Good evening! And congratulations everyone!

Graduation is a time of celebration but also a time of reflection. We worked hard during our time at MTC and I hope you’re all very proud of yourselves today. Many of us have recently begun a new school year. What will we remember when we enter our classrooms? I will remember the incredible history of Maria Montessori and how passionate she was about sharing her educational method with the world. Through her teachings, she has inspired us to become scientists, saints and servants of children. We have learned to be a voice for the voiceless, advocates for change and understand the importance of a high-quality education for all children. I will remember the countless hours we spent going over her method, each day realizing that her ideas were innovative and ahead of their time. I will remember compiling our albums with a sense of pride I’d never experienced before. Where are your albums? My albums are now on a shelf in my classroom and I welcome anyone who has a few hours to spare to read through them. I will happily sit with them and share my newly acquired knowledge, in hopes that we stop underestimating the potential of young children. I will remember the meticulous lessons we received on how to prepare, handle and demonstrate the materials. I smile every time I see the tiny folding cloths I made, remembering that it was my first experience using a sewing machine and how nervous I was ensuring that the hems were perfect and the dotted line was as straight as an arrow. There was so much laughter coming from the Toddler classroom that day and it will be a fond memory for me for years to come. What I will remember most of all are the passionate, knowledgeable instructors that we had. Some days we were in class, reading over power-points and engaging in hour long discussions. Other days we all came together, flying around the school yard like birds and swimming like fish. All of the wonderful educators that we came across throughout our training were enthusiastic and dedicated to the topic at hand; you couldn’t help but feel lucky to be in their presence.

When I look at this group of individuals before me, I am overwhelmed with a feeling of hope. We have been given an opportunity to send respectful, responsible and resourceful children off into the world. The education we received at MTC has prepared us to take on one of the most important jobs in the world. We are educators and guides of young minds. We have a responsibility to share our knowledge with anyone who is willing to listen. It is also our responsibility to continue our learning throughout our lives, it does not stop here. Through our education, we have become a part of a world-wide community of Montessorians. We must welcome the families that we work with into this community with open hearts and open minds. Together, we can lay the foundation for future generations to achieve their greatest potential.

I would like to personally thank all of the incredible women and men I have met throughout this course. To my 3 classmates, thank you for always answering my phone calls late at night and reassuring me that I would be able to complete the assignments on time. To the early childhood graduates, thank you for being a strong group of women; I was in awe during the few classes that we shared, listening to you discuss the different developmental theorists and, frequently, debating fantasy vs. imagination. To our fearless leaders Paula, Daureena, Natasha, Helen, Karolina, Florene, Shela and Debbie, thank you for guiding me towards a change of heart and instilling a passion in me that I look forward to sharing with the world. And finally, thank you to Beni, my fiancé. I am pretty sure that you could write a few essays yourself on the importance of freedom of movement, prepared environments and independence. You were my personal assistant, editor and cheer leader throughout this course and I can’t thank you enough.

I will leave you with this quote from Dr. Montessori: “The teacher of children up to six years of age knows that she has helped mankind in an essential part of its formation. She may know nothing of the children's circumstances, except what they have told her freely in conversation; possibly she takes no interest in their future: whether they will go on to secondary schools and the university, or end their studies sooner; but she is happy in the knowledge that in this formative period they were able to do what they had to do. She will be able to say: 'I have served the spirits of those children, and they have fulfilled their development, and I kept them company in their experiences.'" (Dr. Maria Montessori, 'The Absorbent Mind', Clio Press, 259)

Thank you!