

Good Morning to my faculty, staff, guess, family, friends, and to my dear students,

First of all let me say that I am honored that I have been chosen to give this speech and can celebrate this moment with each and everyone one of you. To be honest I wrote this speech like a 100 times in my head but it was hard to get it down all on paper to make the statement. I was told by my class with specific instructions that I have to be as good as the speech from last year and not to speak in a monotone voice to be animated. But I was thinking to myself that this is one of the few moments where actually a student can say something and hopefully it will make a difference or enlighten or give room for thought. I was bombarded by material since there is so much going on in the world today. Our English Division comes from different countries, cultures, religions, language, and customs; yet what is extraordinary we all gather here to study medicine. Sometimes I wonder if this is a curse or a blessing?!

We are gathered here today to celebrate the half mark of our studies only if people could walk in our shoes. They would see how much health, dedication, sacrifice, pain, tears, joy, STRESS, loss of sleep, hours in front of books, moments of diarrhea and vomiting that we have suffered. But remember we signed up for this – “Isn’t it ironic don’t you think” like the song from Alanis Morissette.

This year has been like no other we definitely have made many memories that will not be forgotten not only by the students but with the faculty who has met us. We definitely are the laughing/least numbered year at this university. But even though there is so few of us I think it is safe to say with our personalities we have exceeded with all limits with the numbers at this university. I hope that in the next three years when we meet here ALL again we will be the graduating class of 2020.

I think we laughed so much that we made up for all the years being here. I like to tell you a little about us. We have - Sam “The instigator/storyteller”, Alex “The commentator”, Ibrahim “The one who secretly cares”, Ghassan “Who claims to know nothing but everybody”, Hassan “The Sleeper”, Sultan “The Late Child”, Dominik “who is always in his own world”, Amina “The fighter”, Anna “The Crammer of Knowledge” Filip “The Confused One” and me “The Laughing Hyena”.

If you think about it anyone can wear a White Coat it isn’t illegal. But THIS White Coat signifies a mile stone of our accomplishments and all that we have done to get here at THIS school and which has also greatly influenced our personal lives. It has been a transition from a student sitting in a class room to our clinical experiences that are like nothing we have experienced thus far.

Think about it.... Do you remember your first experience wearing a White Coat?

My mom always told me that you will always remember your first professional experience and I thought what is she talking about she is crazy but mom’s always know best never doubt that or you will be in trouble. I did my first summer internship with my friend Justyna in Gdansk we are both girls from the states with Polish backgrounds. I remember like it was today meeting the first patient. It was a woman who was after a heart transplant and we were told to check her vitals especially her blood pressure. Justyna was nervous and she was like you do it. I placed the cuff on her and I was paranoid because it wasn’t electronic and it was one of the old ones that had the gage. We had a couple of classes in Gdansk learning about how to measure blood pressure. The patient was so nice and she was trying to help me. She told me for the past 5 years every day I had to measure my blood pressure. Finally I managed to place everything in the right place and started

measuring her blood pressure I got a read and new it was normal. The doctor asked me, "What I had gotten?" and then checked himself. He was satisfied and left. She asked us if we wanted to touch and feel her scar after the heart transplant. Of course we were interested. After this she asked me, "If I believe in God?" Which for Polish people I am use to these kind of questions and I said, "Yes." That is when I spotted all the Catholic memorabilia pictures of the Virgin Mary and Jesus around her. She said to me, "Remember to pray every day because if I would have not done so I don't think I would be here with a healthy heart." I told her, "If she wants I can come back and even say a tenth of the rosary." She looked at me and just smiled not expecting this kind of answer.

These kinds of moments DEFINE you and CHANGE you for life. I hope that ALL of us have these undefined sparks which make us realize how precious life really is and that we take advantage of life while we can.

As a class we would like to thank first of all our parents for bringing us into this world so we can have this experience. Our friends and family for supporting us and understanding that we can't always be there with them even though our hearts are always with them.

We would like to thank all the Professor and Teachers who have touched our lives in their magical ways. Also for their patience with us when sometimes we do not know the answers.

To all the secretaries who try to schedule our lives at this school because they don't get enough credit most of the time we have at least 5 schedules.

To our Dean's Office who really is Pan Pawel Wiereńko our school psychologist who is always willing to help with all our problems.

To all the wonderful students that we have met who unfortunately left this institution.

To those individuals who are not with us anymore who made a great influence in our lives may they look down at us with pride, protect us, give us courage to do the greater good.

To our favorite lines and questions this year: To the Warsaw, Blue Cactus, the one we hear all the time-To be honest it's in the book, as you know in physiology, what happened why is there so few of you?

We also would like to thank all the patients that we have tortured to examine especially during our internal classes. Those patients have been amazing.

To our sisters, bothers, and cousins and those who have children. These children in our lives have kept us young at heart.

As a class I think we all have special gifts we just need to learn how to use them the right way. As we continue the next 3 years of our medical journey in our White Coats I hope we grow as people, take responsibilities for our mistakes, that we become examples for future medical physicians. That we view problems from both sides and we are not narrow minded or racist. We change the world we make it a better place. We become more human, we listen to our instincts, that we question if we believe something is incorrect and are not intimidated. That we are exposed to powerful role models in our lives that make us stronger, work harder, and provoke us to think of all possibilities. That we become aware that life is what we make of it and we don't blame others around us for our mistakes. That we listen to our patients what they are telling us, that we ask the right

questions to get the right answers, that we actually love people and want to help. That we remember to READ, SMILE, be HUMBLE, show EMPATHY and COMPASSION. Even if we fall into a dark place in our lives that we always manage to get up and conquer our problems. I hope each and every one of us makes this kind of contribution to this world and to be a class of innovation.

Finally I will leave you with a 2 quotes I hope they inspire as they have motivated me.

“Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing. Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person. Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving BETTER and HAPPIER. It is not how much we do, but how much LOVE we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much LOVE we put in the giving.” -Mother Teresa, Albanian-Indian Roman Catholic nun and missionary

And now my favorite quote: “How do you measure success? To laugh often, and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a redeemed social condition, or a job well done; to know even one other life has breathed because you lived-this is to have succeeded.”-Ralph Waldo Emerson, writer

Thank you

Witten by Malgorzata Tomsykoski