**GRADUATION SPEECH**

**FOR**

**PERRY LAMBSON**

Hello everyone. I’m Perry Lambson, and I am happy to now be able to say that I am a proud graduate of The Learning Academy. As I have grown up, I’ve realized that each one of us is special... in our own way... and I am thankful to have had the opportunity to study at an institution that promotes creativity... one whose requirements and schedule allow for a student’s true talents to shine through. Although this kind of freedom may not work for everyone, I am aware of, and grateful that I am the exception to that rule. Attending school has been once a week and participating in a fairly independently based program has allowed me to grow and learn in so many other ways... and that leads to real, genuine curiosity to learn and do more. I’ve been able to support my most passionate interests...my day trading and working at my family’s restaurant have provided me with non-traditional “course work” and valuable lessons that I would not have otherwise had. These lessons and this experience, leading to practical, useful training, are critical as we each find our way in the world in which we live. Each school day I would speak with (**Give John’s full name**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, our principal, about business and finance, my favorite subjects, and we would share insights with one another. Ever since my freshman year, while moving around from school to school, I also focused growing my brokerage account. I am now at a point at which I believe I can successfully make a living while exploring the world.... a once in a lifetime opportunity to gain even more knowledge while living abroad. While I believe that living life and doing business is the right way for me to go at this point in my life, I know we graduates are all different, unique young people who understand that encouragement and support are available in many different forms. I am so thankful to have found that support here, a place that has allowed me to explore and discover what works for me. I strongly believe there are alternatives but at the same time, not discrediting formal education.

I am really excited to see what awaits me as I move on from this part of my education. There are young people, my contemporaries, that are discovering their own path to professional and personal fulfillment. Each one of us has had the support, love and guidance of special individuals in our lives..... and I know that personally, for me, I would not be here and would not have the confidence to go forward as I plan, without the encouragement, guidance, and wisdom of those in my life. I would like to give special thanks to my mother, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for supporting me through everything, and to my a brother, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, someone I know, deep down, I can trust. He’s the kind of person who provides a mirror for me... and I find chances to reflect on life and what really means something as we interact. The people at school, like John, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have guided me and taught me to be aware and to be open to new ideas. Without each and every one of these people, I would not be who I am today. There’s a line in a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson that goes, “I am part of all that I have met.” Just based on that idea alone, I **KNOW** I am one lucky young man.

As I have learned from those that walked the path before me, I realize that others may look at the journey I have taken. If I had to give advice to students that will follow us as we graduate, I would like to share a quote from Robert De Niro in his movie The Score....“Make a list of everything you want now and spend the next twenty five years getting it, slowly, piece by piece.” I would also like to reassure so many of you teenagers here, today, that you don’t need to feel stuck following one path, there are always alternatives. The important thing to remember is this: graduating from high school is a crucial step in our lives. It marks the point at which we really begin to enter the world.... to step out on our own... to explore what life has to offer and where and how to make our own individual mark on the future. It marks the point at which we begin to “self generate...” to find our interests and to make our own plans. I know that to some it may seem weird that I have chosen the path that I intend to pursue, but I promise you this... I got here because I believe in a few very important points... I believe in curiosity... in finding out what something means, how it works, and how I can use that information to inspire me to be a more fulfilled and well rounded person. I believe that while education... both formal and what we learn in the “school of life” is extremely important... at this point, for me, I know that travel and “hands on” practical experience will really serve me well. I also know that I have my instincts and the wisdom of those that guide me if and when the point comes for me to take another look and try something new. ... and mostly I believe that what will make this generation great will be how we rise to opportunities...how we begin to think for ourselves... and how we put our plans into action in order to insure the health of our collective future.

Even though I am young, I can see how the world is changing.... and it’s going **FAST**. I realize we have to be open minded, educated, and adaptable to new ideas if we are to make it in the future.

A lot has been said on success, failure, and determination. Bruce Lee spoke of “laser like focus.” Conrad Hilton said, “...successful people keep moving.” Maybe Albert Schweitzer said it best... “Success isn’t just about what you accomplish in life; it’s about what you inspire others to do.” I think of all those that have inspired me, and I **cannot wait** to make my mark on this world!!! I want to congratulate my fellow graduates and thank all of you for your encouragement, support, and faith in me!!! Thank you all!!