

Paige Doseck

Jewett Prize Speech

Ladies and gentlemen, people of the crowd, faculty, friends, family, fellow graduates; welcome to our closing night. If college was a musical, then today is our final curtain call. We have spent the past years of our lives in rehearsals, learning lines, nailing choreography, and improvising when things didn't go to plan. Every step, every song, every late-night crunch led up to now - our big finale.

Every show begins with a first act, for us, that begins with move-in. We all walked onto campus excited and nervous. We found scene partners, our castmates, and our backstage crew; the friends who helped us through the ins and outs of the production. The third song in a musical is often referred to as the protagonist's "I Want" song. This is their moment to express exactly what they want to achieve. For us, a declaration of our major! For some of us, it might have taken a couple of "I Want" songs to get it right, but obviously, we all had our moment of big dreams and desire and that is why you are seated here today.

This leads us to intermission, a small pause in between acts of a show. It is designed to give both the performers and audience a break. We are lucky enough to get a long intermission every summer. These are the moments we were able to catch our breath, soak in the sun, and learn through internship opportunities. After intermission concludes, you start the next act. Every fall we return for the next semester, excited, anxious of what is to come, but ultimately dancing our way to success.

And next up, Act Two. Act Two is full of conflicts, challenges, and moments that caused us to question our own scripts. Some of us threw away our script and started entirely from

scratch. As many performers know, the heart of the story lives in the second act. Some of our second act triumphs include traveling abroad to study and experience new cultures, others powered through mental and physical hardships and injuries, and we all had the privilege to experience the first ever NCAA tournament appearance for the volleyball team. Every single one of you has accomplished something brilliant in your years here at Marietta College, and that will always be written in the script of your time here. The second act is where characters grow, where the stakes are highest, and where we prove to ourselves that we are ready for the grand finale.

There is always a moment in the final bow where the cast recognizes those who helped get them to the place they are now. Thank you to our professors, families, friends, partners, coaches, and mentors. The production would not have been a success without the encouragement from all of you. So often a production is accredited to the performers, the face of it all. But the show would not have come together if it weren't for the countless hours spent on research, instruction, and behind the scenes work that goes unrecognized. Thank you to all of you who were behind the scenes of this wonderful production.

And now, we have arrived. The pit orchestra is striking their chords, the lights are shining, and it is time for us to take our bow. Now remember, this is not the end of our story. A show never disappears after the curtains have closed. The impact and emotions you instilled in the audience lives on. The friendships you've made, the experiences you collected, and the lessons you learned are all songs and dances that occasionally pop into our head, even months after closing night.

Stepping into the next scene of life comes with uncertainty. The future is unscripted, and there will be moments of doubt upon us; moments where we don't know what's next. An actor

could go months without knowing what's to come, but all it takes is one phone call or email to secure the next gig. That's the beauty of this life, although uncertainty lies ahead, so does success. The spotlight will find us again, all we have to do is step into the light.

So, as we step off of this stage and onto the next, we carry the memories and magic of this performance onward with us. Embrace the next audition, next role, next opening night. No matter where we go, you will always be part of this cast, this production, this incredible story we have written together. We will always have The Long Blue Line to come back to.

Congratulations Class of 2025! Stand up and take your bow, you've earned it!