

Katrina Bui Salutatorian Class of 2022

Chasing the Goosebump Moments

Let me be one of many people today to congratulate YOU, the Class of 2022, for your 13 years of hard work that has led up to this special moment. Our journey to this moment has been VERY different from the classes before us. Over the past 4 years it has felt like we started high school AT LEAST 3 times, from our actual first day in freshman year to online learning to coming back full time. Each one of these moments came with a sense of uncertainty as we jumped into new experiences.

It is often said that the hardest part of any journey is the first step. We, the Class of 2022, have experienced many first steps through our time at Red Land. And today, we prepare to take our next first step as some of us will pursue additional education, others will serve our nation, and others will join the workforce.

Before this happens, I want to take this time to share with you some advice. I could tell you to chase your dreams, but this is a broad concept. As YOU change, so do your DREAMS, so how is it possible to TRULY define what your dreams are?... Running after your dreams makes you think about the end result without focusing on the journey you will have to take to get there. This idea can be scary—even terrifying. Your dreams may seem so far away that your end goal seems out of reach. Instead I encourage you to chase after, as Mrs. Joanne Martin would say, your goosebump moments... To those who have never heard of this saying, it is a moment when someone says or does something that you find so profound or interesting that you have CHILLS. These are the moments when you are in such awe that your body physically reacts...

These moments don't have to be life changing events, but they create memories that will stick with you. They can come from something simple in your everyday life like listening to another person tell a story or hearing how you made their day better. It's discovering that you can

connect with the lyrics of a song, like in Hamilton when Aaron Burr says “I am the one thing in life I can control. I am inimitable, I am an original.” Or when Alexander Hamilton says “I'm just like my country. I'm young, scrappy and hungry. And I'm not throwin' away my shot.”... For all the teachers out there, it's seeing your students have that moment when they say ohhhhhhhhhh and after all their hard work they finally click with the material. For me, it's getting to meet new people while volunteering or that feeling after a performance when the performer, standing under all the bright lights, hits their final pose and the audience bursts into applause. Many of you might even experience a goosebump moment today when your name gets announced in front of all your friends, family, and classmates as you finally receive your diploma, signaling the end of your high school career... While your overall journey may be difficult, these goosebump moments are small reminders that you are on the path towards your passions.

As we part ways and continue on our separate journeys, I encourage you to never settle. Instead, strive for that next goosebump moment... Let these moments be the stepping stones that help you along your way. Yes, it may require you to step out of your comfort zone, but ACTIVELY pushing yourself to try something new puts you in a position to have that next goosebump moment. It's better to try something new than to be stuck thinking about what could've been...

Once our ceremony today is concluded, we leave behind the comfort that we have known for the last few years at Red Land and step into a forever changing future... While your dreams may change from what you think they are today, never forget that those goosebump moments are always there to remind you of why you took that first step and remember to cherish each and every one of these moments...

Once again I congratulate you and wish you the best of luck. Thank you.