

Good morning Mr. Karsten, Mr. Penikas, administration, faculty, family, friends and The Class of 2019.

I'd like to start off untraditionally by saying that writing a speech is tough. Attempting to remember 4 years' worth of memories and incorporating them meaningfully is difficult. I also have to try not to bore you, to keep the topic unique. Hopefully I'll see some smiles in this crowd soon.

This is a speech about *words*. A set of words that Stanners past, present, and future know. Words that are Latin and English. Have you guessed what I'm referring to yet? Our school's motto.

What is the true meaning of "non scholae sed vitae," though? Of course, we all know the literal translation "not for school but for life," but there are many applications of this simple phrase.

Values:

I believe that human beings are born with a sense of morality, but the environment they're in is responsible for enriching those values.

Molloy has built upon that foundation in providing us with Marist

values. It is our responsibility to apply them to our own lives and lead as examples to others, which we have already started doing. How?

We've performed simple acts of kindness such as holding the door open, listening to a friend, smiling in the hallway, and trusting one another at Esopus.

We continued by becoming peer group leaders, retreat leaders, team captains, and club officers and demonstrated to the underclassmen and women the importance of working together. Such "small" things can make a huge difference to the person on the receiving end of the act. Whenever I was at my locker and someone I wasn't very close with said "Hi" to me, it made my day.

Each of us has had our own triumphs and struggles, but we knew there was always someone there to support us, a teacher or a friend, who inspires us to be "that person" for others.

It is imperative now more than ever that we remember all these lessons we learned at Molloy and bring them with us in college and beyond.

Non scholae sed vitae on the most basic level means applying our morals to everyday life. We have the capacity to make differences in others' lives with kindness and compassion.

Adjustment:

Our time at Molloy was a lot like the daily task of climbing the stairs from floor to floor. Each step represents minute changes that we experience constantly, which require adjustment, whether or not we notice them. Some changes we can notice, like *new doorknobs, air conditioners, or fresh coats of locker paint*. Other changes, like those within ourselves and our peers, are harder to notice.

Do you remember what it felt like starting freshman year?

I remember that I was so overwhelmed, I basically forgot what happened the whole first month of school.

Sure, I knew a decent number of peers coming in, but everything was happening all at once. It was an "information overload."

Even while we were "comfortable" there were constantly ways we had to adjust. As the years went on, we had to adapt to new friends, new

classes and teachers, new seasons of sports. Each coming year was a little bit like starting all over again, but not quite.

Now we are about to be freshmen again, yet the feeling is different. All of our tiny, daily adjustments in Molloy's environment empower us so that our transition to college, and eventually the world, will be less daunting.

Life outside of a controlled environment is random, but our experience of constant adjustment will make future transitions smoother.

Non scholae sed vitae means understanding that change can't be prevented, and using the tools we learn from our day to day adjustments will make more challenging adaptations less difficult.

Self-Understanding:

What is your favorite **color**? What is your favorite **food**? Take a second to think about it. My favorite color is purple, and my favorite food is French onion soup. But why? I can't answer that with certainty.

A big part of why our personalities are the way they are involves the *intangible*. We have defining experiences, yet we can't pinpoint exactly what makes us, us right now.

High school is known for being a time of self-discovery.

When I started, I was quite different than I am now. I was quieter, would always wear my hair in ponytails, was nervous to put myself out there. On the first day of gym, I was afraid to change in front of everyone in the locker room, so I changed in the shower.

I've grown since then, but what makes me different from that 14-year-old girl? She is still around, but she grew up and became *me*. The versions of ourselves from 4 years ago, or longer, still exist within us.

Everything we encountered during this time period caused us to evolve into who we *think* we are now. I say "think" because there is no way to completely know ourselves, and that's okay. What is most important is our conscious effort to grow as a person.

Non scholae sed vitae means accepting that some parts of ourselves can't be explained, but utilizing experiences and lessons can free us to grow into our best selves.

I am beyond honored that I get to stand here and represent the amazing, dynamic, and creative Class of 2019, but of course there's

no way I can do you complete justice. I hope your experience at Molloy was unforgettable.

Make sure to always stay hopeful and appreciate everyone who helped you get to this point.

We are about to journey into a world where there is *no motto* to guide us. We can't forget that what happened in school reflects life, and we need to carry those lessons we learned to our lives going forward.

Thank you and congratulations to the Class of 2019!