

# THE BANNER

Graduation 2015

North Brunswick Township High School  
98 Raider Road North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Volume 30, Issue 05

## Lester Fan, Valedictorian

*Isha Chavva, Staff Writer*

Lester Fan is the Valedictorian for the class of 2015. When asked how he felt about the rapidly upcoming graduation, Fan replied, “Uhh... it’s coming up faster than I would’ve liked. Freshman year it was far, now it’s here. I want more time.”

Fan will attend Rutgers University to major in computers and electrical engineering, and hopes to later enroll in a prestigious graduate school.

Of all his high school memories and important figures, Fan will remember AP Calculus BC with Ms. Goncharova the most. “She’s an amazing teacher,” he says. He will also remember “all my teachers and friends and Mr. Clark”.

His biggest motivation has been “the feeling if there is a top level, I have to achieve it. Trying to do the best I can because it’s possible.” Fan feels he left his mark in the classroom but wishes he was more involved in extracurricular activities.

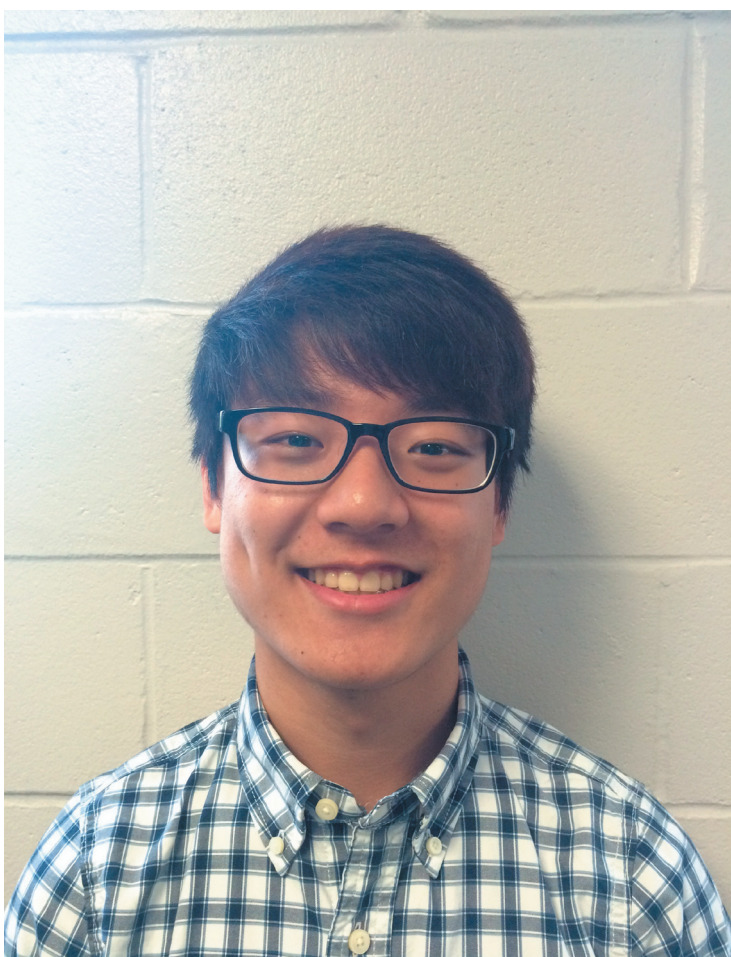
He adds, “The school’s diversity has helped me become a well rounded person.” Fan’s advice to the incoming freshmen would be to be comfortable with who you are and not to mold yourself into someone that you’re not.



*Photo Courtesy of Deep Patel*

## Joe Lee, Salutatorian

*Isha Chavva, Staff Writer*



*Photo Courtesy of Edward Carpenter*

Joe Lee is the Salutatorian for the class of 2015. He is planning to pursue a degree in chemical engineering.

Lee plans to attend both a college in California and graduate school. While his five year plan is not, as he says, “set in stone”, he is both scared and excited to leave for his college journey.

However, Lee believes that he is more than just his amazing grades. “When I came, I only wanted grades,” he says, “when I got to see my potential, I worked harder to put myself out there. Here, I am unique.”

He has left his mark on NBTHS by inspiring the volleyball team, especially the underclassmen, to work harder. Lee says that the people that inspired him the most were “Jesus and my parents.”

North Brunswick, in its turn, has left its mark on him. Lee says he will remember his hometown, “Because it’s home to Tim Howard, so I brag!”

In addition to his hometown heroes, Lee is influenced by his teachers, and one in particular--Mr. Amendola. Lee said he was one of the best teachers he has ever had and has encouraged his presumption of chemistry in college. “[Mr. Amendola] is easy to talk to, can teach, and knows chem.”

Who will Lee remember, after he leaves NBTHS? “A lot of my teachers from the last two years, and my best friends,” says Lee.

Lee’s advice for underclassmen? “Don’t be stupid. Smoking and drinking shouldn’t deter you from your focused high school career. Get involved, make friends.”



## Shane Tieger, Class President

*Anthony Kovach, Staff Writer*



*Photo Courtesy of Tajae Ali*

Shane Tieger, president of the class of 2015, is relieved that he is graduating this year. He cites his key motivation in order to get through his high school years as his fear of being rejected from the school of his dreams, persuading him to pursue a healthy four years of high school in order to be accepted.

The class president shares his good sense of humor when asked about how he plans on spending the following years after graduating North Brunswick Township High School. Tieger insists on becoming “uber famous”. He has a natural affinity for music as proven in the past when he performed at various school events with both his guitar and vocals. Mrs. Mercier will be in his memory as he leaves the building to attend Monmouth University.

As president of the class of 2015, Tieger oversaw the facilitation of his class’s proms both years. He feels that the success of these events left his mark on his classmates and the school as a whole. He says that North Brunswick molded him into the fine and young adult that is proud to ascend from the halls of our school into his awaiting future. As for the incoming freshmen, he believes they should avoid fights and “suck it up and do your homework”.

## Shivani Mathur, Class Speaker

*Anthony Kovach, Staff Writer*



*Photo Courtesy of AJ Savage*

Shivani Mathur, this year’s class speaker, was selected from a vast and intellectual group of individuals who desired to speak at graduation. Her speech was selected for its clarity and embodiment of what it means to be a senior, graduating and moving on from her high school career.

Mathur is ready to embark on a new journey but will always reminisce about her time walking the halls and attending the classes of North Brunswick Township High School. She says, “Each year has been filled with so many great memories.”

She thanks her favorite teachers, Ms. Depasquale, Dr. Ellis, Mr. Weiss, and her NBTHS friends, who helped her to become the respectful and compassionate person she prides herself on being today. Mathur’s main motivation to perform exceedingly well academically is the encouragement received from her family and trust they placed within her abilities to succeed.

Mathur made her mark by being involved in Model UN, SGO, and the Mediterrasian Club. After graduation, Mathur has a five year plan that consists of graduating from NYU, securing a job, and getting an MBA. Mathur’s message to all upcoming freshmen is to enjoy their experiences here, as much as she did.

