COURSE COMPLETION SPEECH

FOR

DANIELLE LITTLE

Hello everyone and thank you all for being here in support of the graduates of this session of the Florida Basic Recruit Training Program. I want to welcome our special guests (**Name the wardens and assistant wardens if you can**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and of course all of us are excited to hear our special guest speaker, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The past ten weeks have been interesting, informative, and essential for all us who intend to pursue our careers in law enforcement. Although thirty-five candidates may have started with us ten weeks ago, I am proud to stand with the thirty-two others that you see here today. These fine future officers have shown their intentions, spirit, and dedication to the task and I know I speak for each of us when I say we are thankful for the lessons learned from everyone involved in this course. (**If you want to keep it a little light you can say**) And the instructors were pretty great also!!! (**Wait for the laugh**) (**If not you can say instead, We are particularly thankful to have learned so much from the instructors of this course**). With inspirations like Lt. Jordan, Sgt Engel, Sgt Fortneir, Sgt Reddick, Sgt Goodrich and Sgt Howard….to teach us, we learned our lessons well and we are all ready to tackle the most important classroom there is, and that’s the Florida Correctional system (**Please replace if another name is more appropriate**).

Senator Barbara Boxer once said, “Law enforcement officers are never ‘off duty.’ They are dedicated public servants who are sworn to protect public safety at any time and place that the peace is threatened…” The same is true of us and the responsibilities we are about to assume as professional corrections officers. I don’t think that any of us thought it would be smooth sailing when we entered the program almost three months ago, but what I have learned is that we learn from every circumstance and every life event. Everything we experience in life has an impact on who we are and how we conduct ourselves as officers, and knowing the responsibilities we are about to take on provides a new perspective for our actions and reactions. As we’ve learned to be tolerant yet assertive, compassionate yet prepared for any turn of events, we have also observed how our relationships to each other have affected our performance and reactions to situations. The lessons we learned in all of our classes have really served to inform how we process any situation… and as you all know, those classes gave us a thorough and comprehensive foundation to build on. From first aid/CPR to handling firearms and learning defensive tactics, from training in physical fitness and preparedness to learning effective communication, and from officer safety, facility and equipment familiarization to learning how to handle intake and release, supervising special populations and responding to incidents and emergencies, all of the lessons really taught us… and some really helped to diffuse some incidents within this class!! (**Wait for the laugh**). I think we would all have to admit that in the beginning, when we all got together, there was some friction, but through learning how to manage group dynamics, I think we all proved just how valuable this training has been-to **ALL** of us. We learned how to pull together as a team and work together to achieve mutual goals.

I am proud to be this course’s class President and to have the opportunity to work with Officers Little and Reed, and I want to thank all of you, my fellow classmates, for demonstrating your support and avoiding a potentially sketchy impeachment (**Wait for the laugh**). Of course we all learned a really valuable lesson from those incidents, and that is simple. Suwannee CI’s donation of that cake worked wonders as a peace offering!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge my colleagues who have won awards tonight, and I’d like to invite all of you to congratulate Officer Hunter from Madison for receiving the firearms award, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the recipient of the award for highest academics, and to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for receiving the Defensive Tactics award.

In a few short weeks we will all sit for the state examinations and we will be tested even further, but that will be nothing compared to when we all take our places in the profession and prove our dedication and training will serve us as we serve the citizens of Florida. Safety and security for our communities and families is our professional priority, but we all must remember that the true goal at the end of the day is to be able to do our jobs effectively and with a positive impact on those with whom we interact … and then the ultimate goal is to insure our own safety and be able to go home to our families. Thank you all!