*As Time Flies*

By Dalton Scharff

As graduation approached, I knew creating a speech to give in front of hundreds would be a challenge. Do I speak about the past 18 years of our lives, or the time that lies ahead, a likely 60 more years of being? In which will I have more to talk about, I pondered. Surely, 60 years must be greater than 18?

As clocks unfalteringly count seconds, I urge you to consider the idea of “time flying by”. It’s an old adage and everybody has heard it before, but have you always found it true? As many others have, I know I have been guilty of complaining that our senior year has gone by far too fast. But, remember back to our first days of elementary school, when hours felt like decades and school days felt like lifetimes. What has changed between now and then? As it turns out, time is not linear as we have been taught. Perceived time is exponential, approaching a vertex at an unknown location in our future. If you’re not following, first let me try to explain or you can go speak to Mr. Neiswender after graduation.

Say, on this very day, it’s your 18th birthday. This past year has probably seemed like the quickest year of your life. In fact, it has been 1/18th of your life. Compare that to your sixth year, your first year of kindergarten, being 1/6th of your life. In perceived time, this past year has gone three times as fast as the year before your sixth birthday. Now time flying is starting to make sense, right?

So, I’ve done the math, and it has been double checked, so we can trust that the numbers are right. It turns out, the time up until your 18th birthday is more than two times longer in perceived time than it is from your 18th birthday until your 78th birthday.

I feel you all in the crowd saying to yourselves, “Dalton, sit down. This isn’t math class,” but I do have a point. I’m not standing here trying to scare you all, saying that half of our lives are over at this point. I am standing here saying that the longest years of our lives have passed, and although I know none of us have wasted *any* time during our high school careers, the years ahead are the most important. Remember, whether you’re off to college, trade school, military, or into the workforce, every day is going to feel shorter and shorter, so make it a point to make that day count.

For 13 years, over two thirds of our lives, my peers and I have attended this institution that we say goodbye to today. For many of us, it’s bittersweet. We have received an education enabling us to do whatever we like with our lives. We’ve met friends that time nor distance could ever separate us from and we’ve learned from teachers dedicated to making each one of us the best that we can be. It hasn’t always been an easy road, though, no matter your standings. We’ve all had our upsets and times when we’ve fallen down, but as long as we stood back up, that time was not wasted. The perseverance to get back up is what got us here to where we graduate today, because everyone has struggles, but too many don’t have the grit.

Tonight, our years of hard work and determination reward us with a ticket to our unknown and unimaginable future. Each and every one of us has potential to be something great, in whatever vocation we desire. I’m so proud to call the class behind me not only my peers, but my friends. Congratulations, class of 2014. Make the most of the time that lies ahead and remember, we made it!