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Danielle Abraham	Silvia Aquino-Montes Philadelphia University	Timothy Bertrand Seton Hall University	David Chapman Rider University
Namita Abraham Rutgers University	Amandeep Arora Rutgers University	Kiana Best Champlain College	Troy Chibbaro
Molly Abramson Middlesex County College	Lucinda Asham Middlesex County College	Kunaal Bhandari Rutgers University	Keertana Chirra Purdue University
Ayesha-Batool Adan	Jessica Aulenbach Rider University	Isa Billings	Asef Chowdhury Rutgers University
Nana-Yaw Adubofour Montmouth University	Vanessa Avelar Middlesex County College	Jerik Binbinon Rutgers University	Ihram Chowdhury Rutgers University
Lesley Aguiar Seton Hall University	Annume Ayaz Middlesex County College	Sukeerthi Bitra Rutgers University	Grace Chu Rutgers University
Shayan Ahmad Middlesex County College	Aaqib Baba Middlesex County College	Steven Bloyed Rutgers University	Kevin Chunilall Rutgers University
Sahar Ahmed New Jersey Institute of Technology	George Baier Rutgers Newark	Kai Boncoeur	Carina Cisneros Middlesex County College
Sarah Ahmed Rutgers University	Kelly Bailey Middlesex County College	Lia Boncoeur Rowan University	Brianna Codrington Rutgers University
Misbah Alam University of VA	Naini Bansal Pratt Institute	Ashley Bonilla Middlesex County College	Rebecca Colandrea University of Sciences
Austin Alfonso Susquehanna University	Nicole Banyacki Raritan Valley Community College	Janella Branch Maryland Institute College of Art	Kevin Cole
Nicolette Aloia East Carolina University	Kasturi Baranwal Rutgers University	Lucinda Brima Middlesex County College	Jamiles Collado Middlesex County College
Kaylyn Altreche	Gabrielle Barbato	Alexandre Brito Rutgers University	Emily Conroy Richard Stockton University
Elizabeth Amoako Middlesex County College	Molly Barker	Taylor Brooks Bloomsberg University	Raven Cooper Middlesex County College
Addis-Asia Anderson Clark Atlanta University	Melanie Barnes Monmouth University	Jennifer Carbajal Middlesex County College	Jeffrey Cruz-Garcia Middlesex County College
Dante Anderson Middlesex County College	Marie Barrie LIM College	Jessica Caron Montclair State University	Israel Cruzado Middlesex County College
Emely Andino Monmouth University	Eric Barthole Middlesex County College	Michael Caruso Middlesex County College	Thomas D'Ambrosio Monmouth University
Mark Anglin	Aldo Battle Mercer County College	Anthony Casanueva Middlesex County College	Rithika D'Souza Rutgers University
Zinaida Angloher	Youssef Bayoumi Middlesex County College	Joseph Castellanos Monroe College	Jordan Daniels Middlesex County College
Chinyere Anokwute Middlesex County College	Romello Belton	Mario Castellanos Membrano Middlesex County College	Warlenys De la Cruz United States Marine Corps.
Jaclynn Apostol Middlesex County College	Michael Benimovich Northwestern University	Tariq Cathcart	Elvin De Los Angeles Middlesex County College
Melanie Applebaum Middlesex County College	Todd Benkovics Middlesex County College	D'Onna Cephas-Davion Middlesex County College	Michael DeFrancesco Rowan University
Tajera Appleton Kean University			



Jocelin Delaluz Nyack College	Alam Fareed Middlesex County College	Jenna Gaston Middlesex County College	Yazmin Gutierrez Middlesex County College
Makijah Deloatch Morgan State University	Asra Farooqi Middlesex County College	Joseph Gaston SUNY-Oswego	Eileen Guzman Middlesex County College
Jenna DeMato Rutgers University	Gerelis Feliz Rutgers University	Solomon Gayle William Paterson University	Malachy Hamilton  Imani Handy
Neil Dhawan Rutgers University	Sameka Ferdous Middlesex County College	Patrice Germain Mercer County Community College	Jontae Hankins Wesley College
Christopher Diaz Middlesex County College	Julian Fernandez Musicians Institute	Jacob Geyer Rutgers University	Alison Hart Middlesex County College
Emily Doherty East Stroudsburg University	Jordan Fisher  Phillip Fisherman University of Hartford	Hamzah Ghani Middlesex County College	Sarah Hart Fordham
Sarah Dohn West Virginia University Institute of Technology	Kierra Fleming Brookdale Community College	Vincent Gibbons Rider University	Alyssa Hawkins  Sydney Helms Virginia Tech
Claudia Doll University of South Carolina- Beauford	Andrew Flores Rutgers University	Karan Gill Rutgers University	Jeong Hyun Heo
Sarah Donofrio Rutgers University	Jesus Flores	Amanda Girello Rutgers University	Yessenia Hernandez Calero Middlesex County College
Nikki Dorch Middlesex County College	Richard Fortes	Khamisi Glover Elmira College	Jessica Herrera Middlesex County College
Kimberly Dornick Middlesex County College	Cassidy Frattalone Middlesex County College	Lucas Gomes Rowan University	Carole Herskovic Wood Tobe-Coburn School
Harit Dubal Middlesex County College	Sierra Frederickson Middlesex County College	Jeakeline Gomez-Madrid Middlesex County College	Tatiana Hill Pennsylvania State University
Andrew Duffer Rutgers University	Aaron Fuentes Monroe Community College	Valarie Gonzalez Chamberlain College of Nursing	Erick Hilliard United States Army
James Duffy Rutgers University	Heather Gaffney Mount Aloysius College	Hector Gonzalez Done Rutgers University	Emma Howard Boston University
Leslie Duran	Pierre Galindo DeVry University	Juan Gonzalez-Genchi Middlesex County College	Jesus Huerta New Jersey Institute of Technology
Jamie Einiger University of Delaware	Taylor Gallagher Rutgers University	Tavyn Graham Middlesex County College	Lauren Hurd Empire Beauty School
Jesmarly Espinal Rutgers University	Gabriela Gallardo Middlesex County College	Moksh Gudala Rutgers University	Hillary Hyppolite Middlesex County College
Waldy Espinal Middlesex County College	Suvin Gamage University of North Carolina	Massiel Guerrero Middlesex County College	Nnenna Ibe Princeton University
Nathaniel Facey New Jersey City University	Marili Garcia Middlesex County College	Tameshwar Guman Middlesex County College	Kerwin Ifill Felician College
Garrick Falcetano Mercer County Community College	Samantha Garcia Louisiana State University	Tony Guman	Vignesh Ilango Rutgers University
Huafeng Fan Rutgers University	Kevin Gartner Rutgers Universtiy	Garrett Gunter	Ammaar Iqbal Rutgers University
		Anant Gupta Boston University	

