

Remarks delivered by Matthew Dussault(2004), Psychology Major, at the March 20th, 2004 Dean's List Ceremony held at 11:00AM in the Rodgers Recreation Center at Salve Regina University, Newport, Rhode Island. Matt was introduced by Jennifer Allen of the University Academic Advising Office.

"I am both humbled and honored for the opportunity to stand before the administration, faculty, guests, and my peers.

I first visited Salve Regina in October 2000 on a high school field trip. That day changed my life. Looking back, I remember feeling a range of emotions. Astonished by its beauty, welcomed by its people, inspired by its spirituality, and intrigued by its possibilities, I instinctively knew that this was where I belonged. I thought of that day often, and when it was time to apply to college, I had no doubt that it had to be Salve. The day I received my acceptance letter, my journey began. Coupled with my excitement, however, was the realization of an overwhelming responsibility - the responsibility to do a good job and to not let my family down, or even worse, myself. While I have always been encouraged by my parents to do-my best, somehow, I was no longer certain of what that meant until I became part of the Salve community.



In preparation for today, I spent considerable time reflecting so that I could share my personal experiences with you. As a commuter with a lot of time spent on highways, I found myself likening those open roads to the endless opportunities and challenges that exist for all of us here at Salve. Based on hard work, enthusiasm, and unswerving commitment, those highways represent our channels to the future and will take us anywhere we are willing to go. They are not without distractions. There are curves, rotaries, detours, and yields, and so decisions have to be made. At times, it seems repetitive and there is little to see, but focus is still required. Other times, there's so much going on that you can't take all of it in at one time, and so choices have to be made. Every so often, an ornate and appealing billboard will tempt your attention away from the road, and it can mean an abrupt end to a promising journey. As difficult and tiring as the journey may be, there will always be places to stop and rest along the way.

I have not traveled alone. I have been blessed with an incredible family, and I don't know if I could have done it without them.

That is my foundation and without a doubt, it is a solid motivation for me to work hard. My professors, however, have given me another gift. As I stated earlier, when I started at Salve, I was not certain of what my best could be. I was full of doubts as to whether my best, whatever that was, would be good enough. Salve embraces the best, however, and we have all had the privilege of studying under the best. As the mentors they are, my professors enthusiastically motivated me by challenging me to give it my all, no matter how difficult.

Since Declaring Psychology as my major, I have become academically and emotionally connected on a deeper level through the guidance of the Department. Now, I know that there are no limits in achieving one's best. The boundless journey to the future continues. There is so much more to learn.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate my peers for the achievements in your own personal journeys.”

Matt Dussault (2004)
March 20th, 2004