Kim Orlando
Graduation Speech April 28, 2006
Good evening fellow graduates, faculty, family, and friends. It is a pleasure to be here this evening at the 2006 Graduation Celebration at Cape Cod Community College. Education is a journey. Tonight as we receive our degrees, it is important to note that this is a stepping stone to our future. We are feeling a sense of relief. All of the studying that we have done has set us out on our career paths. We all had to face many challenges that have come our way. Each of us will bring different attributes and skills to new careers. This is a day to celebrate, a day to add to our scrapbooks, a day to remember.

Our experience is unique to Cape Cod. We do not have a lot of nearby colleges to choose from. Cape Cod Community College is the only college on Cape Cod. We have chosen to obtain our education right here in our own community. As it is says in the recording when you call the college, "There is no higher quality or no greater value in higher education today." Students learned to multi-task their education, career, and families which at this time can be a bit stressful. We may be at the library one minute, and bringing the kids to their activities, or even taking an exam the next minute.

When I made the decision to return to school, everyone warned me that it would be difficult. I accepted the challenge. Since I was in preschool, I dreamt of becoming a Registered Nurse. They offered a wonderful LPN to RN transition program and this would be the chance of a lifetime. After completing my prerequisite courses, I began the 3rd semester. It was not easy. I had to give up my role as nurse manager in a long term care facility and worked the hours that required a lot of coffee. Weekends really no longer existed.

Here I am tonight along with my peers and graduates of Arts, Sciences and Certificate Programs. We did it! We have not made it alone. Others have also made sacrifices to help us as well. The significant others, spouses, and partners who took on more of the household functions, the sons and daughters who needed to help out more, the moms, dads, and siblings as well as the faculty who were there to encourage us. Our families learned to prioritize their days right along with us. They have all traveled beside us in our journey. Some of us have lost important people in our lives, but they remain in our hearts and look down upon us with a smile. Success is knowing what we have obtained here at Cape Cod Community College and knowing that we have the potential to accomplish anything we desire.

Our education does not have to stop here. The completion of our education at Cape Cod Community College is not as much as an ending as it is a new beginning to return to our lives and work as well as to all the friends who have been so understanding. We extend our gratitude to our families, friends, fellow graduates, co-workers, instructors, and all the people who have helped us through our achievements. As we are handed our degrees, I leave one last challenge with you, I challenge you to make a difference in the world.

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