

Commencement 2018 Senior Class President Welcome Speech by Andy Johnson '18

Good morning and welcome. My name is Andy Johnson. I'd like to start by thanking the faculty, staff, administration, board of trustees, returning alumni, current students of Jesuit High School, friends, family, my fellow members of the Class of 2018, and most importantly, the NHS junior ushers in the back. Thanks for the help, guys.

I am incredibly honored to talk on behalf of the class sitting in front of me. To say that I am proud to walk across this stage with you all is an understatement.

So when the important people told me I was giving a welcome speech, I didn't really know exactly what that meant and it's definitely going to show, so just hang in there and laugh when you're supposed to but don't want to, or give me a little "awwwwww" when I say something cute like, "Class of 2018, I cannot imagine myself without you all. I genuinely mean it when I say I love you guys" (pause for "awwww"). Thanks, guys, that would just make things go a little better.

Seniors, if you would, take a moment with me and reflect on the past four years. Freshman year we stood in awkward clumps in the halls or played flappy golf (RIP), but we also met some of our now lifelong friends. Sophomore year:

Junior year: Our parents felt the need to remind us about college, over and over and over again, but we got the needed break of the Junior Encounter. Senior year: We took on the role of leaders in Jesuit, and now move onto our next stage of life.

When I was thinking about our class and our graduation today, I had a crazy but pretty grounding thought. Today will be one of if not the last time we will all be together as a class, and some of these people we might never see again. A classmate two chairs down from you, you might never get the chance to talk to again. I know that seems like a bummer to say on graduation, but I also think it's beautiful. Beautiful to recognize that the four years we've shared together is coming to a close, so why not savor these last moments and the people celebrating it with us?

Seniors, I'm sure most of us have heard stories from our parents or grandparents when they've talked about some crazy thing they did in high school with their friends, like take for example my dad (hey, Dad!).

One time, my dad told me that when he was in high school, and this is a completely true story, he and his friends actually kidnapped the Dean of Students during an all-school assembly. They threw a burlap sack over the Dean's head and just carried him out of the gym over their shoulders. Mad props, Dad! (Look dangerously at Mr. Maxie.)

The point I'm trying to make is that high school gets remembered and talked about for forever. We're lucky enough to still have this last time together. I mean, just imagine yourself 20 or 30 years from now with your kids, or family, or friends telling your crazy stories about high school, talking about how much you'll miss... those last 15 minutes of Membean vocab you skipped... sorry, Ms. Mathes.

In all seriousness, in the years to come whether, it be some ridiculous story or the opportunity to have one of your high school friends be a best man or maid of honor in your wedding, you have Jesuit, and more specifically the Class of 2018... wearing these oversized, fancy green snuggies... to thank for that.

To finish, throughout the day, I'd encourage everyone here to recognize the blessing of our last day of high school together. There are still memories to be made and more future stories to tell if we just stop and savor the moment we are in. All I ask is that we enjoy today's graduation and appreciate the people around us to our final, fullest possible ability. Thank you.