The 2013 Valedictory—Mackenzie McQueeney

Success

To laugh often and love much,
To win the respect of intelligent persons
And the affection of children;
To earn the approbation of honest critics
And to endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty;
To find the best in others;
To give one’s self;
To leave the world a little better,
Whether by a healthy child,
A garden patch
Or a redeemed social condition;
To have played and laughed with enthusiasm
And sung with exultation;
To know that even one life has breathed easier
Because you have lived-
That is to have succeeded.

To laugh often and love much, to win the respect of intelligent persons and the affection of children—Well, to start, some people who have won the affection of children are the lunch ladies, who have made my time at Duanesburg great with Italian dunkers and muffin Tuesday. I don’t think I could have made it through some of those Tuesdays without my chocolate chip muffin, so I am very grateful for that! As for “laughing often and loving much,” Well, that is my class, to
a T. I can’t believe we’re finally graduating. From our 5th grade cruise and picnic with the ceremonious cutting of rat tails, to our trip to Salem when Mark harassed the performers of the witch trials, and just recently on our senior trip where the entire mini golf place was probably afraid for their lives the way Colin was screaming, it’s been a lot of great memories. Luckily, Sean made it back with two feet. I’m going to miss the class of 2013, especially with some of my closest friends going to Washington and enlisting in the Marines, but I hope you’ll all think of me on fuzzy-sock Friday or whenever you see Spongebob on TV! Luckily, Lydia and I will be going to the same college, surprise surprise, so I won’t be missing her too much.

Now, **to appreciate beauty and find the best in others**- this can apply to the town of Duanesburg. While it is small and there isn’t much to do a lot of the time, we have found the best in it. I know I wouldn’t be who I am today without this tight-knit community, and it has encouraged me to choose a small college because I love the environment so much. The community center is a place where half of the kids in Duanesburg have been employed at one point or another, and if you go to Stewart’s or Hannaford, you see at least ten people you know while shopping. I’m sure Albany College of Pharmacy won’t have as much character as good old Duanesburg, but it will have to do. What
makes Duanesburg so great is all the people in it, who give meaning to the phrase “to give one’s self to leave the world a little better.” The teachers give all that they have to help us, in hopes that we’ll go on to leave the world a little better. Mrs. Wilkes was always there in the library when I needed help with my work, or just needed some snacks, because she always had a good stash in her office. Ms. A has put so much into our class just by putting up with us when we don’t get pictures or money or anything else in on time. And of course, Ms Meyer took the class of 2013 under her wing as our advisor when we had no money or motivation to get any. We were eleven then, and she has been there through it all. Ms. Meyer and Mrs. Rynish made sure we had a great senior year. Thank you to all of the teachers who have helped us through geometry, wrote hall passes to places we weren’t coming from, taught us ALL the words in Spanish, not just the ones in the book, and for our minute of silence before class. And thank you to the coaches who helped us on the field, court, or track, especially for the 4x4 in 4 minutes. You have all helped us succeed, because we definitely couldn’t have done it without you.

To have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation- This measure of success is an important one to me. I take it as making the most of every day, and having a great time with
whatever you’re doing. It sounds cliché, but I really do try to seize the day. I have worked hard in school, to achieve the most I can, but I didn’t focus only on work, I have had a lot of fun in high school, making a lot of great memories. Having fun in life is just as important as working hard, as long as there’s a balance between the two. You don’t want to be like Mr. Krabs, who only cares about money, but you don’t want to be like Patrick, who is carefree and doesn’t have any goals in life. I try to live like Spongebob, who is just a frycook, but he puts 100% into making krabby patties and working hard while also loving and enjoying every day.

And, finally, to the people who put meaning to “to know that even one life has breathed easier, because you have lived- that is to have succeeded”. On behalf of the class of 2013, thank you to all the moms, dads, and grandparents who have helped us throughout high school. Thank you to my family, who has been the most important in my life. Although I pick on my mom for being obsessed with me, my life has definitely breathed easier because she has lived. She has given me everything, and then some, to make sure I have the best life I could possibly have. She has made me the person I am today, and I could never thank her enough for everything she’s done for me. Her optimism in every situation she goes through is an inspiration to me. I
just hope that one day I can be as great a mom as she is. I also wouldn’t be who I am today without my dad and step mom, who are always there when I need them. Thank you for the support with every decision I’ve made in life, and always believing I can do great things. Thank you to my brother and sister, who give me a purpose as the oldest sibling and for not driving me tooo crazy as we’ve grown up. And thank you to Jill and Julius, my second parents who have taken me in as one of their own. I appreciate everything you’ve done for me!

Class of 2013, we have succeeded! Thank you to everyone who has helped us throughout the years. With all your success in helping us, we will go on to find success in life.