

Huntington High School's 151st Commencement

Natalie Acton's Introduction of Salutatorian Justin LoScalzo

Tim McGraw said it best when he said “We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take a little of each other everywhere.” I know that this applies to my relationship with Justin LoScalzo because a part of him will always be with me. Through all of the years of our friendship, he has taught me so much and I am extremely grateful. Justin is an amazing person and I am fortunate to call him my best friend.

Thirteen years ago, I met Justin. He was small, kind, and of course, brilliant. Our mothers somehow knew that we were meant to be friends. I remember swimming at his house and I loved when he came over my house to play, but only after I had finished all of my work. Even back then, Justin was an exceptional person and friend.

When Justin and I reconnected in Finley, I learned that not much had changed about him. He was still the same driven, hard working and immensely intelligent person that I remembered. Justin excelled in all of his classes and got involved in as much as he could. He played soccer and baseball for Finley in addition to joining the marching band in eighth grade. I remember thinking “How could he handle so much and still remain at the top of the class?” Needless to say I was not the only person that was impressed. Justin was always a teacher's favorite student, which eventually contributed to his title of teacher's pet. Teachers could not help but love him because he worked hard and always knew what he was doing. He taught me

that hard work pays off and to get involved in as many things as I could handle.

Throughout high school, Justin has taught me so much more. As I reflect on all that we have been through, I cannot help but smile. Freshman year, I remember that he was competing with some of the upperclassmen in band, fighting for a top spot. Justin is an amazing trumpet player and as a freshman, he beat out many upperclassmen. He was section leader of the marching band his junior year and drum major this year. He has been first chair in jazz band, wind ensemble, pit orchestra and senior band. He was always smiling and really seemed to appreciate everything he was given. I learned never to doubt my own abilities, because I saw that anyone can achieve anything that they desire.

One of the most crucial lessons that Justin has taught me is the importance of patience. Justin would sit with me and explain math so that I could understand. I would easily become frustrated or distracted, but he always knew how to put me back on track. Every student that Justin has ever tutored, and it is many, will tell you that he is remarkable. He never gives up and has a way of explaining things that makes sense. I am so grateful to Justin because he has gotten me through math for the past two years. I knew that he was always willing to sit down with me before a big test and would devote himself to helping me understand. Even when I felt as if I was a lost cause, Justin would remind me of how far I have come and how I could accomplish anything that I put my mind to. I am astounded at the patience that Justin has and it truly is a gift.

Justin is one of the best friends that I have ever had. He knows me better than anyone and I know he is always there for me. I am always amazed at how, with one look at me, he knows exactly what is going on in my mind. He has helped me through so much that I cannot imagine not seeing him every day next year. I am extremely jealous of all the students at Colgate University who get to spend the next four years with Justin. He has been an extraordinary friend to me and I am always grateful to have him in my life. It is with great pride that I introduce this year's salutatorian, Justin LoScalzo.