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Idalberto Izaguirre Middlesex County College	David Kim Rutgers University	Sieta Leon St. John University	Geoffrey Mcfall Middlesex County College
Phillip Jackson Middlesex County College	Stephanie Kirkpatrick Richard Stockton College of NJ	Suraj Lingala Rutgers University	DeAsia McMillon Burlington County College
Jamie Jadav The College of New Jersey	Eric Ko University of Nevada-Las Vegas	Taylor Lodise Vassar College	Anthony Medina LIU College
Jibba Jalloh Middlesex County College	Victoria Ko Cullinary Institute of America	Carlos Lopez	Yeselyn Melendez Middlesex County College
Vandan Jani Mercer County College	Sridevi Kodati Rider University	Mark Loshak Rider University	Leticia Mendez Kean University
Austin Jarvis Middlesex County College	Srikar Kodati New Jersey Institute of Technology	Kristen Lotfalla Rowan University	Carolina Mendia Middlesex County College
Alexander Jimenez Kean University	Brandon Koodish Middlesex County College	Cassandra Luken Rutgers University	Ravi Mevawala Rutgers University
Jordany Jimenez Mercer County College	Saran Koroma Middlesex County College	Arlene Luna Salson Academy	Cynthia Mihalenko Montclair State University
Ashley Joga Paulino Middlesex County College	Brett Krause Rutgers University	Anthony Lupo Rutgers University	Ronald Minott Daytona Beach Community College
Corey Johnson Middlesex County College	William Kruah St. John's University	Alison Macko Middlesex County College	Alexa Molinari Rutgers University
Leena Johnson University of the Sciences	William Krzewick Kean University	Harmeet Madhaan Seton Hall University	Tamaebiere Moni-Erigbali University of Connecticut
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Jessenia Juarez-Romero	Ananya Kudugi New Jersey Institute of Technology	Christian Maldonado	Kimberly Montero Sanchez Middlesex County College
Joseph Kady Rutgers University	Joanna Kuldinow Albright College	Robert Mannifield Rutgers University	Lenner Montoya
Akshay Kamath Rutgers University	Anirudh Kulkarni Brandeis University	Matthew Maranca Wilkes University	Fazeela Moonalall Middlesex County College
Mariam Kamel Rutgers University	Angel Kurien Alvernia University	Nicholas Maranca New Jersey Institute of Technology	Alejandro Moya
Sreeteja Kankati Fairleigh Dickinson University	Angel Kurien Alvernia University	Adriano Marques Middlesex County College	John Mueller SUNY-Albany
Saumya Kapoor Rutgers University	Jovanna Larose St. Peter's University	Breanne Martin Morgan State University	Matthew Mueller Rutgers University
Vernon Kee	Sara Lebosky Rider University	Shivani Mathur New York University	Dy-Asiah Murdaugh
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Nyron Khan Middlesex County College	Kangmin Lee University of Southern California	Brandon Mattis Rider University	Tapesh Nagarwal New Jersey Institute of Techonology
Taham Khan Rutgers University		Jaykwon McCray Union County College	

Nimisha Nandankar University of California-San Deigo	Neal Patel Rutgers University	Nicholas Puleio Pennsylvania State University	Bryant Rogers Mercer County College
Pradham Nandyala Rutgers University	Neel Patel Rutgers University	Madiha Qasim Rutgers University	Edward Rojas
Aziza Ndaw Nw York University	Palak Patel Kean University	Priyanka Rajani Rutgers University	Sabeen Rokerya Rutgers University
Sara Nemeth Middlesex County College	Priyanka Patel Rider University	Kimberly Ramirez Saint Peters University	Arturo Roman Rutgers University
Collin Nobles Hampton University	Savan Patel Rutgers University	Amber Ramos Lynn University	Dante Rowell
McKaylin Nora Roger Williams University	Alexis Pelaez Avila Middlesex County College	Nikitha Rangineni Rutgers University	Jazmin Salgado Middlesex County College
Pranay Numboori Rowan University	Jonathan Pena	Akhil Rani SUNY- Stony Brook	Christopher Salimbene Rider University
Robert Orokos Stonehill College	Daulin Pena Feliz Middlesex County College	Sarojoanne Rao	Richard Salimbene University of Connecticut
Kimberly Ortega Middlesex County College	Kiara Peralta Siri Berkeley College	Nicholas Razzano Middlesex County College	Cristh Salinas Middlesex County College
Martin Ortiz Rider University	Alexander Perez Middlesex County College	Kyle Reinson University of Delaware	Nolan Salus Rutgers University
Precious Oshodi Saint Peter's University	Victoria Perfeito Middlesex County College	Matthew Resnick Middlesex County College	Zhane Samaroo
Shreya Pandya University of Connecticut	Sara Perlowitz Pennsylvania State University	Pamela Reyes The Salon Professional Academy	Justin Sanchez Middlesex County College
Sachin Parmar New York University	Andrew Petersen Middlesex County College	Jorge Reyes Pais Middlesex County College	Laura Sandoval Middlesex County College
Payal Patani Penn State University- Harrisburg	Autumn Philip Paul Mitchell The Lab	Mariyah Rich	Alexander Sanducu Rutgers University
Anand Patel Philidelphia University	Nathaly Pichardo Saint Peters University	Antonio Rivera Middlesex County College	Eliana Santiago Middlesex County College
Deep Patel Middlesex County College	Pamela Pilapil Middlesex County College	Aadil Rizwan Drexel University	Gavelys Santiago Berrios Suffolk County Community College
Deep Patel Ithica College	Roshani Pise Rutgers University	Bianca Rodriguez Rutgers University	Pongkhi Sarmah University of Massachusetts- Amherst
Devarat Patel Rider University	Kevin Poindexter Raritan Valley Community College	Gabriela Rodriguez Kean University	Ajaratu Savage Rutgers University
Jay B. Patel Middlesex County College	Kevin Poli Stevens Institute of Technology	Guadalupe Rodriguez Middlesex County College	Amanda Scharf Caldwell University
Kishan Patel Arcadia University	Curtis Porter III Middlesex County College	Kiara Rodriguez Saint Peters University	Rebecca Schnier Rowan University
Maitri Patel Long Island University	Nicholas Provenzano Middlesex County College	Marienny Rodriguez Middlesex County College	Sean Schoonover Pennsylvania State University
	Darian Puentes	Tae-Quan Rodriguez ASA College	Nicholas Scott Rider University



Josephine Scotto Di Clemente  
Middlesex County College

Rachel Seidman  
Montclair State University

John Selby  
Brookdale University  
College

Aditi Shah  
Rutgers University

Noman Shah  
Middlesex County College

Caitlin Shanahan  
Montclair State University

Katrina Shelton  
University of Southern  
California

Katherine Siegel  
Rutgers University

Zachary Silva  
Middlesex County College

Alexandrea Simpson  
Fairleigh Dickinson  
University

Eric Slade  
Middlesex County College

Sarah Sleiman  
The College of New Jersey

Hasaan Smith

Arianny Solano  
Rider University

Christopher Solano  
United States Marine Corp  
Brian Sosa  
Saint Peter's University

