

Class Oration Speech - *Daisja Green*

June 4, 2023, has always had a nice ring to it, as it is the day that your daughters, sons, students and friends graduate. It's the day that marks a new beginning for the class of 2023 as we embark on our next journeys.

While we have made it to this stage because of our own hard work with the occasional help of spark notes, none of this would have been possible if it were not for every one of YOU.

So, on behalf of my class, I want to thank Headmaster Seivold, and the amazing Berkeley faculty and staff for their support and encouragement. But most importantly, I want to thank all the parents who have motivated and supported us to bring us to this moment.

My mother is one of these supporters and I'd like to believe I have more sass than her, but her sass surpasses mine when she offers her favorite response when I am confused:

"What did you say, Mom, I couldn't hear you?"

"MHM because you are on your phone too much."

Growing up, this line lived in my head rent-free. To Gen X, my mother's generation, we are just on our phones too much. But to Gen Z, the younger generation—with a heavy emphasis on younger—our phones have allowed us to capture the most beautiful moments and cherish them forever. These photos challenge, inspire and bring people together.

While social media has its flaws, one thing it does have are platforms that allow us to put a time stamp on our most precious memories. In fact, as I write this speech, my Snapchat shows me a memory from three years ago today. This memory from April 21, 2020, shows my classmates and I on Zoom trying to figure out what “SOH-CAH-TOA” meant so we could pass Geometry.

Fast forward to August 25th. We returned in person with masks for our first day of sophomore year. Other memories I can look back on are traveling to Tallahassee for a state football game, having prom in an aquarium, college kick-off in the Lykes Center with our final Snapchat memory here on June 4th, 2023 as we prepare to graduate.

These memories will never be forgotten in the midst of the “new” our lives are about to bring. Instead, our memories from Berkeley will be joined with new memories from all over the globe. And as we embark on our new journeys, it is important that we remember our alma mater’s vision statement: “Berkeley puts people in the world who make a positive difference,” because we should continue to do so with grace, pride and power.

We should take this time to grow: explore new hobbies and perfect old ones. Take that internship and secure your dream job. Learn about yourselves and the world around you. And finally, take risks and be the changemaker that Berkeley has always encouraged you to be. It is my hope that every one of my classmates continue to capture moments and share them with the world because we are going to be the generation that shapes it.

To fulfill my hope for the class of 2023, I would like to make a new memory to capture the joy of this day by taking a photo of all of our family, friends and supporters. So, Mom, please close your eyes and everybody else smile so this memory can forever be saved. On three, two, one.

