

HEMPFIELD HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT | 2019 TRANSCRIPT

If you would like to tweet your well wishes to graduating students, please use

#HSDGraduation2019. Tweets will be displayed on the large projection screen prior to commencement activities.

***PROCESSION OF SENIORS**

"Pomp and Circumstance" (Processional).....Elgar

Good evening Hempfield! I'm Jim Dague, the principal of Hempfield High School. It is my pleasure to welcome you to this evening's commencement program for the Class of 2019. We are gathered here tonight in a formal ceremony to celebrate this significant milestone in the lives of these young men and women. At this time, would you please stand or remain standing and join the Hempfield Singers in the singing of our National Anthem. Thereafter, please remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Boys - take off your hats.)

***"NATIONAL ANTHEM"**

(After the National Anthem, begin, "I pledge allegiance, to the flag...")

(Boys - hats back on.)

***"PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE"**

Thank you and please be seated. We are privileged to have a Board of School Directors who are dedicated to provide Hempfield students with outstanding curricular as well as extracurricular opportunities. Will our School Board members who are present on the stage this evening please stand and be recognized?

I would like to introduce Mr. Bill Otto, the president of the Hempfield Board of School Directors, so he can address the class of 2019.

REMARKS..... Board President, Mr. William H. Otto

I would like to welcome you here today to celebrate the graduation of the Hempfield High School class of 2019. Class of 2019, congratulations on reaching this milestone in your life. I sincerely hope that this commencement ceremony will be one of your fond memories as you move on in life.

You have spent your entire life, up to this point, learning and growing. This process of growth and learning has brought you here tonight, ready to go out into the world.

Most of you have already made your decision on what you will do to further learn and grow. Many will continue their education at various institutions of higher learning, others have chosen to enter the workforce, some will take different paths based on their passions, interests and desires and some have chosen to enter into military service. For all those in the audience who have, or are, or will be serving, let me thank you for your Past – Present – and Future – service.

In all probability you will take diverse paths to get where you want to be in the future, but what does that future hold for you? I believe that your future will only be limited by your imagination and the desire and drive to make the world a better place. The futurists, when I was your age, were predicting things that, at the time, seemed impossible. Yet here we are

today with many of those predictions a reality. You and your generation will be imagining, implementing and building that which will be needed in the future to make our world a better place. It will require hard work and you will not always succeed, but it is imperative that you continue to try, as many before you have found out. You will learn from your mistakes, and be stronger and wiser for having tried.

You have received an excellent education here at Hempfield which will serve you well and allow you to imagine and implement world changing future ideas, and take you wherever you want to go. There are some items I spoke about the last few years that I think are important to remember throughout your future.

- Always do your best and be accountable and responsible for your actions, or lack of action. You are accountable and responsible for your actions – no one else is.
- With today's technology you have unprecedented access to vast amounts of information, use this to your advantage. Today's, and I'm sure tomorrow's technology, will allow you to further your knowledge of any issue. The more informed you are, the better the decisions will be that are needed to run this country.
- This last item deals with your unselfish efforts to give back to your community. Your actions are outstanding and a role model for others. Continue that into the future wherever you eventually settle.

Over the last few years I have had the privilege of presenting students with their diplomas. As I presented them with their diplomas I was struck by the spark in their eyes as they looked forward to the future. It is a wonderful thing to see that spark and the hope for the future that I am sure is behind that spark. And so I ask you, the class of 2019, to NEVER let anyone or anything extinguish that spark or hope. I ask this of you BECAUSE YOU ARE OUR FUTURE!

So on behalf of the School Board, I want to wish all of you the best of everything as you continue to learn and grow, and hope that we read about your outstanding accomplishments in future years. THANK YOU.

Hempfield High School Principal, Mr. James A. Dague

Thank you, Mr. Otto. On behalf of Hempfield High School, I would like to thank Mr. Otto and the entire Board of School Directors for their commitment to provide our students with outstanding educational opportunities. Our Hempfield students, staff and community appreciate everything the Board of School directors do for our students.

Seated on stage is another group of individuals whose work helps to ensure student growth and personal success. Would the members of the district senior administrative team who are present on the stage this evening to stand and be recognized?

(Pause.)

Without your support, we would not be able to provide all of the wonderful curricular as well as extracurricular opportunities and programs that are available to our students. Thank You.

At this time, it is my pleasure to introduce our Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Michael Bromirski.

