**STUDENT ADDRESS**

**FOR**

**JEREMY ITEN**

**"CELEBRATING SUCCESS, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME"**

Ladies and gentlemen, faculty and administration, family, friends, students.... and of course fellow graduates of CSU, it is a tremendous honor and distinction to have the privilege to speak to all of you today at this, the Commencement exercises for the graduating class of 2017 of CSU. (**If there is anyone in particular who was instrumental in having you speak and you would like to acknowledge him or her, do so here**). I would like to extend special thanks to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for allowing me to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

When I was approached with the opportunity to speak in front of this audience, I must admit my initial reaction was to think.... "Hmmmmm. That's **DAUNTING**.... and then I thought a bit more and had a revelation... THIS YEAR'S THEME IS **PERFECT**!! .... "Celebrating Success, **ONE** Student at a Time....". That's exactly what I did!! As a member of the global campus, as an online student, that's exactly what my experience has been and I'm not quite sure that people grasp just how hard it can be to attend an online university. There was a song that was popular many years ago and in it was a lyric, "One is the loneliest number...." I can attest to that statement. Although it has been an incredible learning experience, completing a college degree while working at a full time job can conspire to be a bit overwhelming. For me the lyric might be changed to "SEVENTY" is the loneliest number...." that's the average number of hours per week I have spent working and attending CSU Global simultaneously.... but it's all been worth it.... think of the nights I had to stay up late and study.... the good news is.... my bed linens barely had to be changed.... I hardly used them!!! (**Wait for the laugh**).... think of all the times my husband Jeremy and I missed out on meeting friends and having some fun.... who needs food and pleasant conversation? Oh... and another thing.... my husband hardly has to shave or comb his hair.... I barely got a chance to look at him!!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Think of all of my favorite television shows I missed.... what could possibly be the upside to **THAT**? I'll tell you... I have absolutely no idea what a "re-run" is!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). It's all new for me....

All jokes aside, I am so grateful for the education I've received here at CSU Global. I have had a great opportunity to work in my profession for a local school district while honing my skills and earning my degree as a female IT student with a minor in cyber security.... like my life, it may sound complicated but I find it fascinating. Attending CSU Global truly meant that I **COULD** have it all...

The Italian philosopher Machiavelli said, "The more sand has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it." I have found that time and education provide that clarity for me, and for that I acknowledge the curriculum created and support given by the fine faculty of this great school. As we advance as a society and a culture, we live to understand just how crucial education is to our success. And also as we advance, we observe that our lives get simpler as they become more complex. With heightened connectivity and technological advances, the more we do the more we **HAVE TO DO**, but also the more we do the more we embrace adaptability. A wise man once said, "Adapt or die." I'm thankful that because of CSU Global campus, I was able to reach for the former!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Nelson Mandela reminded us that "Education is the most powerful tool you can use to change the world." I am ready to take up the gauntlet to make a difference in our community and I am eager to encourage and support my colleagues and friends to understand that as long as we are alive, we must be open to learning new lessons every day. We must remain alert and aware. Every experience is an opportunity. As Jidda Krishnamurti said, "There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning."

I am thrilled and excited to see where my education and passions will lead me. I am thankful to have a strong foundation in IT and cyber security and I know my skills and lessons will serve me well.... I look forward to celebrating this achievement with my husband, family and friends... I hope they still recognize me!! (**Wait for the laugh**) and I may even relax for a couple of hours and watch some science fiction or Gilmore Girls, but I promise you, no matter what I am doing or where I am, I will always be open to learning... after all, wasn't it Bruce Lee who said, "A wise man ... or **woman**...can learn more from a foolish question than a fool can learn from a wise answer..." Think about **THAT** for a momentand thank you all!!