

Chantell Chimbo
Valedictorian Speech Winter 2016



Good Afternoon- Provost Houlihan thank you for that warm introduction.... Chairman Tully, Members of the Board of Trustees, President Dugan, Distinguished Guests, Members of the Administration, Faculty and Staff, and Fellow Graduates. I'm honored to be here today to represent the winter class of 2016. So first off,

Congratulations! Today we flip the page and mark an end to another chapter of our story.

As I look out into the crowd before me, I sense a wave of emotions from everyone present. For family and friends, the sense of pride you have in your graduate's accomplishments is unmeasurable. For Faculty another class you have successfully educated and mentored throughout our time. Yet nothing, nothing can top the feelings that we graduates have right now at this moment.

We made it here in one piece. We survived all those exams, lectures and research papers that we once thought would never finish. It all started a couple years back when we opened our acceptance letters and decided to attend St. Francis College. The small college of big dreams. The college that has granted all

of us amazing opportunities and opened doors for us in numerous ways. St. Francis, a liberal arts college has given us the tools we need to go forward and succeed. Saint Francis not only prepared all of us students to pass our GMATS, GRE's, CPAs or any other obstacle we will face after this day, but gave us confidence to touch the lives of others and help those when needed.

The qualities we have gained throughout our years here have given us an advantage after we leave this campus. We are part of a very small percentage of college graduates who have been exposed to more than just our textbooks. Molded into well-rounded and confident individuals we are ready to start the next page of the new chapter of our story.

When the Provost called me to inform me that I was this year's Valedictorian I couldn't believe it. I always knew I wanted to be a good student, earn good grades and get a job after graduation, but being valedictorian never crossed my mind. In fact, attending a private college was a far reach. You see financially my parents couldn't afford to send me to a private college. My parents came to the United States from Ecuador for a better future and to live the American dream everyone talks about. I've seen them work day and night to put a plate of food on the table. My parents always told me that education is key and with it anything is possible. I've seen them struggle and overcome fierce challenges. They taught me to face adversity and to work hard for everything that one wants.

My parents didn't have the opportunity to go to college so today we accomplished our goal. Today is a victory for my family, for my parents because together We are graduating accomplishing a small portion of that American Dream they aspired. For all your sacrifices, all your guidance, all your love and for never ever letting me give up. Thank you and I love you.

I thank St. Francis for providing me with a scholarship that allowed me to obtain an education and for not bearing my parents with the burden of school debt.

My success wouldn't be possible if it weren't for other several key individuals that have influenced my life and helped me along the way. To my older sisters who have given me their unconditional support, advice, and never hesitated to listen when I needed it the most. To Dr. Anderson for guiding me and providing me with great mentorship, And to my GreenHouse, MTA, and MSG family for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to gain an insight to the real-world.

We have all created memories that will last a lifetime. And although we won't miss the escalators not working when we needed them the most we sure will miss seeing the friends we have made from all over the world throughout our time here at St. Francis.

My fellow graduates today we celebrate our accomplishments!

Always remember to be bold, passionate and spontaneous. I leave you with a message my teacher once gave me. As you travel through life when you stop and look behind you, may the times you've been happy far outnumber the times when fate has been unkind and may much more happiness await you on your journey yet to be. Never give up on your dreams. They are yours and no one determines what you can or cannot do. Work hard and don't ever underestimate your power and don't ever take for granted the opportunities you have been given.

Class of 2016, Today we start the page to a new chapter. The Future is Ours, Let's do extraordinary things and show the world what it means to be a Terrier!

Thank you and Congratulations!