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Principal Chaney, members of the School Board, teachers, parents, friends, and most importantly the Mountain View High School 2010 graduates; it is an honor to speak in front of you all today. Today is the first day of the rest of our lives, but before we leave and go our separate ways. Let us remember and thank those who were so helpful in getting us here today. A little over twelve years ago I started my first day of elementary school at Duluth Junior Academy.

I clearly remember standing in front of the double doors holding onto my pink book bag and Barbie lunch box. My parents were there with their camera taking pictures and wishing me well. Today, I can say that I managed to get through my school career with only few difficult struggles. I was able to obtain good grades and still find time to spend with friends and family, as well as continue with my interests in music and art. One struggle I had to overcome included transferring to a different school.

The transition from elementary school to middle school is different for everyone. For me, transferring from a private elementary school to a public middle school was a big step. Because the private school I attended was very much focused on religion, I got behind in certain subject areas such as math and reading. With a lot of outside tutoring and extra practice I managed to get my grades on track and be on the honor role all three years. Along with honor role I also managed to have perfect attendance.

That changed once I got to high school, especially my last two years. By then, waking up early became a hassle. Slowly I began to struggle on tests and quizzes. I saw many of my friends get there license revoked or get suspended from school. I did not want to be that person. I knew that if I ever got involded with the wrong people only bad could happen. Slowly I managed to get my act together, bring up my grades and not get involved with the wrong kind of people. Something else that I managed to improve in, besides my grades, was to play the piano and paint.

I entered and won many different competitions, including second place on state. Playing since I was five years old opened many doors and now I have to knowledge to teach other kids as well as becoming involved in church community. Although practicing took up most of my day, I still managed to get my school work done. Playing the piano and painting all these years helped me determine what I wanted to do the rest of my life. I know my passion in life is playing the piano and teaching my students.

Dealing with my struggle characterized me and shaped me into who I am today. Besides everything else, I am still very similar to the girl standing outside the elementary school on the first day. Today I did not bring my Barbie lunchbox, but my parents are here with their camera, taking pictures and wishing me well. Some of us here today are wondering how our lives are going to turn out. I managed to overcome my struggles and get accepted into a college where I can use my HOPE scholarship and continue my study in music and art.

It is acceptable to wonder about our future but I also think it is important to realize that our future is not just something that happens to us. It is up to us to create. So, fellow graduates, I advise each and every one of you to embrace every opportunity to come. Take what we have learned the last twelve years and put it to good use. Leave behind what is not helpful and bring forward the lessons that will be the working parts of your greatest invention, your life! Congratulations to the class of 2010!