

Nenay Norawong

Friends, family, faculty, and members of the Wildcat Nation. Hello, my name is Nenay Norawong and it is my honor to be the speaker for the graduating class of 2018.

Wow, look how far we've come. In life, it's important to acknowledge where you came from in order to understand where you're going. I can't help but feel reminiscent and proud of the milestone that today embodies; and knowing that this is only a platform to a beginning of possibilities for tomorrow.

Central Washington University has become our home. It's been a place of growth, strife, commotion and maturity. The memories we've made here will last a lifetime with friends we chose as family during this chapter of our lives. We challenged ourselves; and pushed further to deepen our levels of understanding- and carried out the Universities motto of Learn, Do, Live. Along the way, we met professors who knew us by name; these were the ones who molded our intellect through their mentorship and guidance. Today, we anticipate tomorrow, while we remember our cherished yesterdays.

Here was the place where we exercised our independence. For most, it was our first time being away from home- we discovered ourselves during our adventures within the wildcat nation. Some of us grew in leadership, others grew in community, some found love, but we are all leaving today as graduates ready to conquer and seize any of the vast directions that life can take you on.

There were experiences during these four years that I never saw coming. Never would I have known that I would mentor first year students and help them connect with their passions and pursuits in college. Never would I have known that I would pursue a degree in public

relations with a minor in project management. But also, never would I have known that I would work in the Associated Students of Central Washington University Student Government Office and be the Creative Director of a flash mob of 127 performers.

The CWU Flash Mob, also known as the HSM Project, was a community project that was formulated by myself and the VP of Equity and Community Affairs, miss Myrinda Wolitarsky. Wildcats from all different walks of life put their differences aside to celebrate the diversity and inclusivity while showcasing what it means to be a wildcat. I was able to work with the CWU Dance team, Cheer team, Orchesis Dance Company, and an ensemble of student volunteers from different backgrounds. I got to be the visionary where I choreographed and directed a performance that touched people's lives and revealed the beauty within our student population. It was here, during these moments, where I experienced community that I never knew I could taste.

In life, people often share their ambitions and goals. We aim high and take risks while we dare to dream. Some of you may want to be the next President of the United States, others hope to be an astronaut, and who knows- you might even replace Oprah Winfrey herself! However, my want in life is to grow old and ugly. Why!/? Because if I have gray hairs, it means that I cared. If I have wrinkles, it means that I laughed, and if I have scars it means I lived.

Wildcats, I would like to now bestow a message. This is a message I grew up hearing and hold myself to it today. For anyone that knows me, they know that I've always chased after moments that will resonate in my heart forever. And as we journey on, I hope that we may all capture moments of time that will leave us enriched and inspired. This message is a song; a song entitled "One Moment in Time" by Whitney Houston who has always personally inspired me.

(Sing song)

*Each day I live
I want to be
A day to give
The best of me
I rise and fall
Yet through it all
This much remains*

*I want one moment in time
When I'm more than I thought I could be
When all of my dreams are a heartbeat away
And the answers are all up to me
Give me one moment in time
When I'm racing with destiny
Then in that one moment of time
I will feel
I will feel eternity*

And so, to the friends we made along the way. To the nights during finals where we thought we wouldn't make it. To the countless hours of homework, dreaded group projects, presentations, and exams. And to the photos that hold memories where we'll look back at our hairstyles and clothing choices and say "what was I thinking!?" Class of 2018, here's to our one moment in time.