

## Grad Valedictorian Nomination Statement

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“Gatsby turned out all right at the end. It is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men.”

*Short-winded elations of men.* This very phrase succinctly summarizes why I want to become Valedictorian 2005. Ever since I decided to pursue my post-secondary education at the University of Waterloo, something has been troubling me from within: I have no concrete proof of my two years here at NWSS. I think it's pitiable if a registrar has to confirm my place. I wish to leave a mark here. *I want to make you all remember I was here*, I repeat grimly.

Although I do admit that this short-winded fame is no replacement for actively engaging and participating in the various activities that are organized and conducted in our school, I meander in search for some nonetheless. I believe I have some standing qualities that have made both my parents and my teachers proud of me. I yearn to give back to my school what my school has given to me, and for this, I want to inspire my friends to join a common road, *our* common road, to success. In this unimaginably competitive world, it's not just enough if I'm successful; I want *everyone* along with me to be successful. “Parity for all” shall be my theme for the week.

Why would I make a good valedictorian? I believe I am a good leader. I am self-motivated. Neither mum nor dad have had the need to ask me to go to my room and study. (Permission granted for phone-call verification.) I love team-work but prefer individual thinking (I'm an avid chess player). I know how to constructively take advantage of my team-mates to get a job done. I believe I have strong personal and manipulative skills.

That was the clichéd version. Let's try again, this time shooting for something more original.

I don't know much about myself, but I think my most prudent quality is that I am affected by neither triumph nor disaster. I hardly feel exhilarated when I receive a superb score on a test, nor am I sullen looking when I do poorly on a badly-designed test. This consistency is crucial for the success of today's students. Not dwelling into either extreme is the bottom line.

The successful completion of the IB Diploma Programme is a feather on my ear and on my sophomore year. The IB program, no doubt, is tough and vigorous, and I consider it a special personal accomplishment to have been able to manage its workload plus excel at it. My attendance record is near perfect. As far as I can remember, I am in good standing and have set a formidable example for my peers. I have never once failed to make the honour

roll over the last two years of my stay here. The school honoured me with a bronze medal for service when I volunteered my lunch hours tutoring my fellow school-mates. I am an active member of the school's chess club. Last year, I was very enthusiastic to set-up a math challenge club for students with a passion for mathematics. I sadly abandoned the idea realizing no one would want to spend two hours on a Friday afternoon solving tough and challenging math problems! I have always tried to be an all-rounder and excel in just not academics, but in many other facets of life: physical activity, personal hobbies like web programming, commitment to religion, friends and family, eloquence, introspection, self-improvement, reading and journalizing. I take advantage of my Professional Development Fridays to enrich myself professionally: a task that would appeal to me as odd if only teachers were expected to practice it. I am the first one to sign up for nation-wide competitive tests like the Fermat, Euclid, AMC (school topper), CHEM 13, Begbie and CAP contests. I may not have won prizes for all of them, but I tried to the best of my ability. I also represented our school at the UBC Chem Lab Skills competition. I played for the school badminton team last year. I do not hesitate to help my friends with their plentiful doubts in various subjects. I managed to successfully complete IB French 11 and 12, when it had been only a year since I had come to Canada, and so only a year since I'd started learning French. I've already written three provincials and my marks have already secured the requirements for a Premier's scholarship. However insignificant, I have paid back my school with my own currency of little contributions. I've only lived three years in Canada, and I already feel as if I've spent a decade. Such has been the exponential progress which I am myself surprised to witness during moments of retrospection.

I think I'll stop here before I drown in my own pretentiousness.

If I am nominated valedictorian for this scholastic year, I will have one trait that I know I can pass on dutifully without fail: pragmatism. A lot of us, occasionally even me, take simple things too seriously. On the contrary, we take gifted things for granted. I am an ardent pragmatist. I take things as they come to me. If my mum lovingly presented me with a regular ten-dollar t-shirt for my birthday, I would probably be happier than the daughter of the Sultan of Brunei would have been when her father presented her with a Boeing 747. I never fail to thank people—at least down below in my heart, if not loudly—on even the smallest favours. We, as promising students of today and aspiring leaders of tomorrow, need to learn to offload our intellectual and material baggage that we're so often burdened with at school and society respectively. We have a commitment towards our society and we are bound to fulfill it. Both you and I have a promise we ought to upkeep. Many students at our school haven't yet had the timely epiphany to realize this; I may be someone who could show it them through my valedictory speech on graduation day. I want the administration to make me valedictorian so that I can show my friends how to kiss this lovely world of ours. So many opportunities once we embark, so many things that can be done, and so many bonds to be broken and formed.

As for my inspiration, I am fortunate enough to find ample stimulus within the four walls of my home itself. My father with his incisive maxims: "Proactive ever, procrastinate never!", my mother with her erudite proverbs: "What you know is only a fistful; what you don't is as large as this universe", my elder brother with his timely aphorisms: "Always above

the crowd bro, never among”, and finally my treasured potted plants which struggle and persevere with not a single word of complaint despite my relentless forgetfulness to water them or provide them with any sort of enriching fertilizer or encouragement.

I have personally heard from parents on the kind of traits they imagine their son or daughter to have. I think it would only uphold the dignity and amplitude of our school if they saw their dreams reflected in their child’s school’s valedictorian. Almost all the valedictorians I’ve come across or read about were idols of their school; let’s make a minor change this time and elect a simpleton. I don’t see myself as a leader who expects everyone to follow his footsteps; instead, I see myself as a person, a well-mannered and diligent student, who is willing to share his appreciable qualities with others — in return for more.

If two people exchanged two good qualities, they’d each leave with four good qualities, not two.

Forgive me for my total disregard for the word count limit. We never seem to be at a shortage for words when it comes to talking about ourselves.

Thank you.

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