Paul Spalding  
Johnson and Wales University

Hassan Spall  
Middlesex County College

Shane Springstead  
Rowan University

Jonathan St Ange  
Rutgers University

Amanda Stankiewicz  
Loyola University of  
Maryland

Summer Steadman  
Middlesex County College

Anthony Stilwell  
Piscataway Vocational  
School- HVAC

Tiffany Suazo  
Middlesex County College

Jaqueline Suero  
Middlesex County College

Michael Sukhram  
Middlesex County College

Anthony Tacinelli  
Florida State College at  
Jacksonville

Elisia Tadros  
Middlesex County College

Erica Taitt  
Pennsylvania State University

Marcell Takacs

Mehedi Tamim  
Middlesex County College

Tony Tan

Stuti Tandon  
Rutgers University

Hooria Tariq  
Middlesex County College

Joshua Taubenslag  
West Virginia University

Bryan Taveras  
Saint Peter's University

Amari Taylor  
Middlesex County College

Darryl Taylor  
University Technical Institute

Paris Terrell  
Seton Hall University

Sreesaisindhu Thogarchedu  
Rutgers University

Dajah Thomas  
Pennsylvania State University

Rexford Thomas

Taijerah Thomas Hamlett  
Middlesex County College

Shane Tieger  
Monmouth University

Rangaraj Tirumala  
Rutgers University

Nilo Torres  
Job Corp

Raul Torres  
Middlesex County College

Ariana Towns  
Middlesex County College

Andrew Tsygan  
West Chester University

Nicholas Tucci  
Fairleigh Dickinson  
University

Samantha Tupayachi  
Middlesex County College

Krithika Uthaman  
Rutgers University

Luis Valentin  
Middlesex County College

Anthony Vasquez  
Rutgers University

Luisaura Vasquez  
Middlesex County College

Zenia Vasquez  
Middlesex County College

Chandni Vazirani  
University of Sciences

Frank Vega  
Middlesex County College

Kyle Vega  
Mount Ida College

Varun Venkatraman  
Johns Hopkins University

Tara Viray  
Rutgers University

Cozette Vitanza  
Middlesex County College

Kiranmayi Vuthaluru  
SUNY at Geneseo

Kunj Vyas  
The Ohio State University

Tej Vyas  
Middlesex County College

Imani West  
Temple University

Briana Williams  
Morris College

Jamie Williams  
ITT-Technical Institute of  
Technology

Lorenzo Williams

Orbestes Williams  
Middlesex County College

Taylor Ann Winkler  
Ramapo College

Zoey Woody  
Centenary College

Ashaan Wroten

Rushabh Yajnik  
Rutgers University

Akhil Yerra  
Rutgers University

Christopher Young  
Middlesex County College

Julie Youngman  
Marywood University

Tara Youngman  
SUNY at Purchase College

Hope Yuhas  
The College of New Jersey

Armani Zephyr  
Middlesex County College

Kevin Zimmerman  
United States Air Force

*Congratulations*

*Class of 2015!*

## Gerelis Feliz

I would like to greet all of the visiting dignitaries, administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Thank you for sharing this amazing milestone with us; it means the world. To start, I would like to share a story with all of you. Many of you may have heard of the Bible story called, “The Good Samaritan” But to recap for some of you, here is the story.

Jesus was hanging out with a group of men were experts of the Jewish law. And one of the experts asks Jesus, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”, And Jesus asks “What is written in the Law?” and the expert replies “Love the Lord your God with all of your heart and with all of your soul and with all of your strength and with all of your mind and love your neighbor as yourself.” Then Jesus says, “That’s correct, do this and you will live” But the man was trying to justify himself, he was looking to avoid the love your neighbor as yourself rule so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” And Jesus was quick to reply with a parable.

The parable begins with a man. This man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and went away leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he went to the other side of the street. Then, when a Levite came to the place and saw the injured man, he also passed on by to the other side of the street. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds. Then he put the wounded man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, which is roughly about 40 dollars and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, “Look after him, and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.” Then Jesus asks the expert in the law, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” and he replies “The one who had mercy on him.” Then Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

I can imagine that there was silence after Jesus had told this story. The hatred ran deep between the Jews and the Samaritans. Jews believed that Samaritans were not to be trusted. Samaritans were supposed to be unclean savages. And here is

Jesus, a Jewish man, painting the Samaritans in a favorable light. Then, he proceeds to tell the experts in the law to go and do likewise. They must have thought he was crazy but Jesus was on to something. Love your neighbor as yourself.

I have come to know that it is not the person that has a radically different culture and lives on the other side of the world that is

hardest to love but the nearby neighbor you see everyday whose skin color, language, customs, and values are different from our own. We choose to hurt and ignore those who are not quite like us. Such actions hurt. They are detrimental and you can see the consequences of these choices in places such as the Ferguson case, Missouri and Baltimore, Maryland where the decision to not love your neighbor causes irreparable damage. Our own country is hurting and I cannot take it any longer.

This is a call to end the hurt, to drop the racism, the sexism, the prejudices, and the discrimination. I am overwhelmed with all of the bad in this world. It is time for the Class of 2015 to show our good to the world. We have to be a shining light in the midst of darkness. It is up to us to fight for the rights of our neighbors, It is up to us to bring justice. We have to change the world. We cannot graduate and move on with our lives thinking, “Someone else will do something.” We cannot think, “But who am I? What good can I do?” We are citizens of this world and our job is to make it a better place. We are too good for intolerance, we are too good for hatred. Love your neighbor as yourself, love your neighbor as yourself. Be the good Samaritan. I implore you, Class of 2015 to go and do likewise.



*Photo Courtesy of Aldo Battle*



## Taylor Lodise

We stand together today from various backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, yet we are united by a common goal, success. For thirteen years we may have faltered and failed, for we are only human, but more than anything we have tried and triumphed. We have struggled through the trying times of high school, Linwood, and even elementary school. My fellow classmates through those struggles we have conquered! We have the privilege today to reflect on the past, savor the present, and fantasize about the future, both near and far. Dignitaries, administrators, teachers, parents, and classmates, it is with great honor that I address these past eighteen years of our lives that we have spent together in the not-so-little town of North Brunswick—our home.

A wise man once said: “if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” One succeeds simply when a desired task is accomplished, yet one does not truly grow until he or she learns from those experiences that lie ahead. The definition and fulfillment of success are different for every single person in this room. As you leave this ceremony and encounter greater feats, think about what you want to get out of this life, and never lose sight of your goals. No mountain is too high to climb with the right dedication, diligence, and passion. As graduates, we will have

the opportunity to trek these mountains.

We started this life together, and we have supported each other from day one—from the first day of kindergarten, when napping and drinking milk were our only cares, to this very day, this very moment, when we commence into adulthood as graduates of the NBTHS Class of 2015. Another wise man once said: “We Are North Brunswick”. I am so honored to have grown up with such a diverse, talented, passionate group of classmates who continue to inspire me today. We started from the bottom and—dare I say it—now we’re here! While it is time to part ways and gain real world experience, pursue this entity of success wholeheartedly, and forget not your Raider roots. Thank you.



