

Drew Brees Commencement Speech at Loyola University New Orleans - 2010

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thank you what an honor it is to be here thank you to Father Wilds distinguished faculty esteemed trustees and guests and of course the 2010 graduating class here at Loyola University I'll be honest I was a little nervous about using distinguished and esteemed in the same

sentence because I thought it would come out extinguished and that is the not not the description I wanted to use certainly you are all distinguished and esteemed and it is an honor to be here you know we have a lot in common most of us came to New Orleans around the same time the spring or summer of 2006 when that was not the most popular thing to do for me I felt like coming to New

Orleans was a calling and for you there must have been something drawing you here as well a much stronger force that we can't necessarily describe other than we know that we belonged here and now four years later we can reflect back can say that we were a part of something special and certainly the work is not done yet but we were a part of something special we've all watched the city not just come back but come back stronger than ever

and we have seen the people come back with more passion and determination than before and we've all been part of a Super Bowl championship definitely couldn't leave that one out no matter where you're from or where you go from here keep New Orleans close to your heart and remember what you were a part

of and know that we all are now linked together forever as I look out at the young men and women graduates of Loyola University class of 2010 I am so excited for you all what you are about to experience will be eye opening certainly rewarding challenging at times you know

they say that experience is what you gain when you don't get what you want and I can promise you that over the next few years you will gain experience you will not always get what you want you will face adversity but know that the sky is the limit as to what you can all accomplish there are some of you that will be doctors lawyers politicians

writers artists teachers coaches entrepreneurs inventors and maybe one of you will even own an NFL franchise someday I know another Loyola University member who who does that's Mr Tom Benson but I can tell you this your best years are yet to come but that does not mean it's going

to be easy in fact I can guarantee you that you will face adversity along the way and for most of you it will be the toughest thing you've ever had to face in your life but I'll also tell you that every successful person you meet or talk to will say that it was because of that adversity that they were given the opportunity to reach New Heights that they never thought possible for me it was my shoulder

injury back in 2005 December 31st 2005 I was playing for the San Diego Chargers I dislocated my right shoulder going into a season or an offseason in which I did not have a contract I did not have a job and when you have that kind of injury at the quarterback position there's not many people that come calling or knocking so at the time I thought this is probably the worst thing that could have ever happened to

me but now I look back at it four years later and I say it was probably one of the best things that ever happened to me because it brought me to New Orleans there are many others that have faced that adversity and have been in those similar circumstances or situations I'll give you a few examples Steve Jobs you might

know him CEO of Apple he was adopted as a young baby he went to college and dropped out after his first year he ended up then inventing or starting Apple along with a partner of his when he was 20 years old in his basement but then at by age 30 he was fired from his position as CEO

when he had a falling out with his partner and with the board at Apple for the next few years there was some soul searching for him but in the end he ended up starting another company you might have heard of it Pixar Animation which ended up getting bought out by Disney for almost \$8 billion and then another company that Apple ended up buying a few years later for 500 million and then he was right back where he was years before 20 years

before as the CEO of Apple and there he is today doing some absolutely remarