

Ambika Sharma: Ivy Oration

Hello everyone. First, I would like to say congratulations to the entire class of 2021! This is a pretty interesting way to do class night, but at least it's happening! After 7 long years at Hoosac Valley, we did it. When we all started out in 6th grade, we were all in our own groups. One group from C.T. Plunkett and the other from Cheshire school. As the year passed on however, we saw how much we had in common, whether it was the musical, sports, or volunteer-work. We were all open minded, ready to start something new and to make new friends. I guess we kinda shared a similar experience as the Ivy plant.

The Ivy plant needs direct sunlight, but also needs to be indoors. Can't we all relate to that? I mean, at the beginning of quarantine at the end of junior year, that's kinda all we did. We went on walks and watched dumb Netflix movies and Tiger King till we were sick of it all. However, I don't want to make this speech only about how we missed out on things, but.. WOW. We really went through it, didn't we?

To compare our experiences to the Ivy plant, we all started in one large group with little subdivisions. We didn't know where we wanted to go or what we wanted to do. Then, as we went onto join clubs and sports and make friends, we found our passions. Some of us became musicians, some artists, some athletes, some writers, and some mathematicians, but hey, mathematicians.. Blink twice if you need assurance. I'm kidding. It honestly makes me so happy that we found what we are passionate about throughout high school.

We grew and we grew until we got to the point where we began to separate, become independent. Some of us wanted to challenge ourselves, and others just wanted to push through high school, but that involved learning things. Our questions would always be "ugh, will we ever need this?" And teachers would scramble to find the answer of "yes, yes you will.". People have

joined and left us, and here we are with 40-something kids in our class. It may be the smallest graduation in the history of Hoosac Valley graduations. *Maybe* I'm exaggerating.

I think we all learned something really important from this pandemic, though. Take time for yourself, and be grateful for what we already had. It sucks we didn't get a normal year, but complaining gets us nowhere. We didn't have a normal prom, a real senior skip day, or even our class trip, but we made the best of it, and it made us stronger. We got close to teachers we didn't think of getting close to before. We gained support from our family members and friends who understood what we were going through, because everyone was in a similar situation. To those who pushed us, thank you!

Some of us will be doctors, lawyers, business-men and women; others will work until they drop. Whatever we do, we'll be able to show how we've grown and gone our own ways. Thank you and congratulations to my fellow classmates!