REMARKS..... Mr. Michael Bromirski

Superintendent, Hempfield School District

Good evening! It is wonderful to be here, and I would like to thank all of the family members and friends, as well as our board members, administrators, teachers, staff, and members of the class of 1969 who are present this evening to support our soon-to-be-

graduates. We are so very proud of you and the many accomplishments you have achieved throughout your time in our schools!

Some of the accomplishments this year include:

- 13 seniors recognized as National Merit Finalists, Semifinalists, and Commended Students.
- We had many seniors win recognition in academic competitions for their writing, artwork, accomplishments in the communication/media arts and design, and work in the sciences.
- In February, 21 seniors made formal commitments to continue their education and athletic careers at Division 1, 2, and 3 schools.
- Student Council members served as great ambassadors of the school community and helped create a positive school culture.
- Students earned a third place finish in the Pennsylvania State Envirothon, where 66 counties were represented.
- We recognized three All-State musicians and one All-East Orchestra member, and our Marching Band earned the Cavalcade of Bands Grand Championship.
- And various student-led organizations donated monies to countless charitable organizations to help enrich the lives of others. In fact, our high school MiniTHON raised an amazing \$84,422 to support the fight against pediatric cancer.

I obviously can't list out every accomplishment of each group, student, or every impactful moment or event from the year; however, I know that as each of you scroll through your social media accounts, you will be struck, as I am, seeing the amazing impact that Hempfield students make. Every one of you has made your own mark on the Hempfield School District and now it is time for you to embark on your own new beginning.

You don't always know when you get to the last chapter of a book that there could be a new beginning. The last chapter of the book, Poppy, written by Avi, is entitled, "A New Beginning." My remarks this evening are inspired by this book, which is one of my favorite chapter books for younger readers.

To begin, Poppy is a small deer mouse who must set off to discover a new opportunity for her, her family, and her community. In order to seek this better life, she must take risks and summon her greatest courage to make a journey, which requires traveling through Dimwood Forest - a forest so vast, so dense, and so dark.

Our goal for all students in Hempfield is that you have the opportunity to discover your passions through the experiences and opportunities provided in elementary, middle, and high school to become lifelong learners and contributing citizens in all aspects of your lives. Perhaps some part of your educational career has, at times, felt vast (as in, how long it has felt to get to today - graduation day), dense (as in, sitting through an 80-minute test that could have been 20), or dark (as in, a time when you worked so hard and felt like you saw little success). While you may have had a few of these moments, we hope you had significantly more moments that provided learning, engagement, and opportunities where the light was shining bright through the forest.

Poppy is passionate about her journey because she is inspired by her friend, Ragweed. Throughout their friendship, Ragweed's self-confidence taught Poppy important lessons which helped her start her journey - when you have a problem, ask questions, seek help, don't give up, and take risks to solve the problem. I hope you can look back and think of a friend, a teacher or staff member, or a family member who has been a Ragweed kind of friend to you. Today would be a great day to tell them how much their support, encouragement, and counsel helped you. Because, let's be honest – none of us gets out of the forest without a little help.

And now, the next challenges of your journey emerge – whether it's college, technical school, military or community service, or work, and it may again feel like you are back in the forest. I hope you will summon the courage to persevere when things get tough on your journey. For Poppy, and for all of us, there are times when it is hard to feel courageous. Following your heart and your convictions will require that you take risks. But I believe that the tools and confidence you gained through your education at Hempfield will help you to see that things aren't as scary as you once may have thought.

I don't want to spoil the ending of the book, but it is important for you to know that, despite many challenges, Poppy is successful in her journey. As with every journey, it is not always easy – there are twists and turns and times when Poppy is afraid and wants to go back. However, she realizes, as you will soon too, that there is no going back. There is only a new beginning, and as classmates, you will always have a special connection. When things get tough, it will be important that you stay connected and continue to lean on one another. Your connections will shed great light on your journeys and help you navigate your way.

Along her journey, Poppy changed. She grew the moment she found the courage to enter Dimwood Forest. She grew not because of the forest, but because of who she was. Where you go on your journey is not who you will be; rather, who you will be has yet to be discovered. Continue to take steps to find new interests and passions, celebrate the past, and embrace what's to come with courage, excitement, and the belief of opportunity.

While Poppy was small, her impact was tremendous and she certainly made her mark, just like every one of you has made your mark on the Hempfield School District. Now it is time for you to make your next mark as you embark on a new beginning. We are so proud of you and wish you all the best for continued success along your journey.

