

Alex Garcia - 15th anniversary of his graduation!

Hello everyone! To remember - In January, 2016, I celebrated the 15th anniversary of my college graduation.

It's a special date - This date is special for two reasons:

1) He was the first Deafblind Person and Person with Hydrocephalus and Rare Disease to finish a post graduation degree at a Brazilian university.

2) I was the 1st. Person with disabilities to enter the Special Education Course at UFSM (Federal University of Santa Maria).

These facts were and still are an inspiration for other people. I received many messages. Please read and share them! Stay blessed - Alex Garcia – Deafblind Brazilian.

Dear Alex! Thank you for letting me being part of a very special celebration. When someone graduates, it's a joy to the person, family and friends; in your case, it transcends a milestone in the career of the graduates and in the lives of people with deficiency to expand horizons and raise awareness. These 15 years were a record of public recognition and appreciation that, beyond the title itself, it's your presence, your ceaseless struggle, your commitment and involvement. Inevitably I think people have traces, but you have a title. Congratulations! A hug and that the good God continue to guide your steps. Pilar Samaniego. Maestra. Quito – Ecuador.

Alex, colleague and friend! The celebration is because you are tenacious and tough in your principles and this must stand out. You teach us that the permanent fight is necessary, with grounded knowledge not only in theory but also in practice. I join you in the celebration. Huge endearment. Maria Alejandra Grzona. Docente, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo. Mendoza – Argentina. Dearest Alex: I extend my greeting to you and I follow you in your celebration. May God and life allow you to keep on your optimism, perseverance and passion for what you do. I celebrate that I have met you, because you are an example for all of us. A strong hug, my friend. Paty Gutierrez. Especialista em Tecnologia Inclusiva. Buenos Aires – Argentina.

Alex you are a person worthy of admiration because you turned your difficulties out into opportunities. You opened the doors to those who came behind you. I celebrate with you all your success. Congratulations! Xiomara de Hernandez – El Salvador.

Alex! Congratulations for such an important event. It's important to reverberate events like this so the society understands that inclusive education is possible and that people with deficiency are equally valuable to our society. Emmanuelle Gutiérrez y Restrepo. Directora General - Fundación Sidar – Acceso Universal. Madrid - España.

www.sidar.org

Congratulations Alex for your struggle! My best wishes to you. Ana Maria Dones. Trabajadora Social – REDI. Buenos Aires- Argentina.

Dear Alex! It's a delight to know that you celebrate 15 years of your graduation. For more complicated that it was, you never gave your dream up. To get into an university was not easy and to finish your studies successfully, was equally difficult but you succeed it and this is a huge goal. Being you a disabled person, it is an example for all of us. Best regards! Marita Hess. Omaped. Miraflores - Perú.

Dear Alex! I include myself as well as In the name of our Organization of People with Deficiency from Argentina, to follow you in the celebrations! We congratulate and encourage you to proceed! A strong hug to you. Gustavo Bottelli – Argentina. Asociación HODIF www.hodif.org.ar.

Mr. Alex. Congratulation! I'm very fortunate to be a part of this celebration. Distance is not a hindrance when we want to help others for the purpose of advocating our rights. Having been attained all your dreams and goals is simply implies that you are a person worth remembering. All your efforts you made for the sector contributed a lot to the environment especially the people and the society as well. We really appreciate your endeavor and being a advocate. We hope and pray that you will always continue to speak

for our rights. Sincerely, Marieta S. Jandayan. President - Regional Federation of Women with Disability. Caraga Region. Philippines.

Hello Alex. Congratulations! And bravo for that resilience! Indeed, you are such an inspiration to people who are Deafblind, but to the entire disability fraternity world-wide as well. Keep on keeping on. Julius Kanya. Management and Public Relations Specialist Commissioner: IEC&Training. Equal Opportunities Commission. Kampala - Uganda.

Congratulations – you should celebrate! Sian Tesni. Senior Advisor - Education. Knowledge, Learning and Training (KLT) Department. CBM International. Bensheim – Germany.

