GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS SPEECH

FOR

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Hello everyone!!! What a special day we have today, and what a special person to celebrate!! We are here to congratulate and acknowledge my wonderful grandson, Rusheel, upon his graduation from high school. I honestly cannot imagine being more proud than I am today. Rusheel is a fine young man and his high school achievements are beyond impressive. He is an inspiration to his family, his friends and his teammates and colleagues.

Although I may sound like I am boasting, we have to blame it all on Rasheel!!! From the time he was a young boy, he showed all of us just how special he was and is. His high school career has been filled with accomplishment and success, and I am so inspired by the dedication that Rusheel brings to all aspects of his life. I could not have asked for a more wonderful grandson.

Today we celebrate Rusheel’s achievements and we’re also here to wish him well as he moves on to the next part of his life. As a student in Fairmont High School Academy, Rusheel made his mark. He has demonstrated his passion for sports and his dedication to practice and to do his best, is an inspiration for all of us. He has shown what it’s like to be a part of a team in the best sense of the word. He has also demonstrated that he is a true leader as well, and I am sure his friends and teammates would agree. Rusheel has shown varied interests within his love of sports. Although we all know how much he loves basketball and the Lakers, his high school career saw him excel at Varsity Golf as well, and his love of golf didn’t get in the way of being the Captain of the Varsity Basketball team! A normal student would have been overwhelmed by the pressure to excel in sports as well as academics, but not Rusheel!!! Rusheel has demonstrated excellence in all that he does, and he received the Scholar Athlete Award, was a National Merit Scholarship candidate, was named AP Scholar with distinction, and class Valedictorian!!! So as I said earlier, if it seems like I’m bragging, let’s blame it on Rasheel!

Years ago, there was an expression, “How do you top an act like that?” It would seem that Rusheel reached the pinnacle of academic achievement in high school, but no! Apparently, he was just warming up, because he has been accepted for the greatest challenge of his young life-he has been accepted to, the Honors Program in Medical Education, and will be attending, Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine.

To Rusheel’s parents, (**Name son/daughter in law or daughter in law/son**), my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I want to wish you congratulations on “a job **VERY** well done.” Rusheel is a fine young man and he’s a magnificent reflection of the terrific and caring parents who raised him. (**If Rusheel has any brothers or sisters, acknowledge them**). To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in some cases it would have been difficult growing up with a brother like Rusheel, but knowing who he is and how much he demonstrates care and concern for everyone, I am sure you’d agree, that even though you may have your little disagreements, he’s been a great brother.

To Rusheel, I want to find the words to adequately express how proud we are of you. You’ve accomplished so much at such a young age. You are a clear example of someone who lives with his heart. You are in touch with your passions and you express an inspirational amount of devotion to your studies, your family, and your culture. Your consideration of others is rare in anyone, let alone in someone of your age. Most young people would be content to attempt to excel in sports or studies, but not both. Some would be content to have “someone else” volunteer to make this world a better place, but not you. Your involvement as a volunteer at Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development is like the icing on the cake, and you have made a tremendous difference in the lives of the beneficiaries of Chinmaya’s outreach programs. Your parents have done their best to provide their children with a substantial and considerate upbringing, and even though I am your grandfather, I have to say that you make all of us very proud.

I also know of you love of Hindu mythology, so I would like to share a little tale with you and our guests-you probably know this but it’s a story worth retelling, especially as a tribute to you and your devotion to your family. Shiva and Parvati had 2 sons, Ganesh and Murugan. As brothers often do, the 2 boys would argue, and in particular, they would argue about who deserved a piece of fruit given to their parents by the gods. In order to settle the argument, their parents suggested a race around the world, circling it 3 times, to determine who deserved and would receive the prize. Although his brother had the use of a peacock for his travels, Ganesh had only a mouse to take him. Ganesh was aware his chances of winning were, well, not very good, until he thought about his predicament realized his blessings in life, and came up with a solution. He went to his parents, walked around them 3 times and they were puzzled to say the least. Murugan was also perplexed to see his brother with his parents every time he completed an orbit around the world. When his parents asked why he was not traveling to at least fight to win the fruit, Ganesh simply replied that he realized his parents were the whole world to him and he didn’t need to go any further. All he had to do was to acknowledge and appreciate them and all they had done for him. When Murugan returned and heard the explanation, he accepted his brother’s superiority and bowed to him.

There is so much to be learned from the symbolism of mythology. From this story, we learn to think before we act, acknowledge those who deserve it, and remember that sometimes it’s more effective to work “smarter” and not necessarily “harder.”

Rusheel, you already posses many of the tools needed to have a life of impact, intelligence, and integrity. Your parents have taught you well. Take your knowledge and enter a larger arena. We are all rooting for you and we will be there for you when you need us. You’re entering an exciting first phase of what promises to be a well-lived and admirable adult life. Remember who you are, where you come from, all of the people who love you and all of the lessons you’ve learned so far. The road is about to get steeper, but we know you can handle it. Remember the goddess Saraswati, the goddess of divine knowledge and academic knowledge, and she will guide you, as she has guided others throughout our culture. Remember to place one foot in front of the other to make and follow your own personal path to greatness. You’re off to a wonderful start!

Congratulations! We are so proud of you!