*Photo Courtesy of Aldo Battle*

## Kevin Poli

Before I had the chance to deliver it out loud- I wrote three speeches, and I in that time watched speech after speech get smaller and smaller, and that is when I realized that what I liked so much about speech number three, had nothing to do with what I did say, but what I chose not to say. I didn’t spend speech number three expressing how far I thought we as a class had come, I didn’t bother making a joke about how fast these four years had gone by, I most certainly avoided the part where I face the crowd with my arms extended and urge the audience to never give up on their dreams.

Instead, speech three wasn’t about the wisdom I naively thought I could impart on to you, but the wisdom that four years with this class has imparted onto me. Steve Jobs told us to “Stay hungry and Stay Foolish” and I have yet to meet a group, no matter their numbers that could match the hunger and disregard for convention that we seniors have. As young people, we are often asked what we will do when we are older. We as seniors ask each other with an altogether different sentiment- “what are you

doing now?”. We as a class chose not to bother waiting until we could achieve mainstream acceptance, we chose never to put our aspirations on hold. We understood that even as young people we could be the great artists, musicians, engineers and philosophers we always wanted to be. It is often joked that every kid in North Brunswick has either a mixtape or a clothing line, everytime I hear that, I carry with me a certain smug satisfaction- that the increasingly pervasive mindset I admired has become the envy of our neighbors.

Jim Morrison told us that “Each generation wants new symbols, new people, new names.” I have had the pleasure to sit alongside hundreds of such new symbols and fresh faces eager to change the world, and become the founding mothers and fathers of culture and history.

That is what I had so admired about speech number three. The emotion of that speech coupled with some attempts at cleverness, becoming a brand new speech four. Written not around what I felt like I should say, or my ideas about what a graduation speech should be, but the kind of speech that I would want to sit among the crowd and yell for.



*Photo Courtesy of Austin Ralph-Charriez*

## Sabeen Rokerya

Firstly, I'd like to welcome everyone to this joyous occasion. Thank you parents, family, administrators and teachers for being here today.

To my fellow students, I'd like to welcome you to something a little different. Let me take you back to the August before our 9th grade year. Our freshman orientation. Bright eyed and bushy-tailed, early in the morning, we each arrived to our soon-to-be new school. We met then-current upperclassmen, teachers and administrators all talking to us about their experiences, the multitude of opportunities available, all smiling, all welcoming. We heard so many voices, saw so many smiles, felt so much excitement to overpower any of the nervous dancing butterflies that might have been in our tummies that day.

But no one then ever told us that high school would be one of the best worst experiences of our lives. No one told us about the upcoming struggle with the locks on our lockers. No one discussed the reality of the hopelessness of finding our classes in the infamous triangle upstairs, with a backpack weighing ten pounds, heavily armed for academic warfare. Nope. No one ever told us that in high school, we had to become so many different people at once- leaders, athletes, club members, friends, colleagues, competitors, adults, children, all the while remaining students. No one ever told us that high school would pull us in a million different directions leading many of us to succumb to numerous, consecutive all-nighters, stress, panic, and exhaustion. No one ever mentioned the challenges and the frustrations of the next few years. No one ever told us the dark truth about senioritis.

The truth is, we arrived here four short years ago with little sight and image of this day and survival was not a word that we associated with our upcoming journey. But now we are here. We haven't used our lockers in two years. Our tearing

Jansport bookbags heavily equipped with books have now been replaced by thin drawstring bags filled with nothing but snacks. We've matured, learned, and understood our abilities. We've strived, and thrived.

The purpose of this image is not to place negativity around the essence of high school, but rather to remind us to consciously remember what we came from. We as students, graduates rather, are made up of the challenges we've overcome. For many of us, we choose to look back on the past four years



*Photo Courtesy of Deep Patel*

and remember how much fun we've had- the love for our friends and our favorite activities, the affection towards our favorite corners of the building and favorite teachers. But while we remember the happiness, let's also remember our struggles- because we overcame them. What I wanted to welcome you all to earlier was this climb. We've climbed high above our minute and grand struggles of high school, and today marks a newly-reached height. Let's look back at our progress with the intention of moving forward, and let our past challenges motivate us to pursue new ones in our future endeavors after we leave this arena. Let us remember our roots, not just our cultural backgrounds and familial ties, but also our fears as young teenagers, our frustrations as adolescents, the first few challenges that really matured us as young adults. What and who helped form us as individuals.

Let us remember and thank our teachers, including our parents, who may have felt the need to be strict because that's the only way we would improve. Let us remember and thank our friends, for teaching us something new about life and relationships everyday. And let us remember and thank our struggles, because without our struggles and our founded drive and abilities to overcome them, we would not have climbed to this new apex today. And as a wise girl once told me, it's all about the climb. Congratulations to the North Brunswick Township High School Class of 2015! And thank you.



## Katie Siegel



Photo Courtesy of Katie Siegel

Visiting dignitaries, administrators, teachers, friends, family, and fellow students: welcome. When I was a freshman, there was this one song I'd listen to a lot called "High School Never Ends" by Bowling for Soup. It's basically about how even when we graduate high school, we can never really "escape" it. A pretty dark idea for a freshman to have, but on the days that didn't quite

turn out how I planned them, it spoke to me.

You see, there are two stereotypes of high school.

The first is that high school will be the best years of our lives, and we must cherish these years while we can. This is told to us mostly by our parents or other adults who, over time, have grown to view their high school memories through rose-colored lenses.

The other stereotype is that high school is the worst, and that you just have to keep your head down and get through it the best you can. This is told mostly by exhausted upperclassmen and the occasional adult whose own high school experience wasn't that great.

## Ihram Chowdhury

Welcome excited graduates, esteemed faculty, dignified guests, and proud families. Let's begin with this: "We made it"; through the adversity of biology, the late nights finishing papers, the senioritis urging you to watch Netflix, and all the other impediments strewn along the way, we made it. I know you're all anxious to grab that diploma, take pictures with your family, and selfies with Mr. Clark, but before you do, I'd like to share a few words that I hope last longer in your mind than the time it takes me to return to my seat.

Ernest Hemingway once said, "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self".

We've spent all of high school competing, in sports, in academics, in fashion, but I ask of you: were we competing against the right person? As you move forward in your respective life plans, remember you'll always be surrounded by people coveting the same things as you. Your goal as a human being, should not be to rise above them, but to rise with them, improving the world and yourself in the process.

Another quote I want you to remember, "The beauty is in the attempt." Simply try. Perfection is unattainable, but reach for it and you will land in excellence. Even if something you want is not a guaranteed success, give it a shot. Sometimes our greatest teachers are the moments when we were forced to pull bravery from the depths of our hearts and try, when we thought we could no longer continue trying. My peers, do not forget the bravery that got you through NBTHS to this moment in this place today and apply that bravery as you move forward and create the rest of your lives.

Ultimately, "Life isn't about how hard you can hit, but how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." I know we all think we're guaranteed something, with our fancy SAT

These ideas are put into our minds as freshmen starting high school — along with the idea that there's a pool on the third floor (honestly, why do people still fall for that? We have a pool on the first floor, isn't that enough?). It's up to us as freshmen to decide how we're going to embrace our high school experience: as the best days of our lives, or the worst.

