

April 19, 2020

To the class of 2020. As I listened to the Governor announce to the State of New Hampshire that the school year would end with remote learning I could only think of the senior class. This is not the worst thing that will happen in your lifetime, but still, it has got to be tough. You have had the culmination of 12 years of school stolen from you. Not by an evil group or a maniacal villain, but by a virus, something that you can't even see.

Although caring advisors and faculty will try to give you a graduation later in the summer or try to substitute some other event, it will not be the same. Your last season as an athlete or performance as a singer will be lost. The prom, class trip, senior night and graduation won't happen as planned. You have a right to be upset and disappointed. However, please understand this, your teachers, friends, family, and community members all support you! I know some of the attempts at understanding may seem awkward, like posting old "geeky" senior photos on social media. But in the end, you most assuredly have our support.

I wanted to let you know that things will improve. You will emerge from this pandemic stronger, wiser, and better prepared for the future. The class of 2020 is the most diverse, accepting, and open-minded class ever. On average, more of you want to start your own business than other generations and you are more tech-savvy than older Americans. Further, you want to change the world more than any generation before you.

The class of 2020 is the most ethnically diverse in American history and your generation eclipses all others embracing diversity and inclusion. Although the near future is uncertain for all of us, I am hopeful and encouraged that your class will make a difference in this world like no other before you.

While we are "waiting out" this pandemic try to be inspired. All any of us need to do is look around us for examples of inspiring behavior. Our medical workers and first responders should give you cause for inspiration and hope for the future. Their selfless acts during this crisis should motivate and encourage you to do great things. Be inspired by how the local community is coming together to help one another.

Be inspired by the way your class is coming together, reaching out on social media, supporting one another. Despite the physical distancing during this crisis it is amazing how many teenagers have stepped up to help. From helping teach younger siblings, to creating prototype masks on 3D printers, young adults are helping in many ways. I'm inspired myself when I see so many young people conducting food drives, checking on senior citizens in their neighborhoods and making signs to encourage the community.

Some day you will be old like me. You will have experienced decades of life and you will look back on this pandemic as an experience that made you thankful for what you have. An experience that made you stronger in many ways. You'll be able to write a letter of encouragement to the class of 2060 about your challenges as the "Great Senior Class of 2020".

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