

Mayland Early College HS Graduation

Prayer by Jaden Miller

Dear God, thank you for walking with us and helping us all of these years we've been in school. I ask you to bless each and every student and their families as we continue our lives, and to guide us where you would have us go. If there is anyone who doesn't know you, lead them to you and reveal to them all the blessings you have in store. Thank you God for everything, Amen.

Welcome by Breanna Gormley, Student Body President

Good morning everyone!

My name is Breanna Gormley, and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to welcome all of you to Mayland Early College High School's 2020 graduation.

Since we were young, we have looked forward to our graduation in the year of 2020. It was to be the year of inspiration, positive change, and excitement. Though as the year began, we faced many challenges. COVID-19 has been one of the greatest and most unexpected hardships of our time. But despite these trying times, we have managed to persevere and grow as individuals throughout this experience. Although it wouldn't have been possible without the love and support of all our friends, family, and the faculty of MEC.

I would like to extend a gracious thank you on behalf of myself and my fellow graduates to all of those that have been there to encourage us to stay resolute and focused. To all the students graduating during this pandemic, just know that you are strong, capable, and motivated. If we can make it through this, we can make it through anything. So carry that with you as you walk across this stage and move on to a new journey in your life, and always remember that no matter how hard things may seem, anything is attainable through determination and diligence. Thank you all for making this graduation possible, and for attending one of the most important moments of our lives.

Welcome in Spanish by Wendy Orihuela

"Buenos días, bienvenidos a la ceremonia de graduación de Mayland Early Community High School. Se complace por mi conducta en darles la más cordial bienvenida esta ceremonia,

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misma ir es la culminación de doce años de ilusiones, esperanzas, sacrificios y dedicación, con la que gustosos celebramos el logro obtenido, por la nueva generación del año 2020 en cual hoy se gradúa.

Con emoción y my has ganas dimos nuestros primeros pasos llenos de expectativas, con ganas de empezar a recorrer esta zona desconocida, donde nos esperan todo el año. No es el final, sino el principio de algo nuevo que viene para ustedes. Sigán adelante en el camino de la superación, valoren el esfuerzo de sus padres y sean mejores cada día avancen siempre con la frente en alto y con la seguridad de que cuentan en sus manos con las mejores armas del conocimiento para alcanzar la excelencia.

Felicidades a la generación 2020.
Gracias. “

Salutatory Address by SeAnna Lovett

Four years ago, I stepped into Mayland Early College High School overwhelmed with excitement. High school is *that* time. The time books are written about and movies depict. From *The Breakfast Club* to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, there are so many notions about the high school experience. It's much more than grades 9 to 12, it's an adventure, the adventure everyone tells you will be one of the biggest events that shapes your future. I was ready for this. I couldn't wait to get started because I knew it was going to be just the way I imagined it.

Reality, however, always has a way of creeping into even the strongest fantasies. Classes were challenging from the beginning and became increasingly difficult through the years. Time was always ticking too quickly, assignments always building. There were times when I felt overwhelmed and questioned my ability to succeed in this program. Blood, sweat, and tears: the work took it all, and it was not like people from different cliques dancing during detention or like having superpowers to get through everything like Buffy. Looking back on the past four years though, it was just the adventure I needed.

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I have learned so much academically, but maybe more importantly, I have learned that we are all capable of so much more than we ever imagined. Through all the ups and the downs of school and life, we found motivation, will power, and strength to push through hard days. As we demonstrate by gathering here today, we have also found joy in celebrating with each other over good days and achievements. I have been surrounded by amazing people, from fellow students to incredible teachers, instructors, and other faculty who all go out of their way to support us. This program has pushed us all hard, and now we are ready to face whatever comes our way. That may sound cliché, but I feel the truth of it as surely as I feel the weight of the high school diploma and two year associate's degree this program has allowed me to obtain. My high school experience has shaped me, and I am grateful for every aspect of this time that has made me who I am today.

Valedictory Address- Agne Shields

Hello everyone

I would like to thank everyone who came to the Mayland Early College Class of 2020 graduation.

I want to thank our teachers, family, friends and most importantly the graduates for being able to come together on this day.

Standing here today is such an honor and a privilege for each and every one of us.

From the very first day we entered Mayland Early College High School, we were presented with new challenges and unknown experiences. Around the age of fourteen, we left our county schools for Mayland in search of new horizons and opportunities.

Truthfully, just a few years ago I could never have imagined that I would be standing here today. I was a younger person who had just immigrated into the U.S. from a small country in Northern Europe. I could barely speak English. Just a few years ago, I couldn't even point to North Carolina on the map.

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Today, so much has changed because of the people around me.

My parents changed so much in my life for me. When I lived in Lithuania, I would rarely get to spend much time with my mom because as a single mom she was always working. However, at a young age, she taught me how to be independent and take care of myself. My mom is a superwoman to me. Once I moved to the U.S., I had a full family.

My parents gave me so much in these years, all to give me the greatest chance for success. They showed me that I could really do anything I wanted and instilled a passion for education within me. I am forever grateful for this gift.

In addition to massive support at home from my parents, I received so much help and mentorship from my instructors here at Mayland. The high school teachers are some of the greatest teachers I have had yet. They made me enjoy coming to class every day to learn, although Mrs. Willis could say that I may have spent a bit too much time in her classroom during my freshman year.

In addition to the amazing teachers and opportunities I had here at Mayland, I also want to thank someone who has influenced my future goals so much and in part has opened so many doors for me now. Dr. Sherman has been a teacher and a mentor to me these past couple of years. She has deepened my love for science and has even introduced me to paths to continue exploring the field and have a future career.

Regardless of whether we had imagined ourselves standing in our gowns or still can't quite believe that we are here, none of us could have foreseen ourselves graduating under these circumstances. With the countless challenges we faced as students here, we had to stay strong and persevere. However, these last few months have truly shown how strong our school community is. I want to thank the students who stayed strong despite having to finish their senior year in their home. I am so thankful for every teacher and faculty member who has helped us brave the challenges of online curriculum and ensure our education, despite facing their own struggles during this time of uncertainty.

Because of everyone in the Mayland community, I am proud to call myself a timber wolf.