Through Adversity, We Achieved

Good evening faculty, family, friends, and fellow graduates. As some of you may know, I always joked that I was going to fail a class so I wouldn’t have to speak at graduation, but here I am.

When I think back on the past 4 years, I think of so many amazing memories, like our class trip to the Ranger and Arby’s and winning 2 district 6 championships in basketball. I will miss walking down the halls and worrying that a crow got stuck in the school, only to turn around and see DyIan and Gavin and realizing that there is in fact not a bird in the school. I could go on and on about all the great memories that I have experienced with my classmates over the years, but I think it is also important to acknowledge all of the hardships we have gone through in order to reach this point and to realize that it is okay to not be okay at times.

Highschool in general is a very stressful time. All the adults in your life are telling you that you must work hard and get good grades in order to get into a good college and succeed in life. While adults are pressuring you, you have no idea what your future holds because you can hardly decide what you want to wear to school the next day, let alone what you want to do with the rest of your life. On top of that, you are trying to balance sports, clubs, a job, and a social life. Almost everyone in this room can relate to this because they have gone through high school and experienced this.

However, not many people can say that they were in high school during a global pandemic, where they had to switch from online school, to hybrid, to in-person school with masks. We never knew when we left that day if we would be back in school the next day with all of our friends, or instead sitting in front of a computer screen for 7 hours trying to stay awake and pay attention. I think I can speak for everyone when I say that this was one of the hardest things I have experienced in my life.

I vividly remember celebrating on March 13th that I had 2 extra weeks off of school, but soon feeling heartbroken when I found out that we would be out for a lot longer than 2 weeks, and I would miss out on making memories with my classmates and miss a whole season of the sport I love. While this time of my life was very difficult, I also don’t think I would go back and change it if I could. I think that the difficulties we have gone through together as a class have made us so much closer because even though we may all have our differences, we all experienced something extremely difficult, and we made it through by leaning on each other for support. I firmly believe we will be more successful in the adventures we soon begin after we leave tonight because of what we have gone through as a class.

Before wrapping up, I would just like to say THANK YOU. Thank you to my classmates, for making school more enjoyable and for always helping me through difficult times. I wouldn’t want to have spent the past 14 years with anyone else. I know that if I ever need anything from any of you, I can reach out, no matter how many years later, and I hope you all feel the same way towards me. Thank you to my teachers for helping me with literally anything, and for always being there when I had a question or was struggling with something. Thank you to my coaches for pushing me in practice every day, and for not only making me a better athlete, but also a better person. Finally, thank you to my family for supporting me in everything I do and always being there to cheer me on. It definitely won’t be the same next year walking around campus and not seeing half of my family while walking from class to class. Thank you, because without all of you, I would not be standing on this stage today.

Class of 2022, I will forever bleed green.