**GRADUATION SPEECH**

**FOR**

**JAROD KUMP**

Ladies and gentlemen, family and friends, officers and administrators, distinguished guests, and most of all to all of our graduates present today, I would like to extend congratulations and take a moment and acknowledge the achievements and progress made over the past year. The challenges and opportunities that await our graduates as they enter the world of professional law enforcement are very real, but they’ve learned from the best. This year’s graduates of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have earned their place in the history and heritage of this institution. They have received a strong and comprehensive foundation, and as each one takes his or her place on the streets and in the field, each action and reaction will have an impact. Now, more than ever, it is critical to be able to think quick, act with integrity and purpose, and keep people and communities safe.

Graduates, since June of 2017, most of you have been “in this together.” You’ve cracked the books and “scaled the walls” placed in front of you, all with the purpose to shape your knowledge, hone your reactions, and learn whatever is possible to learn in advance so that you are prepared. You’ve noticed that the workload has gotten progressively more demanding, leading up to “the **BIG FINISH**” of the last four months of arduous training and grueling schedules.... **SIX** nights a week. The relentlessness of the last four months of your schooling have encroached on every area of your lives.... and that’s purposely designed that way.... you see, in your early days at the academy, as much as you may have wanted to think you might just be studying for a “job,” over the course of your training, you have come to realize that a law officer is committed **TWENTY FOUR/ SEVEN**. Your realization of that and your pursuit of the achievements we celebrate today clearly demonstrate to all of us that you are all very special people. You have met stringent demands and have sacrificed a great deal to be in this class of 2018. And we applaud your dedication and character.

Senator Barbara Boxer has said, “Law enforcement officers are never “off duty.” They are dedicated public servants who are sworn to protect public safety at any time and place that the peace is threatened....” The teachers and administrators of this academy understand what it means to prepare you for any and all eventualities, and lessons are taught with the intention that you will never have to use what you’ve learned.... but that’s somewhat unrealistic. We see what is going on in this world and in our communities, and it is up to law enforcement to step up and truly be “officers of peace.” As challenging as situations may get... and we’ve heard about some fairly difficult scenarios lately, it is the mission of the police officer to be strong, detail oriented, quick thinking and most of all, compassionate. The only way we will heal our communities is by emphasizing the last part of the word....**UNITY**.

General George S. Patton has made many wise and thought provoking statements. His comments ably to police officers as well military, especially when he says, “The duties of an officer are the safety, honor, and welfare of your country first; the honor, welfare, and comfort of the people in your command second; and the officers own ease, comfort, and safety last.” As all of you heed those words, remember that it is your job to protect, and while, as General Patton states, your country and your comrades first, and **then** you, remember that your colleagues will have **YOUR** back. You’ve learned over the course of this program that teamwork, fellowship, integrity, and communication are what will get you through along with physical strength, perseverance, determination, and courage.

As officers of the law, your actions and thoughts need to be honest and authentic. There are **NO** dress rehearsals in this career. You have chosen an honorable and challenging career path and when there are moments that make you wonder, “What the heck have I done?” remember the law enforcement mantra, “When you feel like quitting, think about why you started.” Remember the people that encouraged and inspired you to get to this day. Picture the circumstances that motivated you through the academy and never lose sight of one true fact. You have chosen a noble and purposeful profession. People need you. Communities need you and rely on you to do the right thing.... and as we hopefully find the way to **build bridges** throughout our difficult and challenging society, the job of the law enforcement officer will truly be as a paragon of peace.

I wish congratulations and all best wishes to our graduating class and thank you for your extraordinary contributions. Thank you all!!