

## Baron Imparts Wisdom on Not Holding Prolonged Grudges

By MARTIN BARON (cont.)  
Berkeley Alumnus, Class of 1972

So, fellow journalists and I have a job to do. And with our soul and with a spine we are going to do it.

There is another thing I've learned in the 45 years since I left this school. One person really can make a difference. You don't have to change the course of history, or anything like that. But you can change someone else's life for the better. And if you can, you should.

As a matter of fact, I doubt I'd be here today if it weren't for one person. This happens to be her final Berkeley commencement. She'll be retiring. Betsy Astolfi is director of alumni relations. She has worked at Berkeley for 13 years, over two intervals.

In 2004, when I was in Boston, I got a call from Betsy. She said Berkeley wanted to give me the alumni achievement award. And I said, "That's very nice. But I haven't had anything to do with Berkeley since I graduated. Because I left with a ton of grudges." I said, "Look, you might want to give the award to someone else, someone who's given the school some money." And then Betsy said, "Ah, don't worry about it. I hear that all the time. Come on down."

And, with that, Betsy totally disarmed me – and charmed me. And I did come down. And Betsy reconnected me with the school, where I've since stayed involved in various ways. They even got money out of me! And they roped me in to two commencement speeches! (Guys, time to loosen your grip.) Betsy and Joe Seivold have only had to pay a small price: listening to me replay my age-old grievances every time we see each other (including, of course, again today).



Isabella Schiact

**BACK AT BERKELEY:** Baron expresses his deep gratitude to Betsy Astolfi, Berkeley's director of alumni relations, who was key in his reinvolvement with the school's community after a grudge that lasted "three whole decades."

So, two lessons here.

First, it's normal to hold a grudge. But don't do as I did and hold on to a grudge for three whole decades. The second lesson is what I said before: One person really can make a difference. Betsy did with me, as she has with many others.

Betsy, please stand. Please give her a round of applause.

So, let me wrap up with a wish for all the graduates. I hope that every one of you gets to be portrayed in a movie by someone who is taller, has great abs and is a lot better looking. You may not want to count on that, however. What you can count on over the decades ahead are some amazing and pleasant surprises – and also some real challenges that will test your character. Revel in the good surprises. Be prepared for the challenges.

Know who you are. Know your values. Live up to them.

And live not just for yourself. Live for others, too.

I said you will need a soul. I said you will need a spine. You will also need the essential qual-

ity of humanity.

Thank you, congratulations again, and good luck to you all.



Nina Pastore

**A QUICK SNACK:** Shaila Ghanekar '17 and Elizabeth Corn '17 grab a bite to eat with their kindergarten buddy at the Senior-kindergarten picnic.



Nina Pastore

**ONE LAST CONVO:** Van Pittman '17 and Mary Stephen Straske '17 share hugs while in line with their kindergarten buddies. Both have attended Berkeley for all four years of high school.



Nina Pastore

**SWIMMERS SIGN SHIRTS:** Swimmers Sydney Corey '17, Arielle Bader '17 and Kerry Horan '17 (from left) sign mementos of their high school career: their Friday shirts.



# Commencement 2017

## Luo Encourages Students to Paint their Lives with Memories

By JENNIFER LUO  
Class Poet

### Artists

We began our journey here  
As blank canvases.  
Empty expanses of vacant white,  
Pale hills stretching with no end,  
A wasteland of snow swelling  
Into a distance our eyes cannot comprehend.

In the dubious stillness we stood,  
Uncertain specks amid vast unmarked mountains of ice.

Lost in unmoving rock and frozen vales,  
Lost in the overwhelming task of making emptiness our own,  
We stood alone,  
Perched on the quivering border between  
Nothing and everything,  
Poised on the precipice of possibility.

Yet at the fringes of the canvas,  
Rays of yellow peek at the edge of white.  
Like the sun softens the grey of a sky,  
Warmth fills the cold whiteness.

Warmth that takes the form of  
Smiles in unexpected friends,  
Glances embracing in halls,  
A hand extended by a teacher,  
Laughter ringing across the mound.

Pleasant buttercup melts across the canvas,  
Toppling the white-peaked mountains we so often build,  
Crumbling barriers between us into dust.