But we quickly learned that high school is not all good or bad. We discovered that, like the rest of life, high school has its ups and downs. Some days you go home ecstatic because you got an A on your pig dissection and some days you go home and just have to cry a little because, ew, you just touched a dead pig. Those bad days were when I would listen to the song "High School Never Ends," because I would give into that stereotype, that high school really is the worst, and those bad days were going to follow me for the rest of my life.

On the good days I'd listen to, I don't know, *High School Musical* or something. Talk about unrealistic expectations about high school, am I right?

So here we are, on the brink of new chapters in our lives. And it's time to realize again, what's ahead is going to be messy. Life has its ups and downs. That's life. If you set your expectations before going into something, you're never giving it a chance. You all have the potential for great lives ahead of you. Just remember that if one day feels never-ending, the next day you could be singing *High School Musical*, or whatever type of music you like. Your life, your choice.

The best of luck to the Class of 2015. Congratulations!

scores and GPA's, but remember: you are not entitled to anything in life. That statement hurts, but the truth is you will fail. Don't let this reality damage your optimism or belief in the future. Everyone has that moment when the seemingly unstoppable force that you believe yourself to be collides with an immovable object. We crash, we collapse, we continue. I struggled through chemistry with Mr. Strouse, who - by the way - verified that I'd never make it in med school (Aside: "Sorry, parents."). But if I can get through those guided readings, you too can move forward. I've learned that when life hits you, you may falter at first, only to bounce back with newfound confidence.

In conclusion, graduates, I want to thank you all for four fantastic years. We ran for chicken bowl together; we enjoyed proms and homecomings; we grew together within the walls of NBTHS. I want everyone to look to their left and right. Identify these people; maybe they're strangers, maybe they're your best friends. I want to ask that if you meet them in the future in line at Starbucks, say hello, because you have something that ties you together at heart: you are Raiders. It's a fact you cannot escape no matter where life takes you. You were cultivated within the halls of NBTHS. You are North Brunswick. We are North Brunswick.



Photo Courtesy of Deep Patel

## Alexa Molinari

Good Morning, everyone. My sincerest thanks go out to all of the teachers and mentors I have had the pleasure of studying and working under over the past four years. 4.184,  $V=IR$ , and Spain's role in The Maine's fate are permanently etched in my long-term memory. I would also like to commend the parents present today on maintaining their sanity while raising our hormonal, headstrong generation. My final thanks are directed toward you, my classmates, for your presence in the hallways and classrooms, through the groggy Monday mornings, and the awkward years of growth that we will pretend never actually

occurred. It has been a whirlwind of four years, and four of the best. Thank you.

Christina Yang explained, "when we think we know the future, even for a second, it changes. The future changes quickly and completely, and we are left only with the choice of what to do next. We can choose to be afraid of it, to stand there trembling, not moving, expecting the worst that can happen, or we can step forward into the unknown and assume it will be brilliant".

We are each faced with the sunrise and the rhythmic ticks of the clock, every single day of our lives. We are faced with both challenges and opportunities, which we approach with the knowledge we hold at that specific moment in time. As soon as that moment passes and our decisions are made, these moments add to our stores of knowledge and experience. Fact.

What can be changed, however, is how we face said chal-

lenges and opportunities. Stepping through life is much like finding the light switch in the middle of the night. You have an idea of the location of your goal, but your path is unclear. You grip the doorframe while sliding or tapping your hand around until hitting that little magic square knob. What I'm also going to point out to you is that little irrational fear of being vulnerable, and that slight mental relaxation when you finally feel in control by fingering the switch.

In life, we can choose to be afraid of what we can not absolutely call out and touch, or we can assume that these items out of sight and reach are only waiting for us to tap our way toward them while we battle with the challenges of the night and the mind.

So what I am proposing to you—as modest as it might seem—is to swiftly steel yourself against the fears that impact your reactions. We are entering the next part of our lives, which includes a new set of challenges and prospects, fact. Will we let that little irrational fear change the pace of our tapping against the wall? Will we let the little insecurities push us?

Cristina Yang, while

fictional, has shown me that life will taunt and daunt us, make us question and hesitate. She has also shown me that the best approach is the one that you feel in your gut is right and true, even if said approach makes you tie a knot in your rope and hold on for dear life. However, the most important idea she has given me is the one to be your own voice, your own hero.

This address is not an unveiling of the "next big thing" or in front of the union, so I will be frank in saying that my words carry little weight against the other speeches you will hear in the future, and those that have been made in the past. However, my words do ask you to call from inside yourselves that strength to go after something, that voice to say something worthwhile, and that passion for something only you can justify for yourself.

Strength, presence, and passion. With these three, the taps on the wall mean almost as much as hitting the knob. With these three, we step into the unknown, into the darkness with a sense of direction, motivation to persist, and a confidence in ourselves that is purely intrinsic. Thank you.





## Cassie Luken

Hello and welcome family members, staff, administrators, dignitaries and soon to be graduates. As I sat down to write this speech, I thought to myself that at this moment I am just another speaker, preaching our successes and wishing the best futures to my fellow peers. I don't want to be just another peer or another speaker, but I want to be the speaker whose speech carries along with you, because isn't that what we all want in life, to be remembered for the great things we said and did? But before we can reach greatness we must experience failure.

I ask you to look to your left and right and understand that your fellow classmates sitting beside you have faced failures before. Whether it was slurring your words in kindergarten or failing your first test in seventh grade, our elementary and secondary education have not been effortless. We have worked, sweated, lost sleep, and cried for our futures. We have been so focused on our futures that we haven't stopped to look at our pasts. Now I would like to reminisce about a long, long, time ago back when we were ancient...a time without iPhones, can you imagine it, a time without eye strains, addicting games like Flappy Bird, and finger cramps from texting too much? This is a time of childhood; a time where we were asked what we wanted to be when we grew up, and our answers were things like Princesses, Superheroes, and Astronauts; and a time of Finding Nemo where a fish with a lucky fin dared to swim into open water and touched the butt to prove a point that he wasn't weak. Remember when girls had cooties, and boys were from Mars? Not far after we obsessed over pop sensations like the Jonas Brothers, One Direction, and Justin Bieber. Then, our biggest problem was deciding between vampires and werewolves in Twilight.

Passing to high school, we became more mature as we

## Jamie Jadav

Good afternoon parents, faculty, administrators, board of education members, orchestra, band and choir members, and graduating class of 2015. Before I begin my commencement speech, let us all take a selfie!

I would like to take a moment to thank my mom,

dad, and brother for their unconditional love and support. Thank you for always believing in me, and thank you to the teachers for working hard to help us graduate so they can get rid of us once and for all. Most of all I want say thank you to all of my fellow classmates for making these last four years unforgettable and enjoyable.

I would like to give a big thank you to Mr. Clark for reminding us every single day, that "WE ARE NORTH BRUNSWICK" because god forbid we forget what township we live in. How come South Brunswick's school motto isn't "We are South Brunswick?"