Congratulations to all of you - the class of 2019!

Hempfield High School Principal, Mr. James A. Dague

Thank you, Mr. Bromirski for your comments this evening.

Each year, the Commencement Committee, which is comprised of high school faculty members, chooses a theme for the student commencement addresses. The theme chosen for this year's commencement program is "Unique Yet United."

All seniors are invited to audition to speak at commencement. The committee then selects two speakers and one alternate.

In addition to the two speakers chosen to present their speeches this evening, the Class Valedictorian, Student Council President, and the Senior Class President will also speak during the ceremony.

Each year, an alternate speaker is also chosen to participate in the commencement ceremony in the event that one of the chosen speakers is unable to deliver his or her address. Our alternate speaker this year was Elynn Nissley. This morning, at our final commencement rehearsal, Elynn delivered her speech to the class and did a great job. Please join me in congratulating Elynn for her contribution to this year's commencement preparations!

At this time, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our first two commencement speakers.

Bronwyn Meldrum, our class valedictorian, will present her speech entitled, "Piecing it Together."

Bronwyn will be followed by Jackson Fogel who will present his speech entitled, "Connections: The Meaning of Life."

(Students come to the stage and speak, one at a time.)

ORATION "Piecing it Together"Valedictorian, Bronwyn Meldrum

So, for those of you who haven't yet figured out that I'm a nerd, I like doing jigsaw puzzles. They can be relaxing, but have you ever experienced the frustration of having one

piece missing at the end? It takes away all of the satisfaction of finishing, and feels incomplete, because it is. Every piece is important. Sometimes puzzles have vast numbers of similar pieces; I once did one of St. Basil's cathedral, and there were probably over five hundred pieces (out of a 2,000 piece puzzle) that were black sky. They all looked the same, and to find where they went, I had to try every piece in every spot. But the thing about puzzles is that though those pieces may have all looked the same, they were all different shapes, and only one correct piece could fit into its designated place. Eventually I found where each piece went, and since it was a new puzzle, no pieces were missing. But if one piece had been missing, even in that black sky where all of the pieces looked the same and weren't the main focus of the puzzle, that empty spot would have stood out, and no other piece would have been able to fill its place.

Like the pieces of a puzzle, each of us is unique. We all have a place where we are needed, a role that no one else can fill quite the way we can. Even in the times when we feel inadequate, or that we aren't needed and people could move on without us, like we are just one of hundreds of pieces of black sky, never forget that there is no one quite like you, and you personally are needed to complete the puzzle.

No one is perfect, so don't try to be. Focus on being the best person that you can be each day, and rather than looking at others and trying to be like them, keep growing towards a better version of yourself. Not everyone can be part of the colorful St. Basil's cathedral, and not everyone should be. Some people's goals involve fame and money, and that's ok. But do what makes you happy. Forcing a puzzle piece into a place it is not meant to go ends in bending or breaking the piece. Work hard, but if your work takes you away from what is most important, like your health, family, or life goals, step back and reevaluate. Sometimes it takes a new perspective to see what you have been missing, and seeing your current situations with a long-term perspective can help to alleviate stress and reveal just how insignificant the setbacks of today may be when viewing them with the eyes of tomorrow. Remind yourself where you want

to go, who you want to be, and then calm down. Chances are, that bad grade, mean comment, break-up text, or other rejection, even if it *changes* your life, will not ruin your life. Humans are amazingly adaptable, and you will survive.

Fear can be crippling. Believe me, I know. I am excited for the pit of dread that this speech placed in my stomach to dissipate after tonight. Part of growing is overcoming your fears. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Don't be afraid to say no. Sometimes that is difficult; I want to be able to help everyone, but no one can do everything. But also don't be afraid to say yes. Try new things. Explore. Don't be afraid to not know.

For all of the random bits of knowledge that high school has forcefully shoveled into my head, I still don't know many things. Important things, like what I want to be and where I want to end up, and I know that many of you are in the same situation. That's all right! It's ok to not know, but it is also important to not let the indecision bind you. Just start. If it takes you a little longer because you keep changing your dream, you'll end up with more life experience. I used to want to pick up garbage from parks for a living. That is no longer the case, but at least I have a backup plan. You all have the potential to achieve greatness. And when I say that, I don't mean you will all be rich or famous. You won't. I don't mean that you will all succeed in what you might plan. You won't. But greatness doesn't equal perfection. You can be great if you change one life. You can be great if you are the one who walks into the gray office every day with a smile on your face, even though at one time you dreamed to be a cheetah trainer. (Just as a random example.) Being great has nothing to do with you, and everything to do with how you make others feel. If you want to be great, be kind.