Alex! I will be thinking of you very much on January 16 and I congratulate you for successfully graduating from the University! But also for your struggle for life and for your fight on an international level. My very best regards and happy year 2016, Catherine Hutter. Teach LORM - Specific method of communication for Deafblind Persons, as well as HAPTIC. President of GERSAM: Swiss-French Group of Mutual Aid for Deafblind and Hard of Hearing and Seeing Persons. Lausanne, Switzerland.

Dear Alex Garcia. Thank you for your message and interest in the work of the United Nations for persons with disabilities and Congratulations for your 15 years of graduation! Sincerely. Xinyi. Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Division for Social Policy and Development. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations - New York – USA.

Hi Alex Garcia. Many congratulations for achieving these milestones in your life. You inspire us. We wish you all the best for many such milestone success in future. Warm regards! Abdul Mabood - Hon. Director SNEHI - Healthy Minds. A Healthy India. www.snehi.org.

Happy New Year from Ghana. We, at Enlightening and Empowering People with Disabilities in Africa (EPPD AFRICA) are so so proud of you especially the fact that, we can not see you hear physically, but we can feel your great impact from afar. We joyfully celebrate with you and we wish you more greater heights. Go Alex and Go Higher. Our request is during this big celebrations, you please have some plans toward your fellow deafblinds in the other parts of the world where we are now developing hence things are not in place for deaf blinds. In Ghana for instance, we have deafblinds but we can not work with them because, as you know, we do not ave the resources (ex. human resource as in specialists, finacial resouces etc) so they are still marginalized more, more than the other PWDs. Alex, how did you make it this far We will be glad to learn from you. Once

again. Happy celebration. Hip Hip Hip Hurray! Sefakor Komabu - Pomeyie. Founder & President, EEPD AFRICA. Ghana – Africa.
www.eepdafrica.org.

Alex, how lucky I am to have met you, although our meetings are virtual. I'm Ángeles Sánchez and I was a deafblind teacher. I thought I couldn't face this challenge in my career as a Head of Adult Education, but your emotional and intellectual intelligence, soon showed me how wrong I was. Wednesdays, the days I teach, are not a worry anymore, actually, they are now a pleasure, a friendly meeting where I learned and we learn a lot of things. A hug to you Alex and congratulations! I would like to be by your side! Ángeles Sánchez. Madrid – España.

Alex with great pleasure I follow your celebration, because a person like you is worthy of my appreciation, for all the contributions to help citizens of the world to overcome similar problems as well as to convey them your experience and research. At the same time, accept my best wishes for the New Year. Be the success reserved for you and may God enlighten and bless you and all your family. Melenio Rosas. Cueva. Editor, Distribuidor e Implementador Del Sistema de Calidad Educativa A-B. Escalae. Lima – Perú.

Dear Alex! I wish to greet and congratulate you in this day for your accomplishments, because you are an example for a lot of people who want to stand out and be successful. Many of us get it, all right, but we don't give our complete efforts to reach our dreams. God bless you always. Congratulations. Alicia Lourdes M. Docente. Peru.

Dear friend Alex. What a happiness such an event like this brings. I hope you keep on offering all your strength and experience to those in need. A warm greeting. Silvita Vargas. Maestra. Concepcion-Chile.

Alex! I want to congratulate you. You are the best example of "YES, YOU CAN". T.O. Gualeguaychú – Entre Ríos – Argentina.

Dear Alex! It's a great opportunity to send you a special greeting in the celebration of the stages of your life, the accomplishments of your life. Blessings and all the best to you. Beatriz Zoppi y Emiliano Alvarez. Maestra de Sordociegos. La Pampa – Argentina.

Alex! You are an example of a successful life, where your example must give the incitement to many who are defeated in the struggle of life. Jenny Gómez. ACPHES - Asociación Colombiana de Padres com Hijos Especiales. Bogotá – Colômbia.

Hi Alex! Congratulations for the 15 years of your career and for a life of struggle. I wish you strength and happiness. Regards. Valeria Martínez Benegas. Estudiante de Trabajo Social. Mendoza – Argentina.