A vibrant splotch of crimson splatters across gold,  
Leaving a bright trail of unrepentant

red in its wake.  
Along with the red comes  
The same brilliant jolt of electricity you felt when you  
Discovered a future within a petri dish,  
Uncovered meaning buried between lines in Hemingway,  
Stepped across the finish line of a track meet.  
A relentless spark of wild red  
Blazes through emptiness,

A brooding purple shadow clouded with the  
Heaviness of responsibility,  
Threat of the future,  
Imminent adulthood,  
And the single  
Awful  
Certainty  
Of a goodbye.  
  
Away from the impending unknown,

crimson.  
Our own colors are intertwined with each other's,  
Inseparable lives bonded by experience,  
Tinged with blue and white  
In the days we sang the Alma Mater.

We look back and find ourselves  
In a kaleidoscope of colors.

And ahead in the barren expanse  
Lie undiscovered experiences to be had  
And memories to be made.  
Dark violet skies clear to reveal a blank slate,  
As we are handed a new canvas,  
A clean start,  
A beginning.

And this time,  
The emptiness is no longer cold,  
We are no longer alone.

With the smooth wooden handle of a paintbrush  
Cradled in our hands,  
Recollections stained by the colors we have learned,  
We seize the memories we have made,  
Taking our destinies into our own hands,  
Turning uncertainty into a future.  
With bold strokes  
On an empty canvas,  
We are architects of lines,  
Creators of colors,  
Makers of memories.

We are artists.



Isabella Schliker

**POETRY AT THE CEREMONY:** The poet of the Class of 2017, Jennifer Luo '17, addresses family, friends, and graduates at the Commencement ceremony.

Staining the canvas with irrevocable passion.  
As if to say,  
"Try and stop me."

Yet the sky of warm yellow and bold red  
Is soon overcast with dark violet.  
Deep plum seeps into the background,

We turn back to the empty expanse,  
Aching for solace amid chaos.  
Hands reaching back into nothing,  
We long for white,  
Craving familiar blank canvas —  
Only to find that it is no longer blank.

Behind us lie undeniable memories  
In comforting swatches of yellow  
And passionate splashes of vibrant

**LIVE IN THE MOMENT:** Seniors take Luo's advice, enjoying the moment and creating memories.



Nina Pastore

**HE HAS HER BACK:** Jesse Potts '17 signs Anjali Shah's '17 friday uniform shirt during the annual Shirt Signing Day.



Nina Pastore

**PIC WITH THE HEADMASTER:** Headmaster Joseph Seivold and Maria Rios '17 reflect on the last four years on the last day of Senior classes.



Nina Pastore

**SAY CHEESE:** Caitlyn Distasio '17 and Theo Vasiloudes '17 make funny faces with their kindergarten buddy.



Nina Pastore



## Pittman Introduces the Evening with a Thoughtful Reflection

By VAN PITTMAN  
Student Forum President

Teachers, friends, family, and of course parents, welcome. Whooping and hollering is generally frowned upon here at Berkeley, as it is considered tacky, so maybe my 2017 classmates would consider giving a nice golf clap to show your enthusiasm to our invited guests? As you can tell we are all beyond excited to be here and, moreover, we are excited that you are here with us to celebrate this amazing day, our commencement. We have come to our first proverbial fork in the road, and so, following the advice of the great Yogi Berra, we will take it!

But before we do, let's reflect a bit. We owe a debt of thanks. First, to our teachers, who are experiencing a role reversal today as we sit in front of you bursting with knowledge, only this time we're awake! In all sincerity however, we want to thank you for sharing your knowledge and for instilling in us a passion to learn and for inspiring us to become the best



Isabella Schiacter

### GIVING THANKS: Pittman thanks those who have supported the Class of 2017 in life so far.

students and, ultimately, people we can be. Thank you for your dedication to your subject and craft. Classmates, please join me in showing your appreciation, quietly and with civility.

Another thank you goes to our friends and family for supporting us and being

present for the ups and the downs that have faced us over the years and have sculpted us into the strong young men and women we are today.

And parents, wherever you are, give us a nice little refined, polite, genteel wave. Parents you are perhaps the only

ones more thrilled than we are about this life changing day. Yes, your little baby is about to walk across the stage and move on to another new and exciting phase in their life; and yes, you get to convert our rooms into home gyms, offices, and walk-in storage units. Frankly, I speak for all of us in saying that we are a little disturbed by the idea of our mothers and father pumping iron in our past sanctuaries of personal space but it's your house, so have at it.