We finally made it. We are about to enter some of the best years of our lives. We are in our prime, and we should take advantage of that. Don't waste your potential. So much time and effort has gone into making you who you are today, so don't throw that away, do something with it. In case you zoned out at any time during my speech, to recap: you are

unique, you are important; strive to be the best version of you; don't be afraid, be kind, and good luck!

ORATION "Connections: "The Meaning of Life" Jackson Fogel

I once had a conversation with a friend of mine about what makes life worth living. What drives us to act the way we do. I'm not sure there is a right answer - each one of us is incredibly individual, special, and unique, and life can mean something different to every one of us. We are not a carbon copy of the person sitting next to or in front of us.

We are, in a number of ways, different from one another. It could be the way we dress, or the way we talk, or what extracurricular activities we were involved in at Hempfield High School if any at all. It would be folly to assume that we all adhere to a single past, present, and future, neglecting the awesome diversity that each of us represent. Our uniqueness and individuality is something to cherish.

In spite of, or perhaps because of these differences, we managed to come together. We bonded with the people around us, finding our places among friends. We competed as a team in Fall Flings and Spring Shabings. We adapted to new policy together, from iPads to ALICE training. We endured national and international hardships, and came together in support of those affected. We came together not just as classmates, but as friends, and as family, and proved to each other and ourselves that we don't need to be on this journey alone.

This unity contributed to my personal opinion on the meaning of life. Existentialist philosophers said that it was up to us to give life its purpose. I believe the most important way we can do this is by interacting with each other. In talking to each other, we can learn and grow. I mentioned earlier how each person at this event is different, with their own mountains to summit and rivers to cross. These experiences leave each of us with stories, unique to our

own selves. We share these stories, displaying how we are each different, yet compatible; unique, yet united.

I am not the same person as my brothers, or parents, or friends or teachers. But my life could not be what it is today had they not been involved in it, had they not told me their own stories. This verbal interaction, this passing of ideas, is the thread that binds us together, stitched close by a network of lessons and tales. It is an integral part of who we are, not just as a class but as a society, a melting pot of personalities born of hardships and accomplishments who draw from each other to bolster ourselves. In this way, though we may be entirely different people, we will still come together, tied to one another by the common string of life. It's been happening for the past four years and will hopefully happen for many more to come. So, while we are unique, in this moment, as we have been in our time at Hempfield High School, we are united - and that is truly something to celebrate.

Hempfield High School Principal, Mr. James A. Dague

Thank you Bronwyn and Jackson – you both did an outstanding job!

(Pause)

Here at Hempfield High School, we are very proud of our performing arts department. At this time, the Hempfield Singers, under the direction of Dr. Alan Mudrick, will present the choral selection, "Humble and Kind."

(Chorus must move fast.)

"Humble and Kind" Lori McKenna/arr. E. Jojeski

Hempfield Singers

Director: Dr. Alan W. Mudrick

Thank you Dr. Mudrick and members of the Hempfield Singers.

This is a very special moment for Dr. Mudrick as he is retiring and this is his last commencement performance. Thank you Dr. Mudrick for your service to our students!

Our next student speaker this evening is Ruby Mundok who will present her speech entitled, "Uniqueness All Around Us." Ruby will be followed by Andrew Jordan, who will present his speech entitled, "Take It In."

ORATION "Uniqueness All Around Us".....Ruby Mundok

So much comes to mind when I think of Hempfield, and my time here over the past 13 years. Not just hours of studying or fun times at football games, or the excitement of the last day of school each year, but more importantly the Hempfield community that I've been a part of since I first walked through the doors of Rohrerstown Elementary. I remember my 6th grade buddy and field days in elementary school. I remember middle school musicals and our first school dances. In high school I will always remember cheering on our teams, raising money for MiniTHON, and celebrating the end of our journey together. I am grateful for every student, teacher, and member of the Hempfield community that I've met along the way. We all have unique lives and come from different backgrounds. We may believe different things or have different interests, but one thing we will always have in common is being part of Hempfield.