EyePlusPlus, Inc Tokio and EyePlus La Sas, América Latina, feel proud of being part of your admirers and friends through this letter. We are sure: You are na example to be followed in all our Latin American Continent. We are together in the celebration of such an important date for you as well as for all of us. You are an example that the deficiencies are only a state that limit the one who doesn't break through the barrier of your own limitation. Receive our hug, admiration and a lot of respect from our organizations. With admiration and esteem, Fernelly Perdomo. Gerente de Enlace para America Latina y el Caribe. EyePlusPlus, Inc.Tokio – Japón.

Dear friend Alex! I don't know you personally, but I feel your energy, that emanates from a person engaged in breaking down barriers and changing paradigms...Let's hope that Life and God, that athered to us, help us to succeed in cooperating with everything that we do in this part of the World, for the sake of people with deficiency that today are maltreated, discredited and ignored, and that were forced to live from charity, in denigrated conditions for any human being. That your message brings light and hope to many people that today live in darkness and silence, not because they can't see nor

hear, but because they don't look nor listen, they don't feel the silent call from those in need, not to assist them but to guide, drive and head them to the freedom that we can only get through a good education, the reading of books that raise the desire and enthusiasm of doing things, of applying for a decent well paid job, to the fraternity and universal joy. Alex, you represent all these things and much more! You are the light of Brazil, the beacon lighting and comforting everyone to go on... God wants you to go ahead and far away on this path you are committed. Thank's to those who guided and leaded you, your family, dear fellows... Blessings and all the best as always. Silvia Valori. Escritora. Argentina – www.silviavalori.com.ar

Alex! I hope this may be a very pleasant day. Indeed, you are not an example of victimization. You are an example to be followed not only for that who has some deficiency but also for that who is supposed to be in charge of his full capacities. You have all my admiration. It's a clear example that there are not barriers when there is a determination. Together we will fight, for the deafblindness do not make people into invisible human beings, but in people that everyone can see them, so that everyone knows that a deafblind person is exactly the same as anyone who suffers, lives, has projects and aspirations. Happiness to you Alex. Gabriela De Lauretis. San Miguel – Argentina.

Alex! Happiness on this anniversary. You deserve all the achievements. Your success shows us we can go wherever we want. Proceed striving stronger each day and share your enthusiasm. God bless you Alex. Regards and a hug to you. Leonardo Pichun Urrutia. Instructor en Informática. Temuco – Chile.

Alex Garcia, that I have the honor to have as a friend, is graduated in Special Education by Universidade Federal de Santa Maria – Rio Grande do Sul – Brazil, and one of the most active person I know. For several times we have worked together, either formal or informally, exchanging ideas and seeking to go further in the deafblindness understanding as also in the deficiency in general, while determinant factors of the quality of life in the society we live in. We do not always agree with one another, but the personal and professional respect that connect us has turned all the moments we disagree out into important personal learning. Fighting against the several adversities of your personal and professional life, Alex has made available to the deafblind community, not only a lot of knowledge as a result of his studies developed in the university, but above all, the wisdom gained as a deafblind person and all the reflections resulted from these factors. These reflections allowed him to be continuously in contact with families and professors of deafblind children, to whom he permanently serves in an incomparable way, as well as the publishing of some essential books to the understanding of deafblindness, among them I point out “Além de Existir Devemos Ser” and “Surdocegueira Empírica e Científica”. On this date that we celebrate his graduation on Special

Education, I want to join everyone that celebrate with Alex his 15 years of professional life from here, sending him a big hug and my wishes he can keep on contributing in such a complete way, to the acknowledgment, understanding and interpretation of what is the deafblindness. Congratulations Alex! Dra. Isabel Amaral. Terapeuta da Fala – Escola Superior de Saúde de Alcoitão. Mestre em Educação de Surdocegos e Multideficientes – Boston College – USA. Doutora em Psicologia do Desenvolvimento e da Educação – Universidade do Porto. Lisboa – Portugal.

