

EXPRESS_Drake Marketing and Comm_1 | COMMECEMENT_Law Student Graduation Speech

Good afternoon. I did not want to give this speech today. In the midst of a global pandemic, the last thing I want to be doing is celebrating. We should have all been walking across the stage today, being handed diplomas and looking forward to bright futures. Instead, we have watched our friends, family, and colleagues lose their jobs, their health, and even their lives.

Our generation grew up watching the twin towers fall on television, we watched our parents suffer through a recession, and we lived through history today during this global crisis. And through it all, we have been resilient. We have been called "snowflakes," "sensitive," and worst of all, "millennials" by prior generations, yet we graduate today having lived through the last 10 years, and we have made it to the other side.

I did not want to give this speech today. When I imagined our graduation, I thought of telling witty puns and jokes. I wanted us all to laugh, thinking about how terrified we were of being cold called by [? Lady ?] [? DeRay. ?] I wanted us to be surrounded by our friends and our family. I want of us to commemorate the three years we just went through, deteriorating our mental health and bank accounts. I wanted to start with, "may it please the court," and hear the laughter of my classmates.

I want to tell the story of Professor Allan Vestal in our Contracts class when he reprimanded a student for not having the proper reaction to buying a boat. "What would you do if you bought a boat," he asked the student. "I would take it to the lake," the student replied. , However this was not the answer that the professor was looking for.

"No," he said. You would say, "wahoo, wahoo, I bought a boat." That is the speech that I wanted to give. I did not want to give this speech today. Yet, here I am, in a conference room, alone, giving this speech in an empty hallway because what we have done today, what we have finished over the last three years, what we have and will overcome must not be forgotten.

Our generation knows no bounds. We have shown strength, and resiliency, and compassion to the hardships that we have faced. This last year, the legal community lost one of the greatest jurists in the state of Iowa. Chief Justice Mark Cady was an advocate for ensuring justice for those who may have fallen through the cracks of our system. Chief Justice Cady was the epitome of what an attorney should model themselves after, a good person.

We have entered a field that's backbone relies upon justice. And as the workers at Tyson suffer

disproportional rates to COVID-19, this is the era we enter our careers.

I did not want to give this speech today because when I was asked, I had no words that I wanted to share with you all. But in the midst of this chaos, one coherent thought replays in my mind-- we are resilient. Congratulations to the class of 2020.