Our uniqueness comes from who we are and what challenges us, what inspires us, and what drives us. But together, our community is bigger than any individual. Like with math, each number, each rule, and each operation represent something unique. But together in an equation, these individual things solve problems. For an athlete, each skill, each technique, and even each drill at a long day at practice are special, but combined they create the talent that he or she uses to compete at the highest level, and we all know that Hempfield competes at the highest level. When we listen to music, we hear the completed song. But behind that song are measures and measures of different notes, melodies, rhythms, and instruments. All of these

elements are distinct on their own, but when they come together they make up something amazing.

That is how I think of Hempfield. We are made up of unique individuals. We are the musicians, the athletes, the artists and actors, the scientists, and the executives. We are also the teachers, the parents, the leadership, and everyone who lives and works in our community. We may come from different backgrounds, have different stories or different views of the world... but when we come together as Hempfield, we create something beautiful, something powerful, something hard working, and something successful.

The definition of united is *quote* “joined together for a common purpose.” Hempfield supports each other and lifts each other up regardless of our differences. Whether it’s cheering on our buddy club when they’re on stage at the talent show, celebrating victories for all of our teams, or even just helping someone out in the hallway, the relationships we have built by supporting each other, despite those differences, have helped us to unite as one. When we celebrate our diversity, we can come together as a community, set big goals, and achieve them.

As we go our separate ways, I encourage every single one of you to remember these things. Remember the times at Hempfield, when someone looked past your differences and lent you a hand. Remember the friendships you’ve made with those who may not have been exactly like you. Remember the fun times you shared with those friends, and the not so fun times cramming for finals, or holding each other up during challenging times. Most importantly, remember how we are a community at Hempfield and carry that legacy with you, wherever you are heading.

We will all always be Black Knights. I truly believe we can follow our dreams and accomplish anything we set our minds to because of the acceptance and support we’ve received in our time here. Thank you Hempfield for the opportunity to meet so many amazing people, and be a part of such an incredible community. We will miss you, and we will never

forget you, but now is our time to live all that we have learned. Here's to the next chapter.

Congratulations class of 2019. We did it!

ORATION "Take It In" Andrew Jordan

Four years, one hundred and eighty days per year, and seven hours per day. Over the past four years of our lives we have spent over five thousand hours trying to prepare ourselves for the next step. In addition to this, we have spent countless hours on homework, practices, games, competitions, clubs, and other activities all trying to better ourselves for what's next. Well now it is time for what's next! For some of us that is post-secondary schooling, for some that is starting in the workforce, for some it's the armed forces, for some it's a year off, and some of us it is just seeing where the wind takes you! Well no matter where you are going I'm sure that you will do well, work through struggles, and succeed.

Looking back it seems like it was just yesterday that we were new high school students just getting ready to start ninth grade! One of my first memories from high school was walking into Fundamentals of Art on the first day and being told to sit next to a kid that I swear was much over seven feet tall and had a huge beard. So, obviously I proceeded to call him Abe Lincoln. Well, now we are the Abe Lincolns of the school! Some of us not quite seven feet tall with a long beard but we are here, nevertheless. It is crazy how fast that time went and looking back on it, I rarely stopped what I was doing and just realized how unique and interesting my life is! I mean who else spent four years mowing lawns for a living?!

I encourage all of you to step back this evening and just remember the good times you had throughout your four years in high school. The teachers that impacted your life, the friends you made, the courses and experiences that changed your pathway for the future, and also the fun things you did and saw with family and friends throughout your high school career. Look back on your favorite class, your funniest class, your worst class, and remember. I remember

Introduction to Piano class with Joey Diiorio. I remember playing music that may or may not have been what we were supposed to be playing at that time and looking forward to that class every other day! I remember Entrepreneurship with Mr. Hanusa and reading about the energy bus, and playing “trashketball” on review days. And I remember struggling through tough classes with people who were also struggling and the bonds I made in those times. Remember everything that you did good and bad that formed who you are today.

All of us have something next. It is all different, but whatever it is take some time every now and then to sit back and take it in. Take a minute from your go, go, go life and start to list amazing things that happened to you, big or small. For me, I think to the places and memories I've made with family and friends, campfires in the back yard, drives to absolutely nowhere in particular in my truck, and gooooooooood morning Hempfields! By the way today is national running day! I bet this day has been running through all of your minds for years, but now that we're here make sure you take some time to sit back, relax, and take it in.

