

## **Superintendent John J. Finello's Huntington High School Graduation Speech – 2010**

Thank you for your introduction Alexandra.

Members of the Board of Education, colleagues in administration, distinguished members of the faculty, class officers, families, friends and most importantly members of the Class of 2010.

This afternoon I look out on so many smiling and happy faces – young men and women ready to greet the future, knowing your possibilities are limitless. You are prepared and ready to move on to life beyond Huntington High School. It is indeed gratifying to see that you have matured and become proficient, ready to tackle the challenges that lie ahead as you seek and work toward your goals. You are ready for new opportunities and welcome the changes that await you.

I look back this afternoon on your journey – a journey that started with the small, tentative steps of a Kindergartener. Looking out into this sea of blue and white, I see just how far you have progressed; you possess the pride and confidence of a high school graduate. It has been an honor and a privilege to be part of your journey; a journey filled with wonderful memories of all those who have supported you throughout your education in Huntington. Your parents have helped you, encouraged you, picked you up when you fell down and loved you unconditionally. Our many gifted and talented teachers have helped you to discover your abilities and to develop an inquiring mind. I assure you that although you are moving beyond high school those same teachers will remember you, hoping their encouragement has traveled with you on your journey. Your coaches and advisors have nurtured you outside the classroom

through lessons of cooperation, sportsmanship, competition and compassion. There are countless individuals who have supported you some whose influence is known only to you. Then, of course, there are your friends who surround you today. Some of those friendships might be relatively new or may extend to your pre-school days. Nurture those friendships and carry them forward as new people enter your life. There are so many facets to the wonderful memories you have collected. Treasure them all.

Today concludes a significant and wonderful chapter of your life; an equally significant and wonderful chapter is about to begin. A chapter replete with the adventures of the adults you are becoming. You are leaving a world where others have made decisions for you; you are about to leave your “comfort zone.” Soon you will be making decisions, solving problems; deciding which road to travel. It sounds exciting, and it will be, but it will also have its challenges. When you are challenged or discouraged I hope you will remember your years in Huntington and the lessons learned at home and in school. They will give you strength and courage. Have faith in yourself and the unique individual you are; be true to yourself. Instead of the world changing you, you can help change the world.

Your family has nurtured you, the Huntington School District has guided you and now it is your turn to identify and acknowledge your strengths, talents and interests. Find what you love, be passionate about it – learn all you can. Be kind, considerate and positive. Take time for others, be an active member of your community, volunteer your time. There is a great need for generous, caring people in our world.

I would like to thank all those who have guided, molded and shaped the Class of 2010. Your role has been instrumental in preparing our graduates for the challenges of the future. The

accomplishments of the members of this senior class are outstanding and it is gratifying to know the Huntington High School Class of 2010 will be well represented in colleges and universities throughout our nation. You leave us with an indelible legacy of excellence and achievement in the fine tradition of the Huntington School District.

To the Class of 2010 I wish you luck as you go on your way. I trust you will make the most of the opportunities you have been given. With the knowledge you have gained in school, with the guidance of your family and with the wonderful friendships you have made I am confident you will find success and happiness.

Congratulations to the Huntington High School Class of 2010!