

June 21 2016

Hello everyone how is everybody doing? I hope everyone is having a totes radical night so far. I want to say that I'm so proud of our graduating class of twenty sixteen we all have come so far. An all over come so many obstacles and we should all be so proud of ourselves. But, tonight's a night of mixed emotions I don't want this Karafin journey to end. But I know we all have to spread our wings and fly at some point in time and I think it's our time now the class of 2016. So let's do this!

But let's go back in time for now, before coming to Karafin. Being in school was never easy for me. I always felt behind or the teacher was going too fast. No one ever noticed my academic struggle. I ended up getting an IEP, at my home school and everyone else called the students who had them special Ed. I didn't know what was worse; not knowing what was going on or being made fun of for my academic difficulties. My life changed from that point on. When I entered high school I thought it would be a start of something new but it wasn't it was the total opposite. Most of my friends didn't have the same classes as me because of the IEP. When it came time to take tests I would leave the classroom and get extra time, other students would notice this and they didn't understand why so they judged me for it. My self-esteem had fallen due to this. About half way through the school year I started getting bullied by a group of girls. I was

never one to care much about what other people thought of me until rumors were spread and my friends were no longer my friends.. So day after day I would complain to the school and nothing was done for me. I started to believe everything I heard from the rumors. I just wanted to give up on everything I always wanted. I seriously felt like I was at my breaking point and there was no help for me. I found nothing worth trying for, I just wanted everything to end. Every part of me was broken. My confidence, self-esteem, and trust was ruined. I had almost finished 9th grade but I wasn't able to. It got to hard mentally, emotionally, and academically.

Ok enough with the sad and emotional stuff.

Let's Fast Forward to the start of my Karafin Journey. I had planned not to talk to anyone for the three years I would be there. I thought I would go to school come home and be by myself. Well I don't think that really worked. It's ok though I'm glad it didn't. For the first week or so I remember bringing my carrots and dip everyday. I think I went through a rabbit faze who knows. I soon was rescued though by probably the loudest girl in the school Carolyn and she's here tonight you might of heard her already. As soon as I started to warm up to the new school I was able to feel comfortable again coming to school, like I was understood and no one

here would judge me well then again I had Carolyn as my friend and she wouldn't let any of that slide.

Coming to Karafin and finishing now I never thought I would have improved this much. If it wasn't for The Karafin School that gave me a second chance in believing in myself I almost doubt I would be graduating let alone standing in front of you guys giving a speech as valedictorian tonight with my graduating class of twenty sixteen.

I really want to thank everyone who has helped me to become the person I am today. I wouldn't have been able to realize my strength again without the help of my classmates, teachers, teachers aids, and family oh and Mr. Richardson So Thank you all so much.

Another person I want to thank is my brother. My brother has been there for me when I needed someone the most. He's helped me through some of my toughest moments, he's my lifesaver. I'm so thankful to have him in my life, he's gone above and beyond for me. I know that no matter how far apart we are he will always be one call away.

Lastly I wish the best and nothing less to the graduating class of twenty sixteen. I once was told by someone "If your dreams don't scare you they

are too small." I've realized it's ok to be scared. And always refuse to sink.

Congratulations!!! We did it.