunity for students from our county.

I would also like to take the opportunity to commend your social responsibility in the including football activities in Fjaler-hallen. We shall miss you. And wherever you and your family end up in this world, you will always be native «flekking» to us.

I will also use this opportunity to express how grateful we are for the good and developing collaboration with the Red Cross. I look forward to the future

Dear students, Each year I'm here, I hand out a pin with Fjaler's coat of arms. I don't know if people in other countries wear them, but in Norway the mayor and politicians often pin one on their jacket. I don't know if you'll do it, but take it as a small memory, and store it in a box or something, to remind you that once upon a time, you lived in Fjaler

On behalf of Fjaler municipality I would like to thank you for what you have given us during your stay here. We hope that Fjaler has made an impact on your hearts and that we shall see you again.

Here at UWC you have been educated to build a better world. I wish you good luck and all the best for the exciting and lifelong journey you are about to embark on.

*Gunhild Berge Stang*

*Mayor of Fjaler*

*19 May 2018*