In all seriousness, "We Are North Brunswick"; A

approach our new lives hopefully, for our parents can speak on our behalf, but by this time, Obama has made history as the first United State's African American President holding office while we were still learning old US 1 History. High school formed unbreakable bonds that will last until adulthood. High school was a time of SAT's and AP tests; a time where many of us had our first loves and first heartbreaks; a time when a disastrous disease struck the whole senior class, also known as SENIORITIS... so now here we are ... the end... this is the time of our lives... the time to strive for greatness.... the time to make mistakes... the time to fall in love... the time to say goodbye, but also hello to a new future. When the elderly need tips on how to use their new iPhone, we will be there. When the medical world searches for new cures and vaccines, we will be there. When government policies need reform, we will be there. When future generations need to be educated, we will be there. When the world needs entertainment and the arts, we will be there... There is so much that awaits us, but at this time enjoy your experience and congratulations CLASS OF 2015! Achieve greatness, make history, and never forget that... "WE ARE NORTH BRUNSWICK".



Photo Courtesy of Deep Patel



Photo Courtesy of Deep Patel

school of: power outages, rat-filled cafeterias, and unpredictable ventilation systems. All jokes aside seniors, "We Are Raider Nation" A class of: diligent students, star athletes, talented artists, bleacher creatures, and inspiring leaders. We bleed blue and gold. As we close this chapter of our lives, let us never forget our time here at NBTHS.

Princeton, Johns Hopkins University, UNC Chapel Hill, NYU Stern, University of Southern California are just some of the phenomenal attributes our class has made to North Brunswick. From a killer robotics team to a united fan base, we have it all, Class of 2015. And for that I am truly proud and grateful. But as my good man John F. Kennedy once said "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

John F. Kennedy was trying to say, do not sit around and wait, just go for it. Set goals for yourself and take action. Do not talk about dreaming big one day; make your dreams a reality. It is as simple as that. In fact, the most inspirational words come in the simplest form.

Like "Be adventurous", or "Take control of your life", "Explore", "Test your potential". "I believe that we will win". Find your purpose and take a chance because You Only Live Once.

Simple phrases are the most important ones. No matter who we become, or where we go, we will always cherish our school, our memories, and our home.

I wish everyone the best of luck in the future, congratulations class of 2015! and remember "WE ARE NORTH BRUNSWICK". Thank you.



## Akshay Kamath

“You will find the key to success under the alarm clock,” Benjamin Franklin said, and though my nightstand does not in any way resemble the typical key, it sure holds some of the most important mainstays of my progress; Kleenex tissues and emergency snacks. And it is, with great honor, that I stand upon this stage to thank the administrators, staff members, parents, relatives, and of course the graduates themselves for making use of their keys to produce one of the largest assemblages the city has seen. Now that nightstand is a pretty big key, but upon unlocking the door we are still left to beg the eternal question: how can we become the very best? And the answer is in everything we do—from our ecstatic Monday morning routines, to the single colored dress that we could not agree upon as blue or gold: a difference in the way we see things.

The past four years have

shown me that (1) I can survive on pizza for lunch every day, (2) extra credit motivates students sometimes more than deciding a career, and (3) North Brunswick houses the largest student body that holds its iPhones close, but its IDs closer. But above all, I have learned that there are absolutely no limits to becoming the Zac Efron and Vanessa Hudgens of “North Brunswick Township High School Musical”. Now, those movies consumed my childhood, but more powerful than their emotional appeal was their evidential appeal—one that shows how two people from opposite sides of the world come together and bask in their show’s glory. They show us that transition from great to best.

But are these movies different from what we do now? By using our time to shape-up our Brooklyn fades or check our makeup for the 17th time, we learn, often without being

aware, skills and quirks that fuse to make a firmly individual work ethic—one that teaches respect, integrity, service, and excellence. And so the next time we rush coffee for the morning commute or relax to Sinatra while watching Family Feud on the couch, make the best of it. Tell Steve Harvey your answer with pride. No need to think about the glass being half empty or half full when we can just take the glass and drink it for what it is.

Whether we choose blue or gold, snooze the alarm clock, or “break free” from the boundaries of great, we must remember the academic powerhouse upon which our lives have been built. Among our different paths, we must similarly orient ourselves to

wake up and live in the moment, since the best way to approach the future is to live as if it didn’t exist. Now, if you’re asking “which way is that?”, I have an answer. After the ever-helpful morning reminders, Mr. Clark and graduates of the Class of 2015 can confidently agree that we are North Brunswick. Thank you, and Godspeed on everyone’s journeys.



*Photo Courtesy of Aldo Battle*

## Tajera Appleton



*Photo Courtesy of Rebecca Rouantree*

If you do not go after what you want, you will never have it. If you do not step forward, you will always be in the same place.

Good afternoon family, friends, faculty and the class of 2015.

I remember when I was younger living in Jamaica, my mom would tell me that I would fail. These are words that are not spoken by many mothers, but she would look at me and say, “Tajera you will fail. You will fall down. You will feel like the world is against you and you can’t do it.” She goes on to say, “But when that happens, get up! Get! Up! Dust

yourself off and keep pushing forward.” It’s funny, because even now whenever I feel like a failure I can still hear my mom in the back of my head telling me to get up. Thomas Edison failed to create the light bulb 10,000 times. Even with so many let downs

he goes on to say, “I have not failed, I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” I say this to explain that it is ok to fail. It is ok to make a mistake. It is ok if you do not get it right the first time. It is what you do after that failure that determines your success.

Where did the time go? Four years ago we were freshmen thinking, “Yes, I’m so ready for high school,” and we could not even get our lockers open. We would wander around the triangle like lost puppies trying to find our classes and look at us now, just a in a couple of minutes we’ll be high school graduates. Many children around the world have been robbed of such privilege, especially females...because they think we might just take over the world. Thus we owe a huge debt of gratitude to our teachers and faculty for this opportunity. Sure many would say they are just doing their

jobs, I believe they do far more than just their job... so I thank you.

My favorite animal is the turtle. Many would ask, “Why the turtle?”. But if you ever observe a turtle you would notice that in order for it to move it has to stick its head out. It has to come out of its shell to move forward. So as we venture off in the world I want you to be that turtle. I want you to take that risk and get out of your protective shell. Yes, you might fail. You might even hear that you’re moving too slowly but the funny part about life is you just might succeed. So I stand here today to tell you to challenge yourself, because as I stated before, if you do not go after what you want you will never have it, and if you do not take that step forward you will always be in the same place. Thank you and good luck class of 2015, we finally made it!



## Josh Taubenslag



Photo Courtesy of Tajae Ali

Good morning and congratulations to everyone graduating. We're about to finish the long and treacherous 13 year journey that we like to call our public education. Believe it or not, we're all contributing members of society now. It's been an honor being a part of this class and I wanted to take some time to reflect on what we've accomplished

and where we've come from.

