

Good evening parents and accepted students. I want to start by saying congratulations on your admittance and welcome to Archbishop Molloy High School!

I can't believe how quickly the four years have passed since I was in your position. For most of you, as was for me, the position that you are in comes with a choice... a choice to decide on which high school you will attend. So tonight I want to share with you why my choice, to attend Archbishop Molloy High School, was the best decision that I have ever made.

Prior to deciding on Molloy, I had the opportunity to experience elements of the school: at the Open House when talking with students and faculty, at a summer soccer camp run by the boys' varsity coach where I met former Molloy players, and in the stories told by my dad and uncle, who are both alumni. What I gained from these glimpses was a sense of promise... a promise that Molloy would afford me with the environment where I could determine my future. What solidified my desire to come to Molloy was actually this Winter Open House where I had the opportunity to speak to seniors whose desire to talk about Molloy was endless. What struck me was not only what they said but how their words were filled with pride... pride in the emblem they wore on their chest and school they went to for the last four years. So tonight I urge you to seek out those seniors so that you can see for yourself their enthusiasm and passion in being a Stanner.

My journey at Molloy started with freshman camp at the Marist Brothers Center in Esopus, a place many Stanners refer to as their "home away from home". On the way to Esopus, the bus was filled with nervous students with mostly silence dominating the air. Upon arriving, we were introduced to some of our future teachers as well as upper classman enthusiastic in embracing us into the Molloy community. We engaged in activities that were always surrounded with an air of

welcoming competitiveness, from soccer shootouts to ultimate frisbee, with the most thrilling being Molloy's infamous game of "flag". The ride back home consisted of nonstop talking amongst the students and numerous outbursts of genuine laughter. This was the beginning of newly formed friendships...friendships that I now know will last my lifetime.

Between Esopus camp and JV soccer tryouts, I was already acquainted with almost half the freshman students even before the first day of class.

There is definitely an adjustment between elementary school and high school in terms of workload, but don't worry. Molloy does an excellent job in helping with such transition. I attribute my academic growth to the unparalleled faculty here at Molloy. Inside the classroom, their lessons are inviting and always encompass the voice of their students. Interaction with Molloy teachers and faculty does not start and stop within the classrooms. They will also be running your favorite clubs, volunteering next to you at special-need camps at Esopus and cheering you on whether at a sporting event or as you take on your next challenge. Here, your teachers will not only be your academic mentors. They are always ready and willing to provide advice and guidance on any obstacles that you may encounter.

I'd like give all the future high schoolers some advice going into their next four years. First, whenever you need help, never hesitate to ask for it. At Molloy, there's always faculty and peers looking to support you. Second, never fail to do something that interests you. Join that club you're curious about or take that class that grabs your attention. And lastly, always remember to charge your iPad overnight because it's never a good day when you come to school with only a 5% battery life.

Mr Sheehan, my AP Composition teacher, presented the class with a quote one day that I'll never forget, "Your future determines the past." Where I am today, perfectly explains everything I have done leading up to this point: the people I've met, the places I've been and the things I've learned. I know at this moment, you probably have a limited notion as to who you will be in four years, but I promise you that it will all make sense in the end. Coming to Molloy will cause the unknown to not be unsettling but exciting. Molloy enables students like yourself to grow into a person you have hoped to become, with the experiences and lessons learned here being as our school motto says, "non scholae sed vitae", which means "not for school but for life".

I want to give you a sense as to how I've been engaged in the Molloy community. I had the great pleasure of leading the varsity soccer team as a captain for two years, overseeing community service as President of the National Honor Society, challenging myself academically by taking 7 AP classes, following my curiosity by learning American Sign Language and coding in afterschool clubs, and traveling to Europe over Easter break with my peers. And what made each class and activity so special to me were the classmates, teachers, and faculty by my side. The people at Molloy are unlike anyone you've ever met before, and this school's environment helps you to grow into the best version of yourself. It's impossible to completely put it into words, but I'll use a common phrase you'll hear at least once every time you're up at Esopus, "There's something in the air."

Although, I don't want to admit it; I will be graduating very soon. However, I know Molloy has prepared me to thrive outside the margins of this school. Due to rigorous classes such as AP Biology and AP Calculus BC, I will be majoring in biomedical engineering on the pre-med tract in college with the ultimate goal of going to medical school. Additionally, tutoring grade schoolers at the Briarwood Shelter through our campus ministry program and counseling special-needs and

deaf children at summer camps in Esopus have led me to pursue a concentration in Pediatrics.

Where I start the next phase of life's journey is still uncertain since I'm waiting on more college admission results. I have already been accepted into local schools such as Fordham University with scholarship, out-of-state schools' honors programs such as Villanova and Northeastern University with scholarship, and the highly-selective engineering school at the University of Michigan. I have also been accepted into McGill, an internationally recognized university in Canada. But, no matter where I go, I know one thing for sure: Molloy did give me the environment to develop into the person I am today and to determine my future. It prepared me well for my next step. And for that, I will be forever grateful. I know right now most of your focus resides in picking a high school; however, in just a few years, college will not be far on your horizon. As a Stanner, your path beyond Molloy is constantly being paved. The classes you take and extracurriculars you participate in will provide you with direction after your four years are over, and tonight can be the start of your journey. I wish you all the best of luck as you decide your path and congratulations once again!