

# **Remarks by Bailey Squire**

## **For the College of Arts & Sciences**

### **at Trinity's 123<sup>rd</sup> Commencement Ceremony, 2026**

Wow. Here we are. We made it. Can we take a moment to appreciate that? After years of demanding work, tears, and just one more cup of coffee, we made it to this moment.

We celebrate today and are happy of course, but also a bit sad that we are leaving before the Alumnae Hall renovation is done. You may be wondering who I am. My name is Bailey Squire. You may know me as the one white kid from Colorado. I, like many of my fellow graduates, had no idea what I was in for when I decided to attend Trinity. For those of us that lived on campus throughout our time here, you may remember sitting at the tables outside of Cuvilly, coloring the thing that would be hung outside of our doors for our entire freshman year. Third floor you might remember, ours were minions. Mine was a minion in a maid's outfit.

Moving across the country was quite the experience for me. I was exposed to so many more unique people, and when I was asked to write the speech, I was spooked!

What do I tell 3,000 people from all walks of life? Do I tell them congratulations, go on and work? Do I tell them you are going to do great things? It's all cliché. It's not personal. So, what I want to talk about today is about connections.

Trinity has done amazing things in connecting people. From the dream.us partnership, to life changing scholarships, Trinity has helped make a way for more equal and diverse higher education. So, I want to say thank you.

Thank you to our professors. We would not be here, specializing in our different majors, without our beloved professors. From our first day of class to our last, you have been our biggest cheerleaders. Thank you for the encouragement, thank you for sharing your knowledge, and thank you for lighting a fire under us to create the best product, because you knew we were capable of it. Even when we emailed at 11pm because a Moodle assignment just didn't have the submit button!

Thank you to our administration. In a world where those in charge want to dictate what happens to us, you want us to have our platform. Trinity would be a different place without the push for social justice, equality and inclusion that we now pride ourselves

on. Thank you for advocating for us and giving opportunities to those who may not have access to a college education if you did not support them through this.

To the Trinity staff, thank you for helping this place run. We see everything you do, and we are so grateful.

Thank you to our friends and family that could be here today. Thank you for making it to this moment. By car, by plane, or just a few minutes on the metro, you made it to this moment. On behalf of my fellow graduates, we thank you.

Thank you to those who could not be here with us. Watching the livestream, or looking down on us from wherever they are, thank you. We did it.

And of course, my friends in the gowns right here. Aren't you excited? We get to wear these gowns every day for the rest of our lives, so people know we are scholarly!

Honestly though, I want to give the biggest thank you to my green class friends. Thank you to our student leaders, President, and vice president of the green class, student government council president, club presidents, commuters and residents alike. You all have taught me so much about strength, resilience, and perseverance when the outside world wanted you to be small. You pushed to have what you wanted, and we somehow balanced even supporting our friends on top of six classes, work, and the constant need for just one, restful, nights sleep.

One big thank you, to everyone here. Thank you for listening to my life is important spiel. Let's go out into the world and connect people. In a country that wants to divide us, let's bring people together, learn from history, and fight for equality. No matter your race, gender identity, sexuality, socioeconomic background, birthplace in this country or not, you are valued. Thank you for being you.

From what I have seen here, I think we will all go on to be successful. But not in the cliché way! In a real legacy way. In such an uncertain time, a time of division, I hope we go out into the world, connect people, protect each other when we need it, and never, ever feel like you do not belong in a space. You belong. The world needs more of you here.

Graduates, as we celebrate today, we celebrate the last page of this book, and we open another one. We celebrate with our families, our friends, and those that couldn't be here with us. We start fresh, with our pen and paper, we will change the world. This class is strong. We will go on to be leaders, advocates for queer and trans rights, racial equality, disability awareness and inclusion, immigration rights, and peacemakers. All people in

this country, with or without the paperwork, please keep fighting. Stay safe, and know that after being pushed down, humans always will come back stronger, and more connected than ever.

Throughout my time at Trinity, I have spent lots of time sitting in Dr. Gables office, and he has a poster with a quote from Mother Jones that I want to end this speech with. It reads, "pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living". The fight for human rights and equality is not over, and with us coming into the world, I know we are going to bring people together and make change for the better.