

RYAN MULLER

As Herb Brooks said, and as Barr would repeat an annoying number of times, “Great moments are born from great opportunity.” Today is one of those great moments. We celebrate the accomplishments of eighteen years of work, struggle, and opportunity. Now I could stand before you and languish in the struggles of the past year and a half, but we don’t need to be reminded of the hardships we still deal with every day. Today we celebrate greatness.

On our last day, I think it’s appropriate, if not corny and played out, to go back to where it all started. So back to the beginning we go. Back to elementary school, when we would have picked Dr. Seuss over Herman Melville or Toni Morrison. Sorry Barr and O’Hag, but it’s the truth.

We were all introduced to the man behind the Cat in the Hat at an early age and we would be damned to ever forget him. I can’t speak for everyone here, but I know us Egremont kids remember his book “Oh, the Places You’ll Go!” I remember our old principal, Mrs. Rush, having the whole grade in the gym and reading the book to us.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with this book, Dr. Seuss tells us of a person with “brains in their head” and “feet in their shoes” and desire to make something of themselves. He lets us know that it’s okay to get stuck, to fall down, and to be alone. He warns us against idleness and lethargy and encourages us to strive for the greatness that we all know is well within reach.

The broader theme of this work is the inevitability of success that follows hard work. There are very few quotes from books that I have ever cared to remember, but this one here is one of them. “And will you succeed?” Yes! You will, indeed! (98 and $\frac{3}{4}$ guaranteed.) KID, YOU’LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!”

Now go, Generals, and find your mountain, wherever they may be. Here, before me today, are students going to some of the most elite universities and colleges in the world. We’re proud to be sending scholars to Williams College, Northeastern

University, UCLA, University of Southern California, Middlebury College, University of Rochester, and so many other top tier schools spread far across the nation. The mountains we move will reshape the world as we know it.

While students and teachers alike love to brag about the schools we have gotten into, the reality of life is that college isn't for everyone. Today, we also honor the young men and women with the courage to enlist in our armed forces after graduation. We should also not forget about those who have decided to work a trade job and will make more money than most of us here.

What is more important than success, however, is to not lose yourself along the journey. Yes, some of us will move far away from Pittsfield and never even think twice about looking back. And that's okay. This next chapter of our lives is about discovering who we were then, who we are now, and who we one day hope to be. And, if you couldn't already guess, Dr. Seuss's genius was aware of this, too, and he sought to share it with us through this quote. "Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is Youer than You."

Congratulations to all who have made it here, and all the best for your future endeavors.