

Seniors of the Class of 2017.

*"It is tradition at our graduation to acknowledge groups within this graduating class who, through their behavior, character, grit, confidence, curiosity, discipline, hard-work, and passion have embodied the best of what Sequoia High School does. As the students stand tall, please join me in applauding their accomplishments*

*Seniors:*

- *If you are enrolling in college this fall, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you have enlisted in the United States Military, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you have played a sport while at Sequoia, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you danced or participated in a performing art while at Sequoia, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you are the first member of your family to graduate from high school, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you are the first member of your family to attend college, stand tall and be recognized*
- *If you have held a job to help support yourself or your family during high school, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you showed Sequoia Pride by wearing purple on Fridays, stand tall and be recognized.*
- *If you defend your claims with evidence, test a hypothesis, if you can show an inequality by using mathematical reasoning or by citing primary historical source. If you can run these straights-and-curves with your eyes closed, if you pushed yourself harder than you ever thought capable, demonstrating mastery to your teachers. If you have EARNED the right to receive a diploma from Sequoia High School, stand tall and be recognized!*

*Class of 2017, the path that lies before you does not yet exist. Como dice el poeta Antonio Machado, Caminante no hay camino, se hace el camino al andar. The path is yours to make.*

*Please repeat after me: WHOAAAAA!!! WHAAAA?!?!?!? YESSSS!!!*

*That was my gift to you...eternal youth -- freedom from the burden of "cool"*

*WHOAAAAA!!!*

*This is the sound of amazement. It's having to go back and read a paragraph again just to appreciate its eloquence a second time. It's noticing, after you've eaten under the same tree all year, that it's now covered in blossoms. A thousand miles from nowhere with a smile on your face: WHOAAAAA!!! May you say it often. May your mind and heart be open to the amazing things surrounding you every day.*

*WHAAAA?!?!?!?*

*This is the sound of your curiosity. Question your sources, think critically, keep an open mind. Most importantly Keep Asking Questions. Follow-up questions. Clarifying questions. Big questions. What are the BIG questions you want to answer with your life's work? We can't wait to see what you come up with. Caminante no hay camino, se hace el camino al andar. The path is yours to make.*

*YESSSS!!!*

*This is the sound of you on the mountaintop with the wind howling, of you finishing a difficult project -- crushing it! An academic degree, a promotion, a first kiss. Joy! May you say it often. May you feel it often. May your minds and hearts be open to the joy surrounding you every day.*

*The path is yours alone to make. Caminante no hay camino, se hace el camino al andar. WHOAAAAA!!! WHAAAA?!?!?!? YESSSS!!! Together*

*these three words can be your compass as you make your path and I offer them as a gift because I believe them to be the key to eternal youth.*

*By the way, this is what YOU have taught me in my time here in the place of friends. Take from Sequoia the compassion, optimism, and growth mindset that I've have seen from you over the past four years -- that we have heard in the words of your classmates on this stage today.*

*Seniors...caminantes, you made it this far. I am proud of you. I can't wait to see where you take it from here."*

-Sean Priest, Principal