

Student Gift Speech

By Kevin Patel '21

Our class has had a ... unique Berkeley experience to say the least. After all, how many other classes can proudly say that they brought a lobster to a hockey game? With our heads held high, we weathered through a pandemic and online classes, through masks and social distancing, and we came out the other side better for it. Our class has bonded over the past four years more than I could have ever anticipated. Now that we are finally at the end of our Berkeley experience, however unconventional it was, I can look back on it and confidently say that this school has given me some of the best memories and forged some of the strongest relationships I will ever make.

When I first stepped onto Berkeley campus those four long years ago, I was intimidated. Intimidated by the sixteen day rotation schedule, intimidated by getting lost on my way to history class, and intimidated by the idea of starting over with new faces and no friends. But I learned something within that first week at Berkeley that stayed with me all the way through the next four years. I learned that what makes Berkeley so special is the community that comes with it. A community built on shared values and morals, populated by passionate teachers, hard working staff, and talented students, generous with its canned-food drives and wrap-ins, and accepting to new kids like me. Whether it be in the classroom, on the field, in the

halls, or on a stage, Berkeley's community is felt within every facet of its campus, and as this school's graduating class we have a duty to represent and exemplify our own parts of that community as we move on.

Although this may be the end of our journey as Berkeley students, it won't be the end of our legacy at the school. With our class's gift of twelve and a half thousand dollars to the Endowed Alumni Scholarship Fund, we will help provide scholarships to incoming Berkeley students with demonstrated financial need so that they too might enjoy the shared Berkeley experience and join this community. As we carry on into college, this donation will ensure that future students will be able to step in and become the new faces of Berkeley.