I remember as a kid in Judd, I'd rarely come home with work from school, and every night my dad would ask where my homework was. Of course sometimes I didn't do it and he'd always tell me about the hours of work I'd get a night in high school. He wasn't wrong. But to think that these four years are over, these four years that everyone stressed the

importance of so often, is mind boggling. Our lives are about to change drastically no matter what we're off to do and this graduation symbolizes one of our first steps in becoming more independent and successful people.

When we hear "We are North Brunswick" on the announcements, some of us may laugh or mock the phrase,

but if you think about those four words in that order, they couldn't be more true. This is our home. A home that sits an hour away from Philly in the south, New York City in the north and, of course, the jersey shore off to the east. It's a home that has provided great memories. For me, that's fighting with Kyle Reinson in Kindergarten over this blue dinosaur that we both really wanted to play with, or dreading parent conferences in middle school that would result in my dad coming home and constantly asking who Jeremy Mail was, or the countless Saturdays I spent in high school with my fellow alchemists. Everyone has memories and they've taught me that this school and this town has made us who we are.

For those who don't know, Jimmy V was a coach for an NC state team that made

an improbable championship run in the 1970's. He's one of the most beloved figures in sports and he made a speech at the Espys 21 years ago. He said, "To me, there are three things we all should do every day. We should do this every day of our lives. Number one is laugh. You should laugh every day. Number two is think. You should spend some time in thought. Number three is. you should have your emotions moved to tears, could be happiness or joy. But think about it. If you laugh, you think, and you cry, that's a full day. That's a heck of a day. You do that seven days a week, you're going to have something special."

Keep those wise words with you and I wish luck to everyone in the class of 2015, no matter you're doing next year. Have a nice day and a great tomorrow!

## Emma Howard

Friends, teachers, family members, class of 2015, we're finally here. A wise man by the name of Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "Be sincere; be brief; be seated". In my speech I intend to heed that wise advice so we can all hear the names of our best friends, family members, and people whose names we still don't know after going to school with each other for 13 years plus. We've made it through countless tests, the transition to rotational scheduling, Asian Shows, French Club meetings, Mrs. Goncharova's AP Calculus BC class, and the list goes on. All of the sweat and tears that have gone into our schooling have led up to this. The glory of being the alpha dogs of NBTHS is over, and you're ready to become ... freshman.. again. This may not sound so enticing, but you now have the chance to become who you want to be, to do what you want to do, and grace the stage of life with your inimitable presence. Hello, future engineers, dancers, surgeons, soldiers and soccer players. This diploma is your golden ticket, and the choice of where you'd like to go in this giant Wonka Factory we call life, is yours.

This morning I woke up, and listened to the first track on Kanye West's Graduation album, entitled "Good Morning," relevant, right? Well there's a line in that song that goes "Some people graduate, but be still stupid." After decoding the awful grammar of that line, I found a deeper meaning. The stupidity isn't defined by the grades you received, but rather by your personal level of readiness to find your path. There is no "google map" to life. Where you are going to be in twenty years is not up to your parents, or your college professors, or Siri. Ask her, she won't know the answer. The decision is fully in your hands, and sadly, raw talent and smarts won't be the key to your success. To quote a song debuted at the first ever concert of its kind, "Everyone is special" Barney once sang at Barney in Concert. On the surface, it seems purely positive, everyone is unique in his or her own way, but that's where you're wrong.

Everyone is special. Your success requires the passion and the drive to set you apart from the pack. The education and advice you have received from your dedicated teachers, parents, friends and

other guides in your lives, have fully equipped you with a plethora of successful tools to keep in your metaphorical toolbox. That Phillips-head screwdriver you need to tighten that last screw can only be found inside of yourself. So take the advice of Confucius, "Wheresoever you go, go with all your heart," Congratulations Class of 2015, we made it.



Photo Courtesy of Aldo Battle

## Pradham Nandyala

Let me start off by taking a head count... Roughly 400 students sit in front of me, give or take. That means that over 400 of us occupy a town home to 40,000 people. Our modest town resides in the most densely populated state in the nation with a whopping nine million inhabitants. This class makes up less than 0.00005% of the great state of New Jersey. This really puts things into perspective, doesn't it? But I don't believe that we're insignificant. Not in the slightest. In fact I think we're different--different in our emotion, in our attitude, in our potential, and in our ambition. My graduating colleagues, distinguished faculty, vital townfolk, and supportive family who have traveled from near and far, I welcome you to the commencement of the Class of 2015. And what a class we are. So let's establish a precedent of prestige and show what it really means to say "We Are North Brunswick".

When we collectively spilled into the halls of NBTHS as eager freshmen, we occupied our school with

the intentions of maturing into influential men and women. Years passed like minutes and while we fell into a routine in the bubble we created for ourselves at NBTHS, we failed to look ahead at the reality that awaits us. Today, as we graduate and head out into a world that seldom offers the same comforting shelter as our wonderful institution on 98 Raider Road, it is imperative we decide how we will mark our generation and influence the ones to come.

Instead of complaining for hours about how your friend won't "@ you in their subtweet, and instead of endorsing fights between fellow students with the famous "WORLDSTARRR" tagline, we should strive to be written about in the stories of brave heroes that selflessly sacrificed their time and effort to fixing the issues of modern America. I'm not trying to falsely inspire the crowd that sits in front of me but I truly believe that our potential is untapped. As men and women, we can be ignored; but become a symbol of hope and growth, and you are everlasting.

Before you depart here today and open a new chapter in your lives, I want you guys to keep a few things in mind. In this crowd of 400 aspiring graduates, we have future doctors, lawyers, businessmen, athletes, and humanitarians, and although I am confident that each and every one of us will find tremendous success in our pursuits, we must remember the importance of failure. I'm talking about Mark Sanchez's butt fumble failure. I'm talking about posting a fire tweet and getting zero favorites failure. I'm talking about Eli Manning throwing thirty interceptions in one season failure. Because what did that man do the year after? He won the Super Bowl over my beloved Patriots. So my fellow graduates, as you step out into the real world I encourage you to fail, and fail hard. Now don't misunderstand me and think that I'm asking you to deliberately seek out failure. I don't want



Photo Courtesy of Aldo Battle

you guys to ruin your lives. But at the same time, you can't be afraid to take risks. Our generation has the potential and power to change the future and make our voices heard and as long as we are bold in our purpose and swift in our resolve, there will be a legacy to our names. Don't be afraid to fail. Embrace it and learn from it. Because why do we fail? So we can learn to pick ourselves back up. In closing, congratulations to each and every one of you. After four years, I'm proud to say we finally did it.

### About The Banner

As a news publication of North Brunswick Township High School, *The Banner* serves to provide students with interesting, timely and important information about the school and community. Its staff covers events and stories that are pertinent to the student body at NBTHS.

While honoring the provisions the school has established to maintain a safe environment for its students, the staff upholds freedom of speech as ruled in *Tinker vs. Des Moines*.

*The Banner* runs in black and white. Throughout the year, the staff maintains a circulation of both a print and electronic publication among NBTHS, the Board of Education and other areas in the community.

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