

Salutatorian Speech – 2009 Commencement Ceremony – Mary Frame

Father Tony, Father Chris, our honored guest Mrs. Lydia Reid, members of the education commission, Mrs. Reith, Mr. Straub, parents, teachers, relatives, friends, classmates, it is with the greatest pleasure that I welcome you to the Commencement Ceremony for the graduating class of 2009.

We have all gotten to where we are today by the love and nurturing of a variety of people. Sometimes we may take for granted everything they do, or fail to realize how they have been there for us, but they have supported us nonetheless. One of the most important groups of people that have influenced us as almost family is something we all have in common, our teachers.

I would like to begin with a poem called “Why God Made Teachers” by Kevin William Huff.

When God created teachers,
He gave us special friends
To help us understand His world
And **truly** comprehend
The beauty and the wonder
Of everything we see,
And become a **better** person
With each discovery.

When God created teachers,
He gave us special guides
To show us ways in which to grow
So we can all decide
How to live and how to do
What's **right** instead of wrong,
To **lead** us so that we can lead
And learn how to be strong.

Why God created teachers,
In His wisdom and His grace,
Was to help us **learn** to make our world
A better, wiser place.

Our teachers are more than just instructors, educators, or masters in their subject; they are parental figures away from home. Most people from the outside see our standardized test scores and give teachers proper credit as educators, but how many know that we call Mrs. Zehnder “Mama Zehn” because we know we can come to her with even our silly, superficial dramas and she will be there to listen to us and give us kind advice. Or how many people know of Mrs. Groshong’s understanding and forgiveness when we have difficulty completing an assignment by its due date. Even our stricter teachers give us the “tough love” of parents. Mr. Bradner doesn’t hesitate to give referrals when they are needed, and everyone knows not to mess with Mrs. Castle. However, deep down we all understand that they do this to help us learn and grow and we know that even if we have done something wrong and are punished for it, the next day we will be given a clean slate and they won’t continually judge us for our wrongs. Our teachers have been the nurturing, guiding hands to get us through our day and they deserve our utmost thanks.

Another group that deserves thanks for bringing us to where we are today is all of you watching now. Parents, grandparents, extended family, friends, all of you have given us the love we need, even when it is sometimes difficult to do so. As teenagers, we certainly are prone to our *occasional* melodrama and we are known for mood swings and I’m sure there have been times that we have all been less than appreciative and kind to you, but despite the times we have failed you, you sit here to support us as we leave behind this chapter of our lives. It is because of your love and guidance that each one of us is the person we are today.

Finally, I believe as a member of the class of 2009 that we should thank our classmates for the love and support that have brought us here today. I know throughout

the many years we have had our tough times, from fist fights at Mohican Outdoor School in our Elementary years, to Homecoming dramas in High School. But despite all of the times we have wronged each other, in the end we have still been forgiving of those wrongs and we have continued to support one another. As we go to close this chapter of our lives I would like to thank all of you for making this chapter of my life such an interesting and wonderful one. Class of 2009, I wish you all success and happiness as you open up and write in the next chapter of your life.