**ECPI** **UNIVERSITY**

 **Commencement Graduation 2019**

 **June 1, 2019**

 **Valedictorian**

 **Beau Dorman**

**Beau, this an exciting event. It is a large event. There will be lots of noise, laughter, and conversations. Once you are introduced, go to the podium and stand in front of the microphones. The audience will begin to quieten down. Wait for most of them to see you and focus on you. If they do not, then calmly into the microphone say in a quiet voice: “thank you everyone, thank you, welcome.” That should quiet the remainder of those who were still talking. Begin slowly, and keep your pace steady but not rushed, speak to them as you would your friends in a coffee shop, or your jump-mates as you approached the green light. Calm, reassuring, and in command. You own this room, (although it’s an auditorium). As you talk, make eye contact with folks all around the auditorium. If you do not want to do that, then pick a spot on the very back wall, at ground level, such as a picture, a fire extinguisher, a door, etc. Then give your speech to that object. By looking just above everyone’s head, that will appear as if you are looking at folks individually. There will be times when you refer to your mom, and at those times, turn directly to the video camera that is videoing the speech, look right into the red light or lens as you say that sentence. Do not speed up as you talk. Listen to your own voice and judge if it is too rapid, then slow it down. Practice your speech by yourself several times at first, then again with someone you trust to listen. And if possible go to the auditorium when it is empty and practice it once there. A big auditorium is quite different than your living room. Get comfortable with the venue, the surroundings. If you want to switch around a word here or there, then just do it. You must be comfortable with the tempo and flow. You’re going to do just fine, just follow my suggestions.**

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GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE, WELCOME, WEMCOME. And thank you for that gracious and complimentary introduction. **What a day this is** ! My name is Beau Dorman, and I am the ECPI 2019 class Valedictorian. My goodness, that still hasn’t settled in. When I hear that I look around to see whom is being talked about. But it is me, and I am proud to have accomplished, and humbled to be, recognized for that achievement.

I want to acknowledge those in attendance here today:

To our administration, our faculty, our counselors, and especially **Mrs. Hicks**, who’s consistent help and assistance gave us the confidence to go forward. And to the IT Faculty as a whole, for the education they provided, and more importantly the patience they displayed for each of us to comprehend what we were learning. The **IT faculty** is very, very, connected to the high-tech industry, and they are on the cutting edge of every new advancement in all associated industries worldwide. I recently went through a battery of tests and practical exams for a Fortune 500 company. And I was ready, because the ECPI IT curriculum had prepared me to successfully complete their testing sequences. That not only made me confident that I knew what I was doing, but confirmed that I had chosen an exceptional educational university for my undergraduate degree.

Additionally, I cannot thank enough, and want to acknowledge, my family and friends. These were the people, the folks, who were on my ‘six’, and who always had my back, never letting me forget the mission and the goal.

And to my kids, who one way or another, always gave me encouragement, as kids will do in their own special way.

There is one more, very dear and important person I want to acknowledge. A person who I love deeply, a person who has inspired me to heights I would never have imagined. To a person who defines perseverance and resilience. To a person who taught me so much about life, caring, and determination. That wonderful woman couldn’t be here with us today in this auditorium, but she is watching this through a video recording. **(turn and look at the camera).** That woman is the reason I am standing here today, that woman

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is my **Mother,** and this valedictory speech is dedicated to her today, June 1st. 2019. I love you mom and I always will. **Pause**

My mother taught me, and showed by example, many aspects of life. She was the consummate mom, patient, disciplined, caring, nurturing, encouraging, and comforting. One of the most valuable tenants and lessons of life I have learned from her, and one I **still** see in ***her*** every day, including **today**, is the attitude of *perseverance, to keep fighting, and never, never, give up.* That is what I have done and will continue to do. And that is what she has always done,…..and continues to do right now, this minute, as I stand here today.

So often these graduation speeches, these Valedictorian speeches, can drone on and on, as most people just want to get out of here and on with their celebration. I do not intend to profess to have all the answers, but I do have a few. I will tell you I have seen some serious interactions in this world, and I have been a part of some very focused campaigns in distant locations, (and I don’t mean political campaigns). I have witnessed and experienced some extreme intensity between humans in their fight for survival. As I embark on my new career in computer technology I take a calculated leap of faith. Calculated from preparation and precise planning, similar to my previous employer, the United States Army, when with complete confidence I jumped into the pitch-black skies over Iraq and Afghanistan, as an Airborne Infantryman.

Those were duties and tasks that could not be rebooted, because the hard fact was that we were falling through a hostile sky, and we couldn’t start over by simply hitting the escape key. These were assignments with no do-overs, no F1 or F4 key for help. This was life and death, we had to have it right the first time, because if we didn’t, there was no second time. And when that chute deployed, (because I knew it would from proper preparation), then our next challenge was impact. After that our real work began. And we knew that if we had come that far, falling out

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of that dark cold sky for a mission, then come hell or high water, that mission was going to be completed. From the minute we geared up back at base, until debriefing after mission accomplished, we never wavered, we never flinched, we persevered, we showed resilience, no man or woman was left behind, and we accomplished what we set out to do.

There are good as well as unpleasant ways to approach and be successful in a career or a profession. And the same perseverance and resilience that I displayed in the service to my country, I intend to follow and practice in my personal and professional life. All of us, myself included, should plan our goals not only with focused determination, but also by exercising compassion and integrity. Business is highly competitive, but it isn’t war. Business can be cutthroat, but not the same cutthroat as war. As we start our next journeys and careers, and even for those of you who are well on your way, here is my philosophy, my approach. I believe it is possible to succeed, utilizing proper preparation and planning, and still be a good person. Business, technology, and all of industry, can be accomplished with honor, dignity, and values. We all need to treat people with respect, until they prove otherwise. We need to act towards people the exact same way regardless of their social or economic status. We must recognize and comprehend that we are not the only culture in this world. We need to go out and see the world, see the occupants of this globe, and by doing so they, and we, will learn and grow. Whether you’re buying, selling, servicing, transporting, researching, or the thousands of other careers, they all can be done with integrity and fair play. It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation, but only seconds to ruin it. So, make your handshake your word, your bond. Pull out your moral-compass and set it on a course of good decisions and right choices. Gray areas, partial truths, are just that, and should not be the path of least resistance. Do *what* you say you will *do* and do it *when* you said it will be *done*. Set the bar high, bring folks up to *your* *standards*, don’t fall to theirs.

And *most* importantly, remember *family* comes first. Give your family your time, your patience, your guidance, and support. Be their beacon and always, *always*, protect them when necessary. When all is said and done,

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they, *your family*, not your career, *will be* your legacy. They will reflect the impact you have made on this planet.

Many of those ideals I practice now, some I am still learning. And please believe me, the source of those, in one form or another, came from my mother. For eternity I will be thankful for her *teaching* and *showing* me those life’s lessons.

So,…. ***go****,….* ***conquer***,…. ***win***, and for heaven’s sake*,* ***enjoy life*,….** just do it with both ***compassion*** and ***fair play*** to ***all***.

Please be **careful** out there today **everyone** and **Thank You** from the bottom of my heart.

 Until we meet again,….**Goodbye**