

# 2020 Avila College DUX Speech

## Kimberly Chan

Good morning Dr Cotter, distinguished guests, staff and students. It's an honour to be able to be standing here today as the college Dux of 2020.

I am not great with speaking, so in all honesty I'd rather just say 'this ATAR was all due to genetics' and run back to my seat, but in fact I'm also not a great liar, and it happens to be that maths is my mother's arch enemy and my father's understanding of English grammar is a bit questionable, so it would be wrong for me to say that genetics helped me to get here. The only reason I am able to be standing here today is because of all of the help from the people around me.

So, on that note, firstly, thank you to all of the teachers who have ever interacted with me over the years, for being supportive and very patient, even when dealing with someone as bad at communicating as me.

Thank you to the teachers that taught me last year during the coronavirus – Mr Lo, Ms Zammicheli, Mr Francis, Mrs Clapperton and Mr Kennedy. Regardless of the tough year we all had, the teachers always put their best effort to not only support us with our learning, but also trying their best to maintain a positive mood, so I think that all the teachers should be recognised for their hard work.

I was originally not a fan of school with my two favourite subjects being recess and lunchtime, but thanks to the encouragement from my Year 7 Maths teacher I was able to become motivated to try harder in maths, and Year 11 Specialist Maths was the most fun I had throughout my years at school especially thanks to the teaching and kind encouragement of my spesh teacher, so I definitely wouldn't be here without those teachers.

I'd also like to thank my violin teachers, Mrs Seamer and Ms Lyall, as music made school a lot more enjoyable, so thank you for putting up with my sad violin playing every week.

Secondly, I would also like to thank my friends. They are all such kind people and are also very hardworking people in general, which always reminded me of the need to stop procrastinating and to work harder. I am honoured to have the privilege of being able to call such an amazing group of people my friends, and I aspire to hopefully be like them one day.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. Thank you for always supporting me by watching over me understandingly instead of putting pressure on me to get Asian grades, and also helping me to relieve stress by making sure that the stock of snacks in our pantry was always fully loaded.

When I looked on Google for sample DUX speeches, they all spoke about some of the things that helped them throughout their studies, so I would like to follow their model.

For me, the main thing that I think helped me was that I tried to find something that I liked about in each of the subjects that I did, or at least tried not to blindly hate a subject. For example, I enjoyed doing tests for maths and science, because if you look at them as a sort of puzzle that can be solved by putting together all of the pieces taught during class, it becomes fun to solve, and even though English wasn't my favourite subject, by trying to convince myself that it was fun I was able to enjoy the process of writing essays, sometimes.

So, although it can be hard, if you can find a way to like what you are doing, or at least find an aspect that you can't hate about it, studying could become a bit less torturous, and more an enjoyable activity or even a hobby, which can be very powerful.

Today I am lucky enough to be standing in front of the school as DUX, but 6 years ago in Year 7 I was a student who spent most of my lunchtimes standing alone in an empty flowerbed next to the rubbish bin. So, if you are able to find one thing that you like, it could make your life a bit more enjoyable and maybe a bit more vibrant than it is now. For me, that thing just happened to be maths, which just happened to lead me here, with of course a lot of help from other people.