We thank you for being thrilled for us and for guiding us toward our goals and steering us away from life's pitfalls. Unfortunately, just as we are reaching the age when we finally understand just how unending your love for us is, we are moving out and on to the next phase in our life, but your love is portable. And so we will keep it with us wherever we go.

Once again, welcome everyone to Berkeley and welcome to the class of 2017's commencement.

## Kim Warns Students to be Conscious of the Berkeley Bubble



Isabella Schiacter

### SHOOT FOR THE MOON: Kim advises the Class of 2017 to "reach [their] full potential" and to "seek the truth."

By KEVIN KIM  
Senior Class President

Good afternoon everyone. Thank you Mr. Seivold, faculty, staff and parents for being with us today and through our journey here at Berkeley.

Class of 2017, today we celebrate you. I am incredibly humbled that you would find me sufficient to speak on your behalf for reasons that may not be so apparent now, but hopefully when I'm finished, will clearly show the profound effect you all have had on me.

There is an endearing term that is well known within the Berkeley community, and whether you recognize it or not, we are all affected by this phenomenon. I am talking about the Berkeley Bubble.

Believe it or not, this bubble began to form in Pre-k or kindergarten for many of you. You bravely walked through all-school convo as a kindergartener with your senior buddy, competed valiantly in Blue and White day, Cope and Mitre, Battle of the Bucs and the all-important Headmaster's Challenge. You participated in Farmer's day, class trips, retreats and so, so much more.

And through all of these amazing bonding experiences, the bubble ex-

panded and you ran the risk of becoming exclusive. There's no doubt that there is something special about growing up with your best friends since a young age in a protected environment, but there's also the chance that you would be dismissive of students who joined at a later time. But when I first stepped onto this campus my sophomore year, I felt nothing of the sort. The warmth and affection I felt from you guys was mind blowing and I know that many others sitting amongst you would say the same. You didn't care that I was many years late to the party, and my being your class president is proof of that: that no matter your entrance year into the Berkeley community, you are treated as an irreplaceable family member.

I believe that this environment of inclusivity is thanks to the bubble. I can strongly and unapologetically proclaim that we are blessed to be here and that our privilege unequivocally works in our favor every day. However, I think we would also do ourselves harm if we didn't recognize the true effects that living in such an environment has. I urge each and every one of you to prepare yourselves so we may not be disillusioned during this immense transition. Gone are the days when

you can leave your Mac unattended on a desk and expect to still see it there the next day and remember, an 85 is no longer an A. We now step into a world that is dangerous, yet wonderful and beautiful in its infinite possibilities.

As we continue our pursuit for intellectual greatness, social justice and holistic self-improvement, there are many things to keep in mind. Obviously, I don't have the authority to speak on such matters due to my own lack of experience in the world; so, I've gathered every bit of knowledge I could from my parents, teachers, peers, mentors, pastors, and more. From these interactions, I have crafted three principles that I challenge you to think about, and use to expand yourself outside of your own capabilities, or bubble, and take these words to heart as they have been carefully crafted through years of experience, with their summit highs and abysmal lows.

Number 1: Reach your full potential. So many times, our limits come from our own cognition of what we can or cannot do, not from external obstacles. Disregard what your friends or peers might think about you. The people around you may ridicule and shame you for your beliefs and ambitions, but you must forge on for what you care about. As we move into college, an entire world of academia will be opened up to us as well as a world of extracurricular activities. Try your hand at poetry, cooking, dancing, sports outside of the high school staples or anything that remotely piques your interest because any experience can be a worthwhile one if you make it so.

Number 2: Don't be complacent. In an age where we are often thought of as an entitled generation and where complacency is the cop out and apathy is cool, be different. It's up to us to prove that we are the ones who will shape the future. With the awe-inspiring scientific discoveries, civil rights advancements and technological feats the past generations left us, we should aim to break new barriers, build colonies in Mars, eliminate crashes through self-driving cars, cure cancer and finally live up to our founding fathers

promise of liberty and justice for all. C.S. Lewis said it best: Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither. It's up to you whether or not your name ends up in the end credits as a leading role or as just another extra.

