

Huntington High School's 154th Commencement

Salutatorian Joseph Saginaw's Address

Thank you for the great introduction, Charles.

Good evening everyone, we are gathered here today to celebrate and mark a substantial change in our lives. Naturally, I would like to start with a little scientific background.

In evolutionary biology, one main factor that determines the survival of a species is its ability to adapt to change in its environment. Throughout history, human beings have had to react to different climates, events, and trends in order to survive and flourish. It will be no different for us.

On this day, we leave high school behind and go forward, more independent, more responsible, and more knowledgeable than ever before. Today, is not the first, nor the last of the many changes that will take place in our lifetime, and probably not the most important change either, but I am confident that whatever change we face, its impact on our lives will depend on how we rise to address it.

Class of 2015, I strongly believe that change is a good thing, and we will have to adapt and respond to change in order to be successful in the modern world and to make that world a better place. Just think of the changes that we have already experienced over these past 13 years; we started school for the first time, made friends, changed schools, took tests, and began driving. Look at what we

accomplished at Huntington High School; here, we have been the agents of change.

We have donated countless hours to improve our community and help those in need.

We have brought new experiences in the form of new events, teams, and clubs to our school.

We have risen to the challenge of rigorous academics, and succeeded.

We are also probably the first class to forgo a senior prank.

We are talented, creative, hardworking individuals who can achieve greatness when we set our sights on a goal.

On the eve of graduating high school, we must remember all that we have learned here, but move on to the next phase of our lives. Soon, each one of us will go our separate ways, with different goals in mind pursuing different opportunities, but we will all have to change, at many different points in our lifetime.

We should not be afraid to take the next step in life, because whether it be higher education, the workforce, military or a different path, we have all the necessary skills needed to succeed, and all we have to do is use them.

We are strong, capable people that are able to rebound in the wake of loss, persevere in the face of adversity, and learn from every failure. We need these

abilities in order to change, and ultimately succeed. We are the caretakers of the future, and we must embrace change emphatically.

It is ironic that I close with a quote by a man that I have been challenged to understand in every literary encounter I've had during my education, but William Shakespeare was right: the world **is** our oyster, and I say, don't be afraid to dive in after it.

Thank you.