GRADUATION SPEECH

FOR

BETUL YENILMEZ

Hello Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, esteemed faculty, devoted family and friends, and of course respected and dedicated fellow students and graduates. (**Say this with enthusiasm and encourage applause**). **We made it!!!** It’s been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ long years of hard work, financial challenges, scheduling conflicts, and agonizing over priorities, (**If you want to make a joke you can say**) … and that was just about deciding what to eat for lunch every day!! (**And wait for the laugh**) But here we are!!! We have officially graduated from KOC University and this is really a proud moment for all of us. Our minds and bodies are nourished and nurtured, challenged and conditioned, and we are ready to make a much needed and positive impact on the world… especially for those in need of our kind and healing attention. Someone once said that motivation is when dreams put on their work clothes. I think we’re all ready to don our scrubs and uniforms as we enter the world of medicine and make our mark. To many of us it has been a dream of a lifetime to be able to serve our communities as professional nurses and for those of us graduating today, our dream has been realized.

It has been said that nurses are at the “**heart**” of healthcare and wow!!! Is that true!!! We’re also at the brain, the spleen, the kidney and the liver, but I don’t think I have to go into THAT **MUCH DETAIL**…. Nursing is definitely one profession that can’t be done alone… for long… We need patients and **PATIENCE**, moral support, insight, intuition and real inner strength to do what we do… and that was just to get through school to be at this graduation!!! And of course we need to have a sense of humor… to calm and reassure the patient, to calm and reassure the doctor, to calm and reassure the bill collectors! (**Wait for the laugh**) Yes, there’s a big price to pay to acquire the fine education we’ve received, but anything that is truly worthwhile is worth great effort and sacrifice.

I know I speak for all of my fellow graduates when I say that it’s clear we were not the only ones to sacrifice. Each one of us owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to the family, friends, neighbors and colleagues who have made sure we reached this accomplishment. I can’t imagine going through this education process without the love and support of **my** friends and family… To my mother \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , thank you for inspiring me every day. Thank you for showing me how important it is to nurture and support people through the twists and turns in life. To my father \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, thank you for trying to instill a sense of responsibility in me. Between you and Mom, it’s not surprising that I became a nurse!!! I would like to thank my sister, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who lets me practice on her (**I hope she does**!)… She has allowed herself to be bandaged more times than either of us can count!! (**Or say something else she’s allowed you to do and wait for the laugh**). I also have to say an extra special thank you to someone else that is here today. Although we have heard that “Nurses are actually **angels** in comfortable shoes,” (**Wait for the laugh**) every day I thank the **heavens** for **my** “little bit of **HEVIN**.” (I hope her name is pronounced the same as **HEAVEN**!) It’s not quite what you think… you see my daughter’s name is Hevin and she is here with us today. (**Turn to Hevin in the audience and say**) Hevin, I look at you in the audience, hoping you are as proud of me as I am of you, and I know you gave up a lot to allow me to pursue my education. I can’t help but think of just how blessed and lucky I am…. First to be graduating today, second, to have you as my caring, loving, supportive daughter, and third, even though it may be a little unusual to have such a grown up child while attending nursing school, and although some may think I lived my life a little backwards…. usually school comes first, but you know what? I **KNOW** I did the right thing…. because if it weren’t for Hevin’s excellent tutoring skills…. don’t tell my professors but I have **NO** idea how I would have survived math class!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Here’s to you, all of my fellow graduates… I wish each one of us all of the luck in the world…. because this world and all of our neighbors need us. May we bring comfort and healing, a knowing glance and a gentle but assertive and confident hand to all we do. Congratulations and thank you all!