

"Challenge to the Juniors"

Given by

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Juniors, in 365 days, (give or take a few), you will be putting on these stunning black robes, filing into this gym, and sitting in those seats. Take a look at my classmates right now. They are all really excited, sad or terrified. Today is our day to change and move on, and sooner than you can imagine, this will be you. But it is not that final day that I want you to think about right now, it is the 364 that are leading up to it.

In those 364 days, you have a unique opportunity. You have the chance to experience your senior year. Trust me; this year is going to mean more than you think.

Right now, most of you are probably pushing for a position at the start line and willing time to go faster so that you can graduate and get out of here, but by the time you get to where I am right now, you are going to wish that you could slow down and have one more football game, one more show, one more prom. You are going to wish that you had paid attention.

So, that is my challenge to you class of 2012. Pay attention. When senioritis is slowing sinking in, suck it up and go to class. When your last game, meet or match shows up, look around you and realize that you may never play this game or run this race again and take in the feeling that your team, your night, your event gives you. When you step out on stage for your final performance, make it a good one because then you will never regret it and you will want to remember it for the rest of your life, instead of blocking it out as a bad experience.

Realize, as you go to class everyday that high school isn't actually that bad and that you would rather be here with your friends than at a stressful, constant job. Pick up on that fact that your teachers don't really hate you and they don't try to be mean by piling on homework, they simply want you to try, and try, you should, because colleges like that and you all deserve a college education.

I know that you have heard all of this before, and you will certainly hear it again, but I hope you are listening. Pay attention! Pay attention to deadlines! Do not do what I did and wait until December 31st to finish your Common App, which happens to be due the next day, and certainly do not wait until 11:50 pm on April 30th to make your final college decision which is expected from you by May 1st. If you do that, you will be more stressed than I care to remember.

Keep in mind that you are only 17 or 18 and you are allowed to have fun, and DO it. But also remember that you are 17 and 18, not 12, and act like it.

The point is juniors, that this is your final year to live at home with someone else to do your laundry and to call you out of school when you are late for first period. Listen to your teachers, your parents, and your coaches, because occasionally, they know what they're talking about.

Go into this year with courage and ambition. Embrace this year and remember it, class of 2012, because the building, the classes, and the work are not the things that you will want to take with you, you will want the people, the experience and the details. So pay attention to them, I know you will be glad you did.