ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SPEECH

FOR

V. MINNAGANTI

Hello everyone!!! What a wonderful occasion this is!! This auditorium is filled with family and friends, love and joy, celebration and acknowledgement. Today we are transported to a place we all share- our connection to each other, to our culture and to the beauty and meaning of our precious Indian heritage. The **MAJOR** link we all have in common is my niece, your friend, sister, and inspiration, (**name your niece**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. There’s a song lyric that says, “Some people wait a lifetime for a moment like this…” And in this case they weren’t kidding!! (**Wait for the laugh**). \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has been training for **ten years** for this day. She has worked so hard to learn the traditional dance moves and to practice and plan for this presentation and today we can bask in the radiance of her significant accomplishment. Our culture has so many treasured traditions and for so many reasons this event is one of the most exciting. It is also no small achievement that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is also celebrating her high school graduation. Double the effort… double the triumph!!

Every culture and society throughout the world has its rites of passage and traditions. To experience Arangetram is to know that we literally walk the path of those who have preceded us and who have shown us the way. Today’s recital is filled with significance and symbolism. The power of expression through dance is something that transcends time and the importance of dance throughout history and civilization cannot be underestimated. I am sure that we have been “moved” by the program we enjoyed today. The late, great Martha Graham, considered to be a genius in the world of dance, once said, “Think of the magic of that foot, comparatively small, upon which your whole weight rests. It’s a miracle, and the dance is a celebration of that miracle.” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, today signifies the beginning of just how far and wide those feet will guide you throughout life. You’ve done beautifully today and your expression of grace and confidence, dedication and determination shows all of us that you have what it takes to go far in life. I think we all have the same feeling, and that is that you have shown us how deeply you care about your heritage, your purpose, and your self-expression.

You have worked so long and hard to be able to share your accomplishments and we have all been inspired by your message. As you danced it reminded me of the meaning of your name. Of course you know \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is of Indian original and it means “beautifully drawn.” I can’t help but be moved by the connection of your name to the art of dance. Each movement is like a graceful stroke in the air. As you danced you painted a picture of life and history and each step, as it predicted the next one, led you to fill the stage with color, light and energy. Always remember this day and use it to recall just how far you’ve come in the past ten years since beginning your dance practice. You’re almost twice the age you were when you started, you have your high school education and you’re off to conquer the world! Remember your strengths. When times get a tough… and they will, remember the resolve you demonstrated to learn more, to practice, to discover. Remember that life is not about regrets. It’s about preparation, knowledge and respect. Today is one of the significant rites of passage you will experience in life. Take a deep breath, take all of this in, and celebrate!

There’s one other analogy about dance that I want to share with you. Someone once said that when you dance, your purpose is not to get to a certain place on the floor. The point is to enjoy and appreciate each step along the way.

As your practiced and probably currently tired feet begin to lead you through your future, remember this day. Remember your achievements. Remember what it felt like to look around this room and see the faces of so many people that love and admire you, and remember to be present for each step you take from now on. It will make for a truly rich, blessed and fulfilling lifetime. Congratulations, and I am sure I speak for everyone here when I say how proud and impressed we are to see how you’ve blossomed!

(**Do you want to mention her parents and any brothers or sisters? If so you can say**) I would also like to extend special congratulations to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. This is truly a great moment for the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family! Thank you!