Hempfield High School Principal, Mr. James A. Dague

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our speakers this evening for the outstanding job they did in both preparing and sharing their messages.

I would also like to thank the Hempfield Singers for their excellent performances.

Please join me in recognizing our speakers and choral performers at this time!

Tonight, we also have some very special guests in attendance. They are the members of the Class of 1969. They are here as a part of their 50th anniversary celebration of their graduation from Hempfield High School.

Earlier this evening, there was a reception held in their honor. Members of the Class of 1969, we are honored that you have come this evening to celebrate your 50th reunion with us. At this time, would the class of 1969 please stand to be recognized? Ladies and gentlemen - please join me in a round of applause for these very important members of our Hempfield school community.

At this time, I have the distinct pleasure of recognizing the ten students who have achieved the highest weighted, cumulative grade point averages, in the Class of 2019. Would our Top Ten Academic Performers please come to the stage at this time?

(Pause until all are on stage.)

As I call your name, please step forward to be recognized and to receive your plaques. Ladies and gentlemen, family and guests, please hold your applause until all 10 students have been recognized.

(Hempfield High School administrators hand out plaques).

Our Top Ten students, in alphabetical order, are:

- Nishant Balepur - Nishant will attend University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign in the fall, and will major in Computer Science.
- Nebeyu Bekere - Nebeyu has enrolled at University of Pennsylvania and plans to major in biochemistry.
- Hannah Graybill - Hannah will be attending the Eastern University in the fall and will be majoring in Exercise Science with a Spanish minor.
- Cara Mahoney - Cara will be attending the University of Delaware next school year and plans to major in Chemical Engineering.

- Bronwyn Meldrum - Bronwyn is the Valedictorian of the class of 2019. She will be attending Brigham Young University and is undecided in her major. Earlier today at our commencement practice, Bronwyn received her Valedictorian plaque presented by the Hempfield Education Association.
- Adeet Parikh - Adeet will be attending University of Texas at Austin and he will be majoring in Computer Science.
- Curran Schmitt - Curran will be attend Case Western University, and plans to majoring in Aerospace engineering and math.
- Sinclair Schuetze - Sinclair, will be attending Wellesley College and is planning to major in computer science and sociology.
- William Yaeger - William will be attending Lehigh University this fall and will is undecided in his major.
- Ryan Zhang - Ryan is the Salutatorian and will be attending Penn State University next year majoring in Physics and Computer Science.

Please join me in congratulating these students for their tremendous academic performance - thank you for a job very well done!

Also this evening, we'd like to recognize the Academic Top 10% of the Class of 2019. These students are noted in the commencement program and may be recognized tonight by their white stoles. At this time, would the top 10% please stand to be recognized?

(Pause.)

Ladies and Gentlemen - the Top 10% from the Class of 2019.

During the last several weeks, many of our students received awards and recognition at events that included but not limited to the Hempfield High School Senior Awards Program, the Lancaster County Career & Technology Center Awards Programs, the Tri-M Music Honor Society Program, and the National Art Honor Society Program. Award recipients are noted in your program. At this time, would all students who received awards at any of our awards ceremonies, please stand and be recognized?

(Pause.)

Congratulations and thank you for committing the time and energy needed to realize the level of success you have attained.

Class of 2019 – We know that throughout your educational journey there have been many people who have offered you support, guidance, comfort, and at times a friendly nudge to get things done.

Please join me in thanking the members of the Hempfield educational family - all the parents, family members, friends, and community members - without their support the achievements you have realized thus far in your life would not have been possible.

(Clap.)

The Hempfield educational family also includes both the teaching and support personnel who take great pride in the school, students, and facilities.

Many members of our professional and support staff are participating in this evening's ceremony to ensure that our commencement program flows smoothly. Please join me in recognizing the contributions that the staff of Hempfield School District have made to prepare these students for success, both in and out of the classroom.

(Applause.)

I would also like to acknowledge the senior class advisors, Mr. Steve Haldeman and Mr. Josh Peacher, for their work with the senior class over the past four years.

(Applause.)

Additionally, I'd like to recognize and thank Dr. Cathi Fuhrman, Mrs. Rosemarie Zorilla, and Mrs. Lauren Stauffer. Without their efforts and guidance, this evening would not be such a successful endeavor.

(Applause.)

