

I never knew how incredibly difficult I could make something for myself, this speech in particular. I just don't know how to express how I feel. I guess I'll start by saying that this year has been a very quick one, but also a very rigorous and enjoyable one. I don't just speak for myself however. I speak for everyone involved in The Community School.

Everyone invests so much time into this school and the students, Mr. Tom and Justin especially. I know that for both of them it has been quite rough. Mr. Tom, from what I've seen and heard, gets virtually no sleep. Yet, he still manages to find the energy to teach a class and have a little fun with his students at the same time. He is not only a trooper, but he is dedicated to what he does. So many people would have given up if they were in his position, and it really motivates me to see that he hasn't.

Justin is also amazing. He checks our work every single day while doing just about everything else at the same time. It's really crazy to watch him because he is such a hard worker, and does his job with barely any complaints. I really like watching him because it makes me want to work just as hard.

If there is anything that would, and should, motivate the students, it's watching these two men work their butts off everyday just so we can learn.

I want to thank Mr. Tom, Justin, Mr. Don, Ms. Carol, Ms. Peggy, Mr. Dave, Barbara, other staff members, volunteers, sponsors, tutors, and everyone else that helped make The Community School what it is. Without them there, it wouldn't be such an outstanding school.

The next thing to talk about is definitely the class. Amanda, Anthony, Brianna, CJ, Evan, Freddy, Larry, Matt, Sara, and Tevin have been the most influential group of students, as well as friends, that I have been blessed with. These people are honestly something special to me, and to Mr. Tom. Whenever I didn't fully

understand something, they would help me understand it. The tutors and Mr. Tom helped me too, but it made me proud of the other students for being able to learn and re-teach what they had learned, just as Mr. Tom does. The students, my friends, also brought me up whenever I felt blue, or felt like giving up. If it wasn't for them, I might have quit by now.

Freddy, the boy I sat next to for a while, always made me laugh and feel better when I was upset. My best friend Sara did the same when I sat next to her, and really encouraged me before I even started school. Brianna always talked to me, taught me new things, and was incredibly energetic the majority of the time. Matt really inspired me with his creativity, and could always get me or Sara to laugh. CJ, Larry, Tevin, and Anthony showed me that it's okay to laugh at yourself. Amanda was always the one person to randomly start a conversation with me, which made me happy and uplifted my spirits. Finally, Evan taught me that I should always act myself.

To close, I'd really like to thank my family and friends. Sara was always motivating me, being the best friend anyone could ever ask for. Frankie always cheered me up, and kept me going. Both of them are too good for words. My mom and sisters Cindy and Kathryn almost made me want to cry when they said they were proud of me. My sister Rachel made me feel incredible whenever she'd pick up one of my progress reports and say "damn girl!" My grandmother and father made me feel good whenever they asked how I was doing in school because I could proudly say "good" without it being a lie for once.

I know that there is no amount of gratitude that would ever satisfy how thankful I am for every single person involved in The Community School. Thank you for everything.

Kimberly Smith 6/6/10