

Huntington High School's 153rd Commencement

Class President Zachary Burden's Address

I would like to begin by thanking Dr. Leonardi, Mr. Cusack, Mr. Polansky and the Board of Education for all of your support. We could not have done this without you. To the teachers and parents, thank you for helping to guide us along our paths of growing up. Thank you to my other student government officers for being so amazing. A big thank you to Ms. Lombardi and Ms. Colica, for being the Class of 2014's advisors, throughout the past four years, helping make all of our class events happen and helping us to "dance" through our experience at the high school. Also, thank you to those who helped to make today's graduation possible! To the Class of 2014 sitting beside me: congratulations on making it to this point. I am so happy to have had this experience in Huntington with all of you.

As the President of the Class of 2014, it is now my duty to present Huntington High School with the senior class gift. The Rock has become a symbol of Huntington High School. For many, many years it's been a place where students congregate and show spirit. But, at nighttime it is a little dark around The Rock, so the Class of 2014 has decided to put two lamp posts around The Rock to help give light around such an important piece of Huntington. These lamp posts will also be inscribed with the names of Ray Vega, graduate of the Class of 2013 and Carmen Rivera-Gotay, a member of the Class of 2014, whose spirit is with us today and is graduating with us in all of our hearts. They will always be there to be a light in the dark, to remind us that even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise, and that there will always be a light at the end of the tunnel.

Huntington's Alma Mater, or at least the one listed on Wikipedia, speaks the words "Now that our tasks are done. We will remember the days we spent within thine halls, And even though we now must part, Loyal in every heart, O ye of Huntington, We will be true." Now some of you might be thinking "We have an Alma Mater?" and the truth is I didn't know that we had one either, but these words speak very true. As our last moments as students of Huntington High School come to an end, we must keep all of our memories of Huntington in our hearts as we leap into the next chapter of our lives.

From asking people to play on the playground in elementary school to asking people to prom in high school, our memories vary from person to person

throughout the years. We all had a journey leading up to the high school that was different at the 4 four different elementary schools, to Woodhull Intermediate and Huntington Intermediate (or as it is now known as Jack Abrams), eventually bringing us all together in Finley and then to the high school. Huntington has found a way to combine every kind of person and find the perfect mix. There really is no place like Huntington.

This grade has given me so many memories to remember forever. Such as homecomings, where we had our beautiful floats such as the freshman year Fruity Pebbles float, or better known as a worm in a box, to this year's inappropriate Eiffel Tower. Though we may have never gotten first place, we always had a good time making them and that's what really counts. Or how about our Play Fests that always were amazing. Even though sadly we were unable to put on our senior Play Fest, we knew it would have come out good. We also put on one of the best proms ever during our junior year and our prom last night, thrown by the juniors, measures up almost as high, so thank you to them. And most recently, the last day of school.

As I started to write this speech, I was thinking of how unified my grade is. I wanted my class to be all together one last time before graduation. I brought up the idea in the Class of 2014 Facebook group, to meet at the turf, where we are today, and watch the sunrise all together. The sun rose over Huntington High School and we watched together, to finish off our year as the Class of 2014. There have been so many games, performances, ceremonies, events, and more as well, where you can find the class of 2014 coming together to be one.

Movies show high school to be very cliquey and show everyone to be different and make high school seem so tough. It shows no one to have anything in common, but I have realized that that is not true at all. We have all experienced triumphs and failures, heartbreaks and love, and for all of the things that we don't have in common, there is the idea of family and Huntington pride that exists in all of us. As many would say "(Hashtag) #BleedBlue."

So to end my speech, I decided to quote a movie that shows ups and downs of high school and how people can really come together, "High School Musical". "Here and now, it's time for celebration. I finally figured out that all our dreams have no limitations and that's what it's all about. Everyone is special in their own way; we make each other strong; we're not the same; we're different in a good way; together is where we belong. We've arrived because we stuck together,

champions one and all. We're all in this together, and when we stand hand in hand, we can make our dreams come true."

We're all in this together Huntington. Once a Blue Devil, always a Blue Devil. Believe in yourselves, dream, try. Do good. Congratulations to the Class of 2014, and the best of luck on all of your futures, I know you will all do extraordinary things.