



Draft Orientation Speech by Dr. Asburn Pinnock to the cohort of New Undergraduates

Orientation – August 25, 2025

1. Greeting & Welcome (2 minutes)

Good evening, and welcome to The Mico University College, the oldest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere and arguably the most accomplished and legendary institution across the Caribbean.

It is important for me to begin by congratulating our new undergraduates. Ladies and gentlemen, congratulations! You have made an important choice to invest in your future, and it was the right choice to choose The Mico University College.

Please share my gratitude with your parents, guardians, and supporters. Thank them on my behalf for the sacrifices, encouragement and other types of support that helped to bring you all here today.

2. Context – A Nation in Transition (3 minutes)

Students, your orientation comes during an important moment in our nation's story. In just a few weeks, Jamaicans will go to the polls to participate in **general elections**. And

that voting process reminds me of the power of choice – the individual’s power to determine his/ her future.

By choosing to empower yourself and to contribute to national development by enrolling at The Mico you are answering a call uttered by The Mico’s founders. Our founders knew that real independence could only be achieved through educational empowerment, and I sent the same message just recently while the nation celebrated **Emancipation Day**.

Ladies and gentlemen Emancipation reminds us that freedom was not given, but earned. The period should remind us of our ancestors’ resilience, of their belief in freedom, and of their courage to fight for generations they would never meet.

Students please recognize and accept that today, you stand as the beneficiaries of that struggle. Your presence here is proof that our founders’ dream lives on – and now, it is your turn to dream of and prepare for Jamaica’s future.

3. The Mico Legacy (3 minutes)

The dream to educate the descendants of slaves made The Mico more than a college, because the institution began to write its own history. New Miconians must by now know that you are not just joining a university. You are joining a legacy that began in 1836.

Throughout that time The Mico has produced ministers, governor-generals, global educators, scientists, entrepreneurs, and innovators. You are now part of that lineage, and must now demonstrate your self worth..

You will be equipped to make impactful contributions across so many sectors. And that is because a degree from The Mico is not just limited to one profession. While many will graduate and become teachers – and while that calling is noble and regarded most by The Mico – a Mico qualification is **versatile**. It equips you with leadership, discipline, research skills, and creativity. It prepares you to take on any challenge with all Thy might.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Mico experience that you are commencing will be a foundation, not a limit. It can open doors to careers in business, technology, government, social services, and beyond.

4. Join the Legacy Campaign (3 minutes)

New Miconians there could not be a more fitting time to commence your studies here. This year we have launched the “**Join the Legacy**”, and as we prepare to mark our 190th anniversary, we are “Celebrating the Legacy”.

The campaign asks each of us to think bigger – to see ourselves not just as students or lecturers, but as **legends in the making and as the sculptures of legends**. Our slogans say it best: *Be A Legend. A Legendary Future. Global Legends. Legendary Careers.*

You will see and hear about the campaign across Jamaica as we tour towns, and connect with schools and communities. You will also hear stories of the Miconians making their mark around the world, and will have an opportunity to add your own legendary moments to The Mico’s story.

5. Personal Challenge & Inspiration (3–4 minutes)

Your story with The Mico begins today so it is important for me to leave you with a charge and to provide some inspiration.

In the coming months, there will be days when the work feels heavy, when the journey feels long, and when doubt creeps in. In those moments, I encourage you to remember three things:

1. **Resilience** – Just as our ancestors pressed through hardship to achieve freedom, you must persevere through your challenges to achieve success.

2. **Responsibility** – Just as our nation prepares to make important decisions at the ballot box, you too must always make wise decisions about your studies and your life.

3. **Versatility** – Take every opportunity Mico offers: clubs, leadership roles, volunteerism, internships, scholarships etc. The more you explore, the stronger your legacy will be, and so too will The Mico's.

6. Closing (1–2 minutes)

Future Miconians I welcome you, officially, to **The Mico University College**.

You are now Miconians – part of a family, a tradition, and a mission that is older than Jamaica itself. You walk in the footsteps of legends, and it is now your turn to write the next chapter.

As you begin, I charge you to be resilient, be responsible, be versatile – and above all, **be legendary**.

Together, let us keep **Building the Legacy**, and in doing so, we will shape not only your future, but also the future of Jamaica and the world.

Thank you, and may this year be the start of something extraordinary for each of you.