Congratulations Alex for your 15 years of graduation. I perfectly recall this time because you were taking your graduation course and later you attended a Specialization Course, all these studies at Universidade Federal de Santa Maria. Although everyone knows, but it's good to say, the UFSM is a Public, unpaid and high quality Institution. At this time, I worked as secretary for the Pedagogy Course which shared the same area with the secretary of Special Education, who was Marizete Hoer. Alex was a student at this course and it was in the 90s. Accessibility was not a concern among the main priorities of public leaders, but thank's to people like Alex, this scenario today is quite different. The accessibility is all over the places. I remember that several times we increased the size of the letters in the small computers screens so Alex could read the messages; when the communication was by phone, we made the call, he would tell us the subject and we started "a bridge" between Alex and the other person on the phone. However, these difficulties and others, were faced by Alex just as a challenge to be achieved.

And he did it! Alex broke the barriers that seemed to prohibit or make your professional qualification more difficult. He succeed as a professional. He succeed as a person. You have a lot to celebrate in these 15 years of graduation! In 15 years laws were approved, Commissions were created and the inclusion is a reality which makes the lives of others "Alex" much easier. Alex Garcia...an example to be followed! Cenira Rodrigues da Silva. Educadora Especial. Servidora Pública Federal Aposentada. Santa Maria - Brasil.

Friend Alex! You are God's more special overcoming. You deserve the most beautiful things in life. I am pretty sure about what I say because I could share your experiences, as a secretary of the Special Education Course. Strength, courage, success and a lot of love and peace in your heart. Maria Odet Portes Martins. Servidora Pública Federal Aposentada. Canoas – Brasil.

Alex is a person more than special, he has light! He is an example of determination and strength, I admire him very much! When he was a student I shared with him the student's affairs at UFSM, and he was always positive and high spirits! Congratulations Alex, all the success and happiness to you! A big hug to you! Gilce Maria Fenner de Souza. Servidora Pública da UFSM, Coordenadora da Assessoria de Comunicação do Centro de Educação. Santa Maria – Brasil.

My dear Alex! I gained a blessing from God by sharing your company for thirty days, what I believe, it has been one of the biggest challenges of your life and you, with your strength and determination, emerged victorious by being approved and having received, bringing your Labrador, to Brazil! I see the victory of your graduation at the University, as one of the many achievements that life will present you because the only choice that you nurture - that is the one of winning - is inside of you. What an example of struggle and persistence you are my friend, for all of us...Congratulations! My wish is that you keep on like this, walking ahead, as a beacon to light the steps up of the fellows who go along with you, because the achievements are milestones to the imperishable soul, in the big course of our evolution. With love! Deise Leitão de Souza. Professora de Inglês. São Paulo – Brasil.

I had the opportunity of meeting Alex in Cajazeiras – Paraíba, where he was giving a lecture about Inclusive Education. The lecture was wonderful and Alex is an enlightened and very clever person. I will always thank the opportunity I had to know this person who is special in all senses. I am passionate about education. A big hug friend Alex Garcia and success. Gilvana Soares. Professora e Psicopedagoga. Conceição – Paraíba – Brasil.

Dear colleague Alex! Congratulations for your achievement, congratulations for being our example of overcoming, dedication and for being a brilliant humanbeing that manages to thrill everyone in a

stupendous way. May our Great Creator, The One who gives us life, proceed to blessing and giving you the necessary strength to go on, sharing your findings and enjoyments with us. Josefa Barbosa Nunes Maia. Professora de Atendimento Educacional Especializado. Cajazeiras – Paraíba – Brasil.

Congratulations, for your achievement and for inspiring other people to have self confidence: people with or without deficiency! A big hug to you. Deise Tallarico Pupo. Bibliotecária Aposentada do Laboratório de Acessibilidade – Unicamp. Campinas – Brasil.

Alex! Congratulations. Much more accomplishments and victories in 2016. May God continue always blessing your life and making you an example for all of us! Rodrigo Rosso – Diretor Revista Reação. São Paulo – Brasil.

