

Student Lasallian Commencement Address
December 2002
Presented by Theresa Behlala

Good afternoon members of the Board of Trustees, Brother James, honored guests, faculty, staff, fellow graduates, parents, families and friends. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome family and friends for being here today to share in this wonderful occasion. The support, understanding, faith, belief, and love you have given us throughout our endeavors have given us the strength to stay focused and to become hard working, productive individuals we are today. For this, we are grateful.

And to our instructors, faculty, and staff—we thank you. You have provided us as students with the tools necessary to be creative, think critically, and to be leaders in the workforce and throughout our communities. You've helped us to develop the skills necessary to be able to interact efficiently and effectively with others. Your commitment to our development reflects the Lasallian values shared by the Lewis community—the association that encourages us to interact as a teaching/learning community.

When I first began my studies at Lewis University, I had no idea what it meant to be “Lasallian”. Through the semesters, however, I have come to realize that according to the teachings of St. John Baptist de LaSalle, Lasallian is a way of life. It is how the professors teach. It is how the students learn. It is how we, students, faculty, staff, family, friends, fit under this “umbrella” of the Lewis mission.

As members of the Lewis University community, we have been provided with multiple opportunities and experiences, which have contributed to the development of our Lasallian character. One light-hearted but creative example comes to mind...when I was a sophomore, just starting the nursing program, our instructor for a particular class mentioned that there would be a question on our first exam pertaining to the Lewis Mission values of Justice, Fidelity, Knowledge/Wisdom, and Association. (Our class) memorized a rhyme we fashioned as JFKWAN (Brother James), we all managed to get that question right. We didn't know then, however, that the context of this Mission would become so important to who we were, what we would become, and the impact it would have in the semesters to follow.

passionate about what we do. Because it is passion and persistence that makes the impossible possible.

In a few minutes, we will have the opportunity to express our appreciation to our family, friends, faculty and staff for their support and guidance. I would like to share with you and all who feel as strongly about life as I do, a quote my Dad shared with me in a most precious letter... "Life is measured not by how many breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away..."

Thank you. And, God Bless....