Number 3: Seek the truth. Go beyond your Facebook or Twitter feeds and the talk shows and look for the truth. Don't just take things at face value. Check your sources and don't discard a fact just because it doesn't align with your preconceptions. But also be bold enough to doubt your own doubts. In an age of skepticism, I challenge you to get uncomfortable with your beliefs and disbeliefs. Seek out the other side of the argument and others who will continually press you on all sides, in order for your true self to take shape.

These things are but a fraction of the advice I have been given on how to live a meaningful and fulfilling life. As our minds expand with experience, so too do our bubbles of inclusivity and understanding, as our protected minds and hearts give way to true fulfillment. While I continue to expand myself beyond any false sense of security afforded by my bubble, I find encouragement in knowing that I am not alone and that I have the strength of an entire class behind me, and I hope that you all feel the same.

So, Class of 2017, now it's your turn. I have concluded that these three ideas will carry me into the future, and I hope that they help you as well. However, my greater wish is for all of you to do your own soul searching and to reach your own conclusions on how to be the best version of yourself that you can possibly be, to go beyond your capabilities, and truly make a positive difference in the world. Commencement is not the end of the road but the beginning and while we don't need to necessarily pop the Berkeley bubble, we can make sure it stays elastic and we stay inclusive. This is our family and I hope you're as excited as I am about the amazing things we're going to do in the world. One heartbeat. Thank you.



# Commence Class o

Sydney Grace Allen Butler University	Daniel Michael Doyle III Southern Methodist University	Jeffrey Marc Guttentag Washington University in St. Louis
Marcus Stephens Ayers, Jr. The University of Georgia	Amanda Marie Dumar Samford University	Kenneth Mitchell Harvey Florida State University
Arielle Michaela Bader The George Washington University	Pierce Reed Eckelman Florida Atlantic University	Elizabeth Marie Harwell University of Chicago
Kosmia Georgette Bassil Florida State University	Catherine Sykes Eckhard Sewanee: The University of the South	Avery Joseph Heyck University of Florida
Bradley Jimenez Batas University of Florida	Elizabeth Carson Eckhard University of Pennsylvania	Michael McElroy Hill Pomona College
Mary Kate Brittain University of South Florida, St. Petersburg	Camelia ElKasri Baylor University	Andrew Max Hoffman Brandeis University
Dylan Brown The Hotchkiss School	Tristan Michael Louis Facenda-Kerswill Vanderbilt University	Robert Bryce Hoover Florida State University
Ethan Blake Calverley Southern Methodist University	Andrés Javier Fernández Noriega Boston College	Kerry Maeve Horan Oberlin College of Arts and Sciences
Danielle Marie Carolan The University of Georgia	Olivia Cristina Ferrone Undetermined	Julia Yuriko Hossain Yale University
Alexander Carr Chapman University	Kaleeyl Q. Findlay Palm Beach Atlantic University	Mya Emily Hurwitz Rollins College
Jessica Marie Cascio Vanderbilt University	Anna Wren Fleming Florida State University	Madeline May-Soo Ide Florida State University
Robert Scott Cecil Northwestern University	Sofia Grace Florin The University of Arizona	Lucie Lenka Imholz University of Miami
Connor Spellman Cedro Southern Methodist University	Gillian Italene Forbriger Tulane University	Austin Joseph Jacobs University of Colorado at Boulder
Catalina Edith Cepero University of Miami	Ethan Adler Franzblau Brown University	Reghan Carrington Judge Southern Methodist University
Meghan Elizabeth Clare Chapman University	Sara Jane Gardner The University of Arizona	Anjali Ketan Kapadia Georgetown University
Luke Bellamy Corey University of Virginia	David Jacob Gasser University of Southern California	Sophia Dimitrios Karides The University of Alabama
Sydney Ann Corey Vanderbilt University	Shaila D. Ghanekar Barnard College	Callie Karpman Indiana University at Bloomington
Elizabeth Alyn Corn Tufts University	Maximilian Asher Goldenberg Colgate University	Timothy Keeley Brown University
Naja M. Daniels Howard University	Anna Louise Gorsky Georgetown University	Ahmed H. Khan Case Western Reserve University
Caitlyn Alexandra Distasio DePaul University	Zoë Cosette Gries University of Southern California	Kevin M.T.Y. Kim Emory University
Hayley Duvall Divers Dartmouth College	Madeline Lily Grills Tulane University	Andrew Thomas Koch University of Virginia



