

Boozhoo and welcome everyone. It is an honor to give this speech for this year's class graduates of Humanities-101. First, let us acknowledge our host community; Fort William First Nation and Lakehead University with gratitude for providing us a venue for our celebration this evening, thank you both for your valued relationship. Next, it is a great honor to welcome our guests; family and friends, past graduates, and sponsors to our class graduation 2014. Finally, we could not do this without our professors, our fantastic four, along with volunteers who gave their undivided and meaningful passion toward the program.

Humanities: Anything is Possible

Love What You Do For It Will Look After You

I have a story to tell. A dragonfly was hovering over a field, flying over the grasses. Out of curiosity, it flew around a giant trunk of a tree. And then, spiraling, it flew into the branches of the sapling and, every now and then, out of the break of leaves, it circled back in until it gradually reached the top of the tree. High above, it looked all over its surrounding with amazement and joy. And, while up there, the dragonfly asked where it should go next? Suddenly, it flew back down to the field realizing its appreciation for the turfs, abundance and length of the meadows for it could explore them with new sense of belonging and purpose.

I enrolled in Humanities-101 through New Directions Speakers School. I felt it was an opportunity to learn something new. I felt like the dragonfly going for the top of the tree. But in this case it was a trunk of knowledge, and learning how to think outside the box. I reached the top of that tree. And, I carry with me now a new awareness and insight; not to take things for granted that every opportunity has a reason and purpose.

Humanities-101 at Lakehead University has run its program for 10 years. Tonight, we are joined by fellow students: past and present, all of whom have stories to share and built important relationships. Our design, our pattern, our path is connected. We all make differences benefiting the future, and like the dragonfly blossoming in fields of belonging and purpose.

“HUMANITIES” as an acronym that stands for:

H is for “Honor”, honoring our achievements as students and faculty; we carry a legacy with us and carries on

U is for “Ultimate Goals”, these are put in place with shared ideas and dreams to focus on higher education

M is for “Mind and Heart” to associate with the things we love to do, and to express our love of learning. With respect, to align our actions and produce healthy steps forward

A is for “Advantages” with heightening our awareness, we heighten our intelligence

N is for the “New Beginnings” and new paths, whether we face the challenges and/or fears on our own or with friends and family by our side

I is for “Involvement”, getting involved and making a difference, making our voices heard in a meaningful way. And, to know what we are doing, and attentive guidance in the program

T is for “Trust” Trust one another and our sense of belonging, and trust where the program is leading us

I is for “Invite Ideas”, ideas for an authentic approach to educate for an ethical and egalitarian society and solidarity

E is for the “Existence” and an affirmation of our journeys, and an absolute natural being of presence

S is for the “Support” to expand our wings, and to cultivate achievement. It started with our first steps to walk through the doors in the program

Like the dragonfly that roamed over the green pasture. It was a pleasure and privilege to share this speech with all of you. Past, present, and future accomplishments are reflected in the people of this room. I have learned to challenge and ask as many questions as possible; because, anything is possible. Love what you do for it will look after you; your voice, our voices have what it takes to fulfill the dreams and passions to confidently enter many doors, and use the tools and keys effectuated from Humanities-101! Thank you