**15435, Caroline Pangramuyen**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here tonight to celebrate one of the greatest moments of our lives, our graduation from our Bachelor of Nursing program. We just survived 15 months of exams, essays, research, ATI competencies, group work, presentations, arduous clinical hours, all very tedious work. We knew going in this is an accelerated program that was difficult to be accepted into. But, we were accepted and now we’ve finished with flying colors.

For those here who are unfamiliar with this program, (*Use the school’s name here) a* National University that offers accelerated courses for the working student. It has a very competitive program for nursing and every 2 years, it accepts only about 20 applicants for the LVN to BSN program. It has a 97% passing rate for the board of registered nursing and many hospitals in southern California region prefer to hire graduates from the nursing program.

My cohort is close knit, we get along with each other well and I want to thank them for a wonderful experience. Anthony and Frank were always gracious when the women demanded, I mean requested. Corinne and Christina were always great for voicing our concerns and questions. Tiffany doesn’t have a mean bone in her body. Kim-Kim always had great comebacks, while Ashley and Leica always knew what page we should be on. Shauna always had a contagious laugh and Danielle was such a lady. Hanna was the baby in the group. Mikki and Lori had a great sense of humor and Katelin was my shot gun companion in the carpool lane. Rachelle was Wonder Woman. She had a baby during med surg. Bachelors of Science in Nursing is said to be the hardest but we all succeeded.

All nurses have a certain degree of obsessive compulsiveness, me being the first one. We all want that A right? But I learned in this program that not having an A is okay, passing is more important. Plans were definitely side railed and I learned to say it's okay, there will be another time and chance. Those syllabi and emails from the instructors were my holy bible. Those never failed me and they gave me a picture of what to expect and how to plan accordingly.

We had some interesting experiences during our time here, from the mannequins in Health Assessment Lab to the intensity of Med Surg. Psych taught us the power of the mind and community health was a humbling experiences—I will never take for granted the security of my home and the food in my kitchen. I found Leadership to be empowering.

But, the intensity was balanced by the lighter moments, like when there were 5 of us with computers and there were only 2 sockets, so Kim-Kim brought out her extension outlets. I remember once trying to take a patient's vital sign on the floor but her new dog was so cute and distracting. It was a real challenge trying to catch my preceptor--how do they walk so fast? Of course there was the time Leica brought out the clean toilet seat cover from the bathroom and said, "Facebook says we’ve been using toilet seat covers wrong.” Frank surprised us all when he said he wasn’t hungry but ate a 2 lb. loaded burrito, and my pancakes, sausage, and toast. I certainly enjoyed those rides and women stories with Fennie and Angela.

I want to thank the faculty and staff for your wisdom, patience, and understanding. May we be as competent as you, and exceed your expectations. We all have our challenges and struggles in life -- balancing marriage, family, kids, work, and school but nothing is ever too late, if there is a will, there is a way. This choice was ours, we stuck to it. We will have our own paths to make from here on. I wish everyone good luck and the very best.

But tonight let’s celebrate us! We have our reasons for choosing nursing. We worked hard for this education. I did it for a better life for my family. But I learned how to be a better listener, better person through this pursuit of education. The strength that we possess, that strength that we draw from when our head is under water comes from our mistakes and failures. We will never truly know ourselves or our strength until we acknowledge these. Thus failure in life and in our profession is inevitable, but life goes on. Don’t let that stop you. I want to encourage all of us to appreciate our accomplishment and have courage for our future. I want all of us to remember this night, and enjoy ourselves.

Thank you