# of 2017

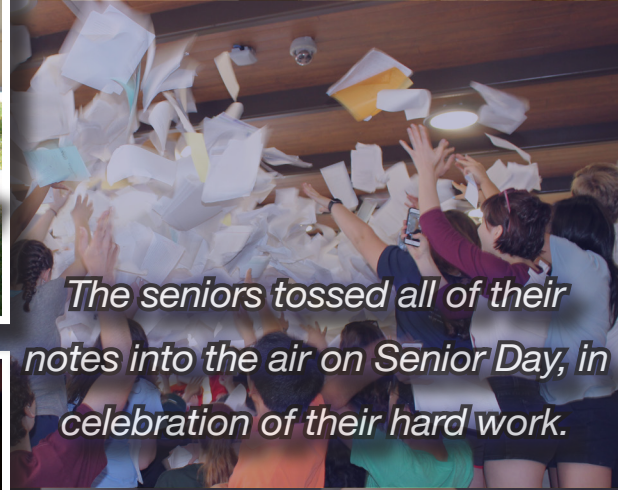
Davis Jacob Koetter Portland State University	Gregory Lamont Moore II Stetson University	Morgan Jane Risi DePauw University
Nikitas Michael Nicholas Koulianos University of South Florida, Tampa	Maxwell Soren Mortonson University of Virginia	Sarah Nicole Roth Vassar College
Noah Isaiah Kraus University of Miami	Margaret Jane Murphy University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Alexa Rose Rudolph Tufts University
James Oliver Langley Rhode Island School of Design	Kaitlin Sandra Murray University of Virginia	Jacob Edward Safee Wake Forest University
Elaina Laxer Furman University	Spencer David Myers University of Notre Dame	Anjali R. Shah Emory University
Samantha Sungme Lee University of Chicago	Alec Emerson Navori Boston College	Spencer Anthony Sherman University of Virginia
Maxwell Carter Lerner Auburn University	Sean Quan Nguyen The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Max Siegman Colby College
Ryan Jun-Man Li Georgia Institute of Technology	Jacob Thomas Nicker Florida State University	Rohan Jit Singh University of California, Berkeley
Jennifer Luo Stanford University	Nicholas Pierce Novello Northeastern University	Reagan Michelle Smith Auburn University
Marissa Joyce Maddalon University of Miami	Bridget Ann O'Carroll Loyola University Maryland	Jake Ryan Sokol Brown University
Matthew Scott Maddalon University of Florida	Leonel Ochoa University of California, Berkeley	Gordon William Stetson Stetson University
Rowan Majumdar Yale University	Richard Jay Oehler University of South Florida, Tampa	Nathaniel Stovern University of Michigan
Freyda Llyn Mannering University of Calgary	Landon Myles Isaiah Padgett Florida Gulf Coast University	Mary Stephen Straske Washington and Lee University
Alesandro Lee Maxwell United States Air Force Academy	Tej Mehul Patel University of Florida	Dawn Patrice Taylor University of South Florida, Tampa
Brandon Tyler Maxwell Chapman University	Hopeneshea Jordan Perallon Elon University	Sally Frances Thompson New York University
Zachary Ryan Mayes Florida State University	Daryl James Oldbury Pickerell University of West Florida	Charlie Maxwell Tobin Florida State University
Kyra Dawn McDonald Duke University	A. Van Pittman, Jr. Southern Methodist University	Samantha Marla Tun Columbia University
Benjamin Miller Florida State University	Jesse Diego Potts Cornell University	Maureen Adaku Ubani Vanderbilt University
Carmen Danielle Mills Florida State University	Mira Rajani Emory University	Theodoros Vasiloudes University of Southern California
Ryan Edmund Montgomery University of Chicago	Otto Winston Rapp American University	Ivan von Greiff Technische Universität München
Isabella Hana Monticciolo Villanova University	Maria Clara Rios Cacua The George Washington University	Rachel Elana Weiss The University of Georgia
		Austin Knight Whitaker University of Florida



