**GRADUATION SPEECH**

**FOR**

**SHABNAM KASHANI**

Hello everyone! Each time I am asked to speak to a group of people about a colleague, student, resident.... whomever it may be, I am honored to have the opportunity, and I am always interested in doing the best that I can to convey my clear thoughts about, and assessment of, the subject. A few months ago, when I was asked to speak about Dr. Eamon Felton, I took my time to really consider my experience of this promising young doctor. I was intrigued and eager to share an accurate and considered impression and I wanted to really show my respect for such a fine young man. (**If you want to make a joke you can say**) Of course if I thought any longer, Eamon could have probably earned another degree or received another certification in that time.... so I tried to speed up my process! (**And wait for the laugh**). It's true! Eamon Felton doesn't mess around! ... and that's one of the points about him that really impresses me!

Every once in a while, our paths are crossed by a person who really stands out... one who exceeds expectations, excels in his or her field, and is humble and dedicated on top of all of the other skills and talents and characteristics they possess in abundance. (**If you want to make a joke, you can say**) ... and as soon as you meet someone like that.... let me know!! (**And wait for the laugh**). Of course I'm kidding. And of course I am referring to Eamon. The English essayist and playwright Joseph Addison said, "if you wish to succeed in life, make perseverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counselor, caution your elder brother, and hope your guardian genius." I have a feeling that Eamon was born with this innate wisdom. In my experience of him, this is how he lives his life.

It has been a privilege to work with, and get to know Eamon through his dedication to his profession and to observe the skills, intelligence, and compassion he brings to every aspect of his life and practice. Of course, to meet Eamon is to get a fairly clear and comprehensive snapshot of his character and very impressive accomplishments. I have witnessed and can speak for his skills.... he is a great physician and a technically great surgeon. He is a true team player and makes sure to be there for his colleagues and his team whenever he is needed. His accomplishments so far, throughout his life and his medical education and career have been nothing short of exceptional.

One might think that with the long hours and grueling schedule imposed on residents that Eamon might show signs of "wear and tear....". Well, to me, and I am sure to all of you as well, he is clearly able to maintain his "youthful enthusiasm." What's the secret to Eamon's success? Like I've thought and said, he's **EXCEPTIONAL**! (**Wait for the laugh**). It is rare that we meet someone that has been able to achieve so much, so thoroughly, and at such a young age. Sometimes when I think of it, it's difficult to imagine, but Eamon graduated from high school when he was **THIRTEEN** years old. I have a feeling Eamon instinctively chose to sidestep those "awkward teenage years" by pursuing his passions... learning, reading, travel, history.... he's someone who shows us he had no desire for "a misspent youth!" He had completed medical school by the time he was twenty-two, and here tonight, Eamon is ready to graduate from his residency program and enter into practice as an OB/GYN. How does he do it? There's a website online that shows comparison pictures of celebrities and asks the provocative question.... "Good genes or good docs?" Clearly Eamon can claim both! The encouragement and legacy he has received from his family, along with the support and education he earned surrounded by some of the best "docs" in the business have yielded one of the most promising young physicians to formally enter this field. Someone once said that it takes courage to be gifted. As Eamon demonstrates every day, it also takes focus, consideration, determination, and intuition. All of those characteristics are rare, and to find them all rolled up into a person with as much as Eamon possesses and willingly shares, turns out to be a gift for everyone that knows him.

Eamon may be young, but so far he has accomplished so much. If we take a look at his CV, we can see the true composition of this person. He's someone that knows how to identify his goals and pursuits and he's willing to work for them. Through teamwork and participation in a variety of important committees and organizations so relevant and essential to his education and profession, Eamon's passion for excellence is obvious. With his dedication to the application of his skills and his commitment to understanding, he is laser focused. And thanks to his respectful, compassionate, and kind nature, his interaction with patients is something to really be admired.

We are all so fortunate to be able to call Eamon a colleague and more importantly, a friend. But even more significant in Eamon's life is his wonderful family and his beautiful, intelligent, and supportive wife, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I know that the life of a physician isn't always fun and games, and for Eamon to be in a loving, intelligent, and supportive relationship nurtures, renews, and encourages Eamon to strive for even greater achievements. (**If Eamon's parents are present, do you want to acknowledge them? If so, you can say**) To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I want to acknowledge you and thank you for raising such a superior young man. Eamon is more than just an accomplished young doctor. He represents the future of our profession and sets an incredible example for his contemporaries, his community, and those that will learn by his actions and deeds.

And finally, Eamon, what can I say that hasn't already been said? I am sure you know how proud I am to have watched you learn and evolve over the past four years and I am also sure you know how impressed I am as I have observed the way you have respected this field and have sharpened your skills. Your attention to detail is impressive and your focus will take you far.

As you head off to begin the next phase of your life, you're going to have a lot to remember.... something that is clearly not an issue with you! I want you to remember how it's not only your medical knowledge and finely tuned skills that work to heal....your kindness and compassion are two of the greatest tools you can keep close to you. Whether you are in discussion with a colleague or interacting with a patient, remember to empathize. Remember that as doctors we have taken an oath. No matter how challenging a situation may be, maintain your integrity, use your knowledge and skills for the benefit of humanity, and treat others as you would want to be treated.

I know I speak for everyone that knows you and has observed and shared your singular life and career, that we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Continue to learn.... be persistent with sharing your compassion, and be vigilant in your respect for the past and your determination for a healthy, happy, enlightened future. Congratulations!

Thank you!