

Dayonna Williams

Only You Can Stop You

Good Evening, My name is Dayonna Williams on behalf of the graduating class of 2015, and faculty I would like to say thank you for coming and supporting us at this very important time of our lives. For some it may not be their first degree and for others it may, but that doesn't mean that this time isn't as special. I don't think the sense of accomplishment ever goes away, no matter how many degrees we can collect. It's the sense of building, growing and creating new opportunities for ourselves that keep us pursuing an education.

Therefore, despite the obstacles we may have faced along the way we persist in the pursuit of our degrees. So many times in our lives we doubt ourselves, saying "we're not good enough, I could have done better", but we gave it our all and everything we had! It's okay to have high expectations sure, but don't beat yourself up with negativity because of it. Take falling a bit short as motivation for completing your next task. Your efforts did not go unnoticed; we're so busy setting high standards and beating ourselves up, that when we fall short we don't realize people are congratulating us. Have you ever said, "I wonder what I look like in the eyes of someone else?" Well let me tell you: You are, brave for not giving up! You are, intelligent even if there are things you forget. You are, strong for not letting anything destroy you. You are, a hero, mentor, idol to those whom look up to you. You are, soon to be college graduates of the Herkimer family.

So, you may not know all that you are when stressing over a paper, project or test - but those around you do, and they're just waiting for you to relax, and give yourself a break so that they can tell you. We often get clouded by our own judgment and fears, but Fear is only False Evidence Appearing Real. The more confidence you have in a project, assignment or life you'll notice things aren't as hard as we make it seem. Education is what you make of it and looking at

all of these caps and gowns here, it looks like we've made the best of it. Thanks to Herkimer and our dedication we've created more opportunities and are now closer to being in the career of our choice. Tony A. Gaskins Jr. once said "If you don't build your dream someone will hire you to help build theirs." this quote motivates me because so many people get afraid and quit chasing their dreams due to the fear of rejection. But, who is to tell you what you're incapable of doing? Who is to tell you you're not good enough whether it's a job, school application, sports team or audition for a part? It is honestly true that you can be anything you want to be. All it take is you! So after today continue to break barriers. Break the cage called statistics and stereotypes that they try to keep us locked in. Wipe the fog of the mirror we call a mind, because the mind is such a powerful weapon, where if we convince ourselves of something the body will react with a response to that positive or negative energy. It's mind over matter which Julie Delmedico so happily drilled in our heads during every single cross country meet. So go show the world what you're made of because that is exactly what I plan on doing. Nothing can kill motivation and, if you get rejected on the way to your dreams, don't stop, keep going and pushing or create your own empire and be better than the company that turned you away. It's all up to you, Good Luck and Thank You