Huntington High School’s 154th Commencement

Charles Beers’ Introduction of Salutatorian Joseph Saginaw

When Mr. Caleca first came to tell me that Joe wanted me to introduce him as this year’s salutatorian, his words were “Keep it brief. Two to three minutes max.” I was almost immediately confused. *I’m introducing Joe Saginaw, right?* I thought to myself. The GO President, the Robotics team founder, the Young Leader, the pole vaulting champ, the National Merit Scholar, and the AP Scholar with Distinction? You’re kidding me. “Keep it brief?” It couldn’t be done.

Three minutes can barely scratch the surface of what Joe has managed to accomplish these past four years, and the lasting impact he has had on the Huntington community at large. Throughout this time, I’ve seen him in many roles: as a President who inspired us to make Huntington High School a better place, as a defendant who kept me sane during intense Mock Trials, and a classmate in some of the most challenging and sleep-depriving classes we’ve ever taken. But none of these are nearly as important as his role in my life, and the lives of everyone he encountered in Huntington’s hallways: a friend.

It seems that Joe was always there to help everyone throughout his high school career, through the good times and the bad. He was always modest about his talents, supportive both inside and out of school, and eager to make friends with anyone he came across.

So the true reason why Joe is being honored here today, something that I think we all know is going to be a trend for the coming years, is not just his
commitment to academics. Anyone can memorize facts and statistics, a point we talked about constantly over chicken-bacon slices at Rosa’s and float parties before successful Homecoming parades. It’s his willingness to go above and beyond what’s asked of him: to be successful in everything he does and include others in these incredible achievements.

I think my friendship with Joe makes this point perfectly clear. If he wasn’t who he is, I don’t know if we would have become friends. How could two people with such polar opposite interests, an engineer and a writer who had never met before freshman year, become so close in such a short time? It’s simply because he’s Joe. He brings out the best in all of us and in himself. He inspires others to reach their true potential. He will lead our graduating class’ charge into the real world, making a difference with his gifts and proving why the Class of 2015 is, and always will be, one of the greatest groups of Blue Devils this high school has ever seen.

So let’s give a round of applause to this year’s salutatorian, as well as one of the greatest friends we will have the good fortune of knowing, Joe Saginaw.