Lastly, I'd like to extend a very special thank you to Mrs. Renee Dissinger. I cannot begin to express my gratitude for the work Renee does for graduation. The long hours she has spent organizing tonight's program as well as the Senior Awards Night are greatly appreciated by all. Renee, a very sincere thank you for everything you have done for me, our graduates, and the entire high school community.

(Applause.)

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS.....Hempfield High School Principal,

Mr. James A. Dague

CHARGE TO SENIORS.....Hempfield High School Principal,

Mr. James A. Dague

Class of 2019,

We are proud of the academic, artistic, and athletic accomplishments your class has had over your careers in the Hempfield School District. I know that some of the life lessons you have learned were not easy. Along with the cheering and laughter, there were times of uncertainty, fear, and tears. You are now moments away from completing your last high school task. You are

about to receive your diploma. You are now ready to move on to new adventures and challenges. As we part ways, I want you to know, it has been an honor to be part of your life! To everyone in attendance tonight and everyone at home watching this ceremony, thank you! We have appreciated your support through the last 13 years. Education is truly a partnership and without you, your sons and daughters would not be where they are today. You certainly have helped lay a solid foundation for the Hempfield High School's Class of 2019. Thank you.

Before I present the graduating class, may I remind the audience that this is a momentous occasion? These students have worked for 13 years to reach this academic accomplishment. Many parents have waited 18 years to hear the name of their son or daughter presented for graduation. Hearing their name is very important. Letting your student know how proud you are of them should take place before and after our ceremony, not in the middle of it.

Parents will only hear the name they've waited 18 years to hear if you hold your applause and comments until all names have been read and the entire class has been recognized. Please understand that noise makers will not be tolerated and will be removed - your cooperation will be greatly appreciated by everyone – especially the parents of our graduates - as we prepare to bestow diplomas upon the Class of 2019.

Mr. Bromirski and Mr. Otto! It is my pleasure and honor to present to you the graduating Class of 2019. I hereby certify that these students have completed all academic requirements established by the Hempfield School District and the State Board of Education, and are entitled to receive their diplomas.

Seniors ...it is that time ... please present yourself on stage when called forth by Dr. Reinhardt and Dr. Harrington.

(Dr. Harrington and Dr. Reinhardt read the names of graduating students.)

PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS

At this time, I would ask the members of our chorus to move to the risers. Members of the audience, please rise for the choral benediction and the Alma Mater.

***CHORAL BENEDICTION.....Hempfield Singers**

***“HEMPFIELD ALMA MATER”**

Director: Dr. Alan W. Mudrick

Hempfield High School Principal, Mr. James A. Dague

Students, please remain standing. Members of the audience you may be seated. It is my pleasure to introduce Maria Karamanos, the President of the Class of 2019. Maria will address her classmates and symbolically mark their transition from Hempfield High School STUDENTS to Hempfield High School ALUMNI.

REMARKS..... Class President, Maria Karamanos

Today is a day for celebration, and in the Greek community, we celebrate by dancing!! I want to tell you about a dance that my grandfather taught me when I was a little girl that is called the Ikariotiko. Today we aren't going to get up to learn it, but we are going to walk through the steps together. In this dance some people rock, some people take two steps, and some people stomp in place. If you have ever seen a Greek dance, it may have appeared to be a seamless line of beautiful dancing. But I'll let you in on a little secret! In that line, everyone is doing a different step! It's all of these individual movements that create the perfect dance.

At Hempfield, we are band members, basketball players, and artists.

And we are Black Knights.

At Hempfield, we are a part of the CTC program, NHS members, German Club members, and Quiz Bowl Champions.

And we are Black Knights.

At Hempfield, we are Republicans, Democrats, Protestants, and Orthodox.

And we are Black Knights.

The reason why the Ikariotiko dance lasted hundreds of years is that it allowed people to be themselves in a unified passion. Some people rock, some people take two steps, and some people stomp in place. Our incredible teachers and administrators at Hempfield have taught us the importance of being unique and being the best that we can. No matter what we embark on in the next stage of our lives, we are united in the fact that we are each unique and special, and we are united in the fact that we will always be Black Knights.

So let's take this next step together, and turn our tassels from the right side to the left to symbolize our transition into our next adventure.

(Turn tassel and then toss caps, if desired.)

Hempfield High School Principal, Mr. James A. Dague

Congratulations to the Class of 2019 - this concludes this evening's ceremony. Thank you for attending - please drive safely!

***Audience Standing**

Interpreters: Rayelenn Casey and Libby Berlin