

Welcome Board of Trustees, distinguished faculty, administration, staff, family, and friends; and especially, my fellow graduates. This is Megan Silva and you're listening to 93.5 KWDC Stockton Delta College Radio.... Wrong intro sorry... our radio station was a huge part of my time at Delta College, it's weird starting a speech with anything else. You're listening to someone from the 88th graduating class of San Joaquin Delta College, class of 2023. I think any graduating class that starts with the year 2020- anything is extra amazing because we finished school during one of the wildest times in history. We've taken tests on our phones, on the Canvas app, on a break at work, and many of us had to hunt for good wi-fi in a Starbucks parking lot or fast-food restaurant, and some of us, like me, didn't even get to see the school we were going to until well over a year after we started.

But when we did come back, we were tasked with rebuilding. All of our departments had to start over. Student chef got up and running again, bringing us delicious food (those cream cheese pumpkin muffins in the library bakery? I'm so glad that I'm going to college literally down the street because I might need to pick one up on the way to the University of the Pacific.) The music department started giving us amazing concerts again, the horticulture club is out there taming the wilderness with their weed whackers making our campus look pretty, anyone here who has been in any activity at Delta, congratulations. You brought life back to Delta College!

And you did it while balancing so many other things. It is my opinion that community college students don't get nearly enough credit. Not only are we doing the same work as anyone at a four-year, but we're doing it while balancing our family responsibilities (I know a lot of kids are getting to see their parents and even grandparents graduate today). That's huge, take all the cute pictures today. They're going to remember this forever. And many of us are also balancing our jobs. I worked as a music teacher and a programming assistant while being a full-time student here. My radio station coworkers will tell you I took a lot of naps in the station... I would be in the middle of uploading some music or my show I'm just there like (snores) but I made it. We made it.

We couldn't have done it without the support from our staff. According to the enrollment update given this past February, there are over 16,000 students enrolled at Delta College. I never would have known that, because I've never felt lost in that, I've never felt like I didn't matter. And that makes me work harder because I have people who will critique my resume and get me in contact with who I need to talk to in order to transfer to a four-year college. I have no excuse not to do well because we have people in the DARTE Program, in the Career and Transfer Center, and in all of the student services who have put in the work with us to get us to where we need to be.

And there's another amazing group that changed our lives....our faculty. I'm sure we all have that person on campus where you're like "I gotta make them proud, they've helped me grow as a human so much." Go ahead, give them a round of applause. For me, that person is Adriana Brogger, she is a Professor in the Digital Media Department, and our Mistress of Ceremonies tonight. Something she always tells us when we're turning in projects is "let go of the idea that it

needs to be perfect the first time". And I'm a perfectionist so that took me a couple of tries to get it to sink in, but that stuck with me like, yeah? What opportunities am I holding myself back from because I'm waiting to feel like I've really got it down before I put it out there?

So, I started a radio show, Delta Book Club. I was really freaked out about publishing the first episode but was like "If it's not perfect, I've got a few more tries to get it really polished. Gotta start sometime." Fast forward a year, that show recently won a national podcasting award from the Associated Collegiate Press. I think a lot of us feel like we must get to a certain point before we feel like we can call ourselves what we want to be, whether that's a radio host, Nurse, entrepreneur, welder, or any number of careers available through Delta. The great thing about being at Delta is you start doing that thing right away, and that has given me so much confidence.

Thanks to everyone who helped us get here today. Our experience at Delta has been an integral part of forming who we are today. These past few years have shown us the importance of being there for each other. The class of 2023 is resilient, creative, and ready to delete the Canvas app from our phones. Delta gave us life, now let's go live it! Congratulations, 88th graduating class of 2023, we did it!