Congratulations my dear for this wonderful achievement, congratulations for your courage and strength, may God be always with you driving your steps, that you succeed in reaching all your goals and mainly that you go on leading hope for all around you. Jucélia de Freitas Lagher Vieira. Empresária. Porto Alegre – Brasil.

Alex! No, I don't have words to say how special you are! We spent just a few moments together, however they were moments that I

could look at life in a different way because you are different, so it made me do that. You are an example of determination, devotion and strength, an example that if we want something in life, we are capable of getting it; besides all that you are a very charismatic person. Congratulations for the 15 years of graduation! We wish you all the success of the world my friend, all the best to you. Receive a kiss in your heart. May God be with you! Flávio Eduardo Souza Leite. Representante Comercial – CEASA – São Paulo – Brasil.

Congratulations Alex, you really are a big example of determination. In this way, you show to a lot of people that faith moves everything in this life! Vivian Carla Meneguelli Leite. Dentista. São Paulo – Brasil.

Hi Alex! My name is Andressa and I have a visual deficiency. I'm just passing by to give you my regards for your 15 years of graduation. You really are an example to many people, including myself for I still didn't get into university. But now I'm happy to know stories like yours. Once more, congratulations. Andressa Batista. Student. Luiziana – Paraná – Brasil.

Alex Garcia, a person that regardless of being deafblind, he is an active and motivating human being that seeks through the citizens right, the overcoming and strength to develop and apply all his unique potentialities and skills. Congratulations for this and all the

accomplishments that will come! Marisa Pretti Ferreira. As Meninas dos Olhos – Audiodescrição. São Paulo – Brasil.

Alex you were and will remain a big example of strength, dedication and affection for what you do not only for the people with deficiency, but also for all of us. I admire you beyond measure rather, I'm your fan and admirer of your work. I hope one day we can to know each other and also, bring you to my city – Salgueiro – Pernambuco. Maria Patrícia Lourenço Barros. Professora e Coordenadora do Núcleo de Apoio as Pessoas com Deficiência do Instituto Federal do Sertão Pernambucano Campus Salgueiro. Salgueiro – Pernambuco– Brasil.

Dear friend Alex! You are an example of a warrior of life and the people's right. I hope such an event may be celebrated several times with health, joy and friends. A big hug to you. Marilice Costi. Sana Arte – Cuidados Integrados. Porto Alegre – Brasil.

Dear Alex Garcia! Congratulations for this commemorative date that actually, it is a symbol of achievement that gives strength and determination for other people. I am happy to share your gladness!

A big hug to you! João Ribeiro da Cunha Neto. Funcionário Público Federal. Porto Alegre – Brasil.

Congratulations, Alex Garcia, for your 15 years of your graduation. Thank's to your willpower and persistence, you arrived to such an important level. Besides, your work enables people to know the existence and the real situation of deafblinds in Brazil. I's necessary to show they exist and fight for them. You do it with mastery and competence. Have a strong hug. Erika Hanssen Madaleno. Jornalista. Porto Alegre – Brasil.

Alex! I do not only celebrate but I applaud you standing, my friend and Darling master. Have a bunch of hugs with brother's affection. Humberto Pires do Carmo. Músico, Salvador - Bahia – Brasil.

Alex, you are an example and I know that you do everything excellently. There are those who are chosen and you are one of them, most of the time noticing and putting yourself in others shoes. Warrior Alex, go on always dreaming and living with full intensity. Be much more blessed as well as your family who is always close to you. Congratulations. You deserve it! Your star is Always shining. Be God always with you. I love you. Aunt Ana Neli Gamarra. Porto Xavier – Brasil.

Alex! Congratulations for your 15 years of graduation. Congratulations for your immeasurable willpower of overcoming the obstacles which appeared in front of you. Be 2016 a year dedicated to big and successful achievements. A hug for you! José Luiz Alves da Silva. ADVIM – Associação dos Deficientes Visuais de Mossoró. Mossoró. RN – Brasil.