



**2017 Albany High School Graduation
Speech by Class President Isabella Higgins
June 25, 2017**

Good afternoon. My name is Isabella Higgins and I'm honored to stand before you as not only class president, but as part of one of the largest graduating classes that Albany High has seen walk the stage in many years.

These past four years at Albany High have taught me priceless life lessons and helped me to find myself, as I'm sure it has with many of you as well.

Often times the stigma attached to Albany High is one of an unmotivated student body, ridiculous violence, and an overall failing school. However, I am here to proudly say that this class has helped to diminish that stigma and paint Albany High for what it really is, which is a school that is exploding with character to say the least.

As a school that is in receivership, the students and the faculty has had to fight these past two years to prove that Albany High can sustain itself and improve our numbers, which this class has helped to do tremendously.

In the face of adversity our students are wired to triumph and overcome. In being as diverse a school as we are our students also have a more well-rounded comprehension of the complex dynamic that encompasses the world outside of high school. Our student body is composed of future EMTs, nurses, educators, business people, doctors, mathematicians, artists and so much more.

I'm sure that there were times when many of you had your doubts about Albany High, I know my parents did and I must admit that at times so did I, but in hindsight there is not a single shred of doubt in my heart when I say that no other school could have offered me the kinds of opportunities that I've had, or that could have taught me to be as strong and proud of where I come from and who I am.

As we continue to venture to new horizons outside of high school, and in attempts to be as cliché as possible, this is not the end, this is only the beginning and I wish you all the best of luck in your future endeavors.

Thank you again to all of the friends, family, faculty and staff who made this possible, and congratulations to the phenomenal class of 2017!