# The Senior Journey



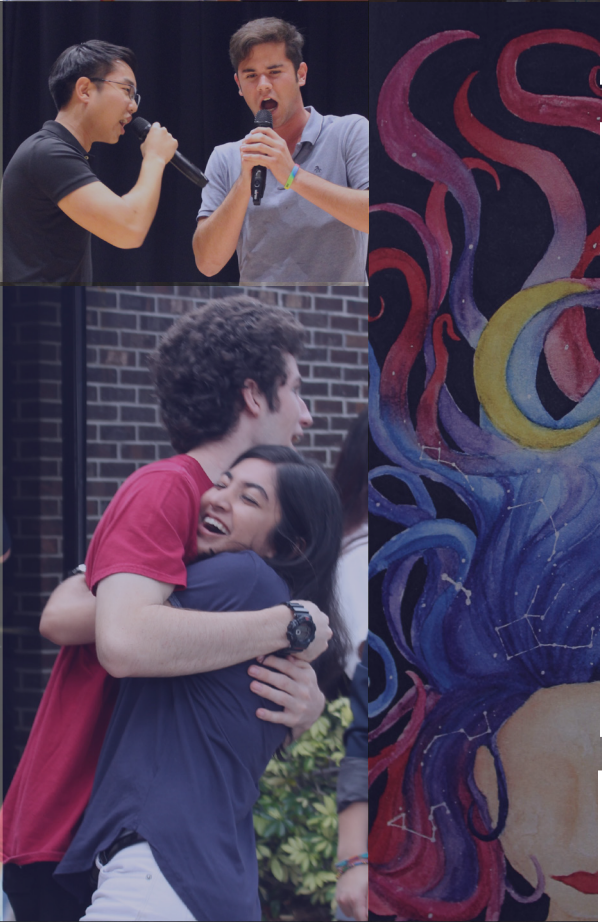
Kindergarteners enjoy a picnic with their senior buddies.



The seniors tossed all of their notes into the air on Senior Day, in celebration of their hard work.



The Baccalaureate service and dinner honor the senior class.



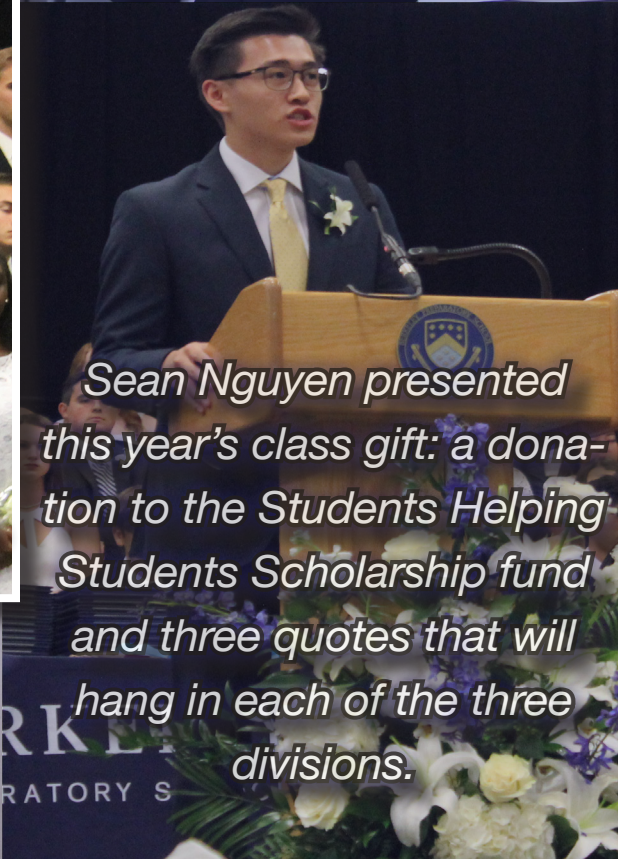
Seniors sport their college t-shirts at the annual clap-out.



Shaila Ghanekar and Anjali Shah performed "That's Life" at this year's ceremony.



The high school journey comes to a close at the commencement ceremony.



Sean Nguyen presented this year's class gift: a donation to the Students Helping Students Scholarship fund and three quotes that will hang in each of the three divisions.