

## **Iseline Mendoza Student Speaker**

### **NECC 2022 Commencement**

Wow! Thank you president Glenn for that beautiful introduction!

Class of 2022, we made it!

We could not have done it

if it wasn't for our determination,

and the support of others!

I think i wrote this speech about 7 times,

And I didnt expect the emotions it would bring out of me.

But each time i wrote,

the message stayed the same.

Be specific when addressing your goals, hopes and dreams

And always vocalize your needs.

The dream to go to college and provide a better life for my little one and i started with a prayer.

In a moment of desperation and need

You see

i didn't always have the support I have today

I was pregnant

working three jobs

just to get by

And As the days went on and my due date approached

I thought

how was I supposed to do this with a little one?

Tearfully i prayed

I prayed for Jehovah God to help me with my goal of going to college

That by going to college i would not only be providing for my son financially,

But i would be able to be there for my son

- Physically

- Spiritually
- And Emotionally

I asked for the will to complete college no matter life's challenges

And it was my hope to have family support along the way.

When i was done praying the first person i thought to call  
was the very person who taught me about faith,

prayer

and my relationship with Jehovah

My mom.

It had been a long time since i had asked for my mothers help

So humbly i requested if i could stay with her and my father for the duration of  
two years max.

The years it would take to complete an associates degrees

A degree i knew would set my son and i up for success

After that

the rest of life would be up to me.

Fortunately my mom and dad had the space in their home and agreed.

Now when picking a school it was a no brainer

The low cost of going to NECC,

The location,

And the transportation from campus to campus

was more than I could ask for.

I remember when school was about to start I had no means of transportation so I  
went on offer up and bought myself a bike.

The best \$20 bucks i ever spent

Every morning at 530 am I would ride my bike a mile to the Lawrence campus to  
wait for the bus that would take me to my first class in haverhill.

Every afternoon I would take the bus back to Lawrence and ride my bike back  
home.

I came accustomed to this

Not to say some days didnt stink

The cold rainy days were ones for the books

But To make myself feel better i would think back to my original prayer

And add more detail to it

such as

- What my goals were when completing the semester
- How i was going to accomplish them
- And for more perseverance

These bike and bus rides became a time of reflection for me

Unfortunately that came to a halt when the pandemic hit.

The pandemic brought on so much hardship,  
loss and took us away from everything we know.

I dont want to re traumatize us with the details

But i remember feeling so concerned for my classmates and their wellbeing

A once happy go lucky person

I became depressed and discouraged.

So with a friend I went to the student government for some answers, i wanted to know what the school was doing to help its students and vocalize my worries.

And boy what a journey that took me on

What started off as a complaint turned into me helping the school find solutions.

By getting involved I was able to share my experience with those in charge of getting things done at the school.

I was able to be a part of projects such as

- The we are listening project
  - A project aimed at discussing mental health and the impact Covid-19 has had on the necc community
- And aid in the start of free drop in child care

To think this whole Journey started with a prayer

I was not only able to enact change but i was able to find a passion for helping others

I came here expecting to leave with just a degree but i'm leaving with so much more

Class of 2022 my hopes that after today and with my story you are able to leave here encouraged and excited to go on to your next journey

To remember to be specific when addressing you goals and always be vocal about your needs

Thank you