

Good morning members of the faculty, families, friends, and of course, brothers and sisters of Promocion XXI Colegio Jefferson.

I would like to start by giving thanks all of **you** who made this day possible. To our families, your love and unconditional support has been determining in motivating us to pursue our goals. To the school faculty: professors and directors, you have understood the importance of your roles as guides in every one of our lives. To the rest of the school staff, including Alfredito, Sra Eli and their team for your infallible job during all these years. To Professor Antonio Sanchez, thank you for not just being our godfather, but also for your patience and unlimited support. And finally, to all of you present here today who contributed in our formation.

Today marks the end of a stage in our lives. A stage that began 15 years ago when a group of us started to shape what we see today as la Promoción 21. From the beginning, Colegio Jefferson as an institution had the objective of transforming us into what a Jefferson student should be: responsible, resourceful, hard working, a citizen of the world. **Today**, July 27th of 2011, I can **proudly say** that we became that and **much more**. We became a family, and this was **more** evident this year than ever when we experienced not only “el síndrome de 5to año” (which we obviously suffered, right Professor Tabares?). More importantly, we experienced “el síndrome de la 21” (right Promo?)

We have an authentic capability of enjoying each other’s company. It is incredible how no matter what the situation is, we have the ability of bursting into laughter at any of Max’s jokes or Oswaldo’s “in da night”. It could be Las Villas, Camuri, Playa Azul, La Encantada, the place didn’t really matter as long as we were all together.

But, just like any family, we also stood together during hard times. It became evident how we could count on each other when confronting family loses. I am sure we will always have two little angels looking after us from up there.

As a group we broke paradigms inside and outside the school, leaving a transcendental mark and becoming an example to follow by future generations. Not only were we outstanding in our academic accomplishments already mentioned by Professor Tabares and Ms. Maria Teresa. Who can forget our school gaitas “El Mundo de Caramelos”, which surpassed everyones expectations and beat all records (Thank you Mario). Who can forget our Spirit Week, which consolidated our identity as a school, and of course it happened thanks to Juanchi who had everything written down (Thank you Juanchi).

Who can forget our Talent Show, which broke with the classic pattern and innovated with a new concept, closing with the band Vinilo Versus and **definitely** going down in history. I have to say that Marco and Sylvia shuffled with style.

Our experiences together are innumerable, and I could spend hours talking about events such as the day we visited la Quinta Anauco with Ms Pilar, Ms Polina's tattoo, Ludoviko, Amram's "salsa y el picante", the famous Allilli vamos, Labroca's, Valentina's, and Daniela's faces on Fridays, Meli's movements (which I can still find no adjective to describe. Sorry Meli), Professor Pedro's passion for regueton, Diego Benitez saying "I said I'm here", Lord's and Sultan's FUAS, and Diego's MIRA.

Looking around us it is not hard to notice we are **extremely** fortunate. We were born in families that granted us with **limitless** opportunities from the first day. We have had the chance of receiving **the most** prestigious education in the country and **now**, we are about to continue forming ourselves in very high ranked institutions in Venezuela and around the world. However, we live in a country where these conditions **are not the common ones**. Only a couple of miles away from this beautiful school we know there are young people like us living in unfair circumstances. **8 out of every 10** Venezuelans experience severe social and economic problems. **Only 3 out of every 10** have access to Superior Education and only **6 in every 10** find a dignified job to sustain a living. Looking around, our first thought is: **this is not our fault**. However, we know we have had countless possibilities and this makes us **responsible of contributing to a change**. Remember that those who have **received more** have the obligation of **giving more**. For me, it is not a matter of who did it wrong. It is a matter of **who's going to do it right**.

There, we will see the members of the Promocion 21 making a difference. Marian, Chiva, Andrea, Ina, Dani Vegas, Oriana, China: through pictures, art, videos, and media, **you** will open the world's eyes and create empathy towards Venezuela. Marucha, Tuti, Alex, Guiseppe, Eduardo: **you** will be part of a new generation of leaders who will bring hope to our nation. Kochen, Chiqui, Vero, Marivalen: in the world of science and investigation **you** will bring the new advances to save people's lives. Juan Jose, Jorge, Camillo, Bernardo, William: by becoming successful businessmen **you** will create new opportunities. Diego Rivas, Benzecri, Jose, Gaby Aneas, Nicolle, Martin, Ornella: **you** will undoubtedly be the future engineers and architects who will build our infrastructure. And finally, Jesus, Jon Ander, Ivanna: **you** will be the lawyers who will bring justice and strength to the institutions in **this** country.

