

Seton Hall Law Class of 2019...we finally made it!

Congratulations to all of you for getting through this incredible challenge. Each of us had to sacrifice so much to get to this day, and every time we thought we had sacrificed enough, we had to dig a little deeper and give a little more.

We had to give up time with our families, our friends, our partners, and yes, even our pets! We suffered through sickness, injuries, a scary number of hangovers, late nights studying or outlining, and so much more.

And most of us would not have made it here if we did not have support from the exact same loved ones we had to give up time with. So, I first want to focus on all the families, friends, and loved ones in the crowd.

We thank you, and we apologize.

Thank you for being there even when we couldn't be there for you.

Thank you for understanding that we didn't want to miss a holiday dinner, but law school demanded it.

Thank you for sending care packages, letting us do laundry at your house, or giving us a place to stay on Spring Break or on weekends.

It may not have always been clear to you, but we were struggling, and your support helped get us through.

Sorry for not calling or texting as much; sorry for the times our anxiety or depression made us push you away. Thank you for never letting us push you away for too long.

I hope today you can see that what we went through, and what we put you through, was worth it. It was worth it because our lives have changed forever, and doors we didn't know about are now open.

Many of us came to law school in part to support you, to help you retire, or to help you pay your bills.

Sometimes we may have seemed selfish, or distant, or disinterested, but really you were on our minds all the time.

You were driving us to reach higher and strive for more, and we will always be grateful for that.

I know I can speak for every graduate in this room when I say we thank you and we love you for everything you have done for us.

**Please join me in giving them a round of applause.**

We also owe the professors at Seton Hall Law a tremendous amount of gratitude.

We thank you for everything you had to do for us, but we thank you even more for all the things you didn't have to do.

Whether it be extending your office hours, calling us the night before an exam to answer a question, or just being there any time we had personal struggles.

We wouldn't have made it here without you, thank you.

We also wouldn't have made it here without the friendship and support from all the graduates in this room.

We could've been cutthroat, we could've kept to ourselves, and we could've celebrated someone else scoring poorly on an exam.

But we didn't do that. We studied together. We shared outlines. We met our best friends at Seton Hall Law.

Now that we've graduated, we probably won't have as many Thursday nights out at Redds, lunches at Chipotle, or coffee runs to Starbucks, but I will always look back fondly on those memories.

I hope all of you will look back fondly, as well.

I came to law school to change the world. I think a lot of us did.

Many of us had this idea in our head that we would become the greatest lawyer ever, win a bunch of civil rights cases, and help everyone in need.

Then there are those of us in the room who came to law school on a whim, or to make a lot of money, or for any other reason.

Some of us have stayed true to our original reason for coming to law school, while some of have changed our minds.

I did. I struggled with it at first. I felt guilty that I wasn't going directly into public interest after graduation.

Eventually I realized that the way I am going to help people may not be solely through my legal career, but also outside of work.

Whether it be by starting or supporting a charity, a foundation, funding a scholarship, or all of the above.

I now realize that there are so many ways I can change the world, and it does not have to be in the exact way I envisioned 4 years ago.

There are some of us who still haven't figured out what we want to do or how we want to give back, or maybe we think it's not in the cards for us.

I urge all of you to remember the wonderful toolset you've acquired as you've made your journey through law school.

Think about how 1 or 2 months into 1L, your friends and family were begging for legal advice and you probably knew enough to give it. But of course, you NEVER dared do such a thing.

We've all learned so much in such a short amount of time, and it would be a shame not to give other people the benefit of our knowledge.

It's easy. It doesn't take long to answer a friend's question about their apartment lease contract or their uncle's will.

We've earned our JDs and will soon take and pass the bar and earn the right to practice law. With that comes the obligation to help others that need it.

It doesn't have to be a constant thing; it can be every so often.

But what we've learned here, most people do not know, and it is our responsibility to make sure we protect those who cannot protect themselves.

If you are still unsure about it, don't worry. It will come to you. There are so many ways for us to help and I know that all of us, as Seton Hall Lawyers, will rise to the occasion.

Speaking of Seton Hall Lawyers. Remember what that means. It means you answer emails from Seton Hall students looking for a mentor.

You say yes when you're asked to sit on a panel for Lambda or First Generation Law Students Association or any other student organization.

You call someone you used to work with and put in a good word for a former classmate or mentee who needs a job.

These are things we benefitted from while we were students and it is part of being a Seton Hall Lawyer.

The alumni network is one of the biggest reasons why I chose Seton Hall Law. We are now part of that, and we need to make sure it stays as strong as it always has been.

It's going to seem like forever between now and when we get our bar exam results, but just know that this is the beginning, not the end.

This is the start of over 100 Seton Hall Lawyers' careers.

The quality of the education we have received along with the tremendous amount of hard work and dedication I have seen from all of you leaves me with no doubt that we are all going to achieve wonderful things.

It has been my honor to attend law school with each and every one of you, and an equally great honor to address you all today.

I'll end with wisdom from Leo Buscaglia to carry with us as we begin the next phase of our lives:

“It's not enough to have lived. We should be determined to live for something. May I suggest that it be creating joy for others, sharing what we have for the betterment of personkind, bringing hope to the lost, and love to the lonely.”

Thank you.