

Chico State Graduation Reflections Speech – Brian Peart

Good morning! Is everybody awake? I trust nobody over-indulged in celebration last night- or this morning!

To the students, friends, family and faculty of the College of Agriculture, the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, the College of Business and my friends in the College of Engineering, Computer Science and Construction Management I welcome you to Chico State's 2012 Graduation Day!

To say this is an exciting day would be an understatement. For us students, today represents the culmination of years; allow me to re-emphasize that word- YEARS, of higher education that have prepared us for our futures as successful individuals. For you parents, today marks the time when you can finally take us poor, starving college students off your payroll. Well, maybe one of those statements is true- I'll let you decide which.

As I look around at all of you here today two things come to mind. First, that one public speaking class definitely didn't prepare me for how nerve-racking this is. And second, I can't help but wonder about the ties that have brought everyone here to celebrate this day, for today is not just an individual victory, but also a team accomplishment. I for one know that I would not be standing here today if it weren't for the love and support of many who have helped to guide me along this journey.

The supportive mom... who I know is in the audience shedding tears of joy like every mother will do today when she sees her baby on the stage.

The dad... who externally may be complaining about the traffic jam we'll face when leaving today, yet internally is crying tears of pride just like mom but is too tough to show it.

The sibling...who has challenged and frustrated you but always has your back, whether you know it or not

The best friend... who's been family ever since you can remember and would not miss this for the world

The roommate...who's always ready to get the party started because this is Chico, and we got this!

The significant other...who puts up with your nonsense and can't wait for you to start making money!

The faculty member...whom you may or may not know, but behind the scenes has helped you through admissions, counseling or some other university process

The professor... whose passion has inspired you and knowledge will forever be engrained in your mind.

The friend and classmate...who's walked with you through this journey and has shared every moment of frustration, sleep deprivation, and toast of celebration

And of course... the friends and loved ones who could not be here today for one reason or another but will always be present in heart, in mind and in spirit.

All of these people with us today have been there throughout our years as students here at Chico State. From the first day we moved to Chico- into the dorms with a group of random strangers, or apartment or house we found on an ad somewhere they have carried us, and our beds, dressers and other heavy belongings we didn't want to lift.

They have been there through the frustrating yet beneficial group projects, alongside us cramming for midterms or finals, and there to help support the student clubs and sports we were involved in.

They were in the tube beside us on that Labor Day float, or backing up our Journey rendition while making that long drive home over break.

That one time we had a little too much fun, ok perhaps two times, they aided in our recovery.

When we were a dollar short we know we could count on the Bank of Dad, which has been a lending institution ever since I can remember.

They have been that shoulder to cry on, or ear to listen to our life or death trials and tribulations which of course, turned out to be just minor bumps in the road.

And today they still stand with us proud of our accomplishments, eager to hear our names called as we accept our diplomas, and ready to embrace us as we step off the stage and into the next phase of our lives. They will be there to share the thrill of beginning our new careers, to hear us say the words "I do" at our weddings, and to rejoice at the births of our children to come.

As we celebrate this glorious day of commencement and head off our separate ways to experience what life has in store, I am reminded of words I once read which present each one of us with an eternal challenge: always remember that we never achieve success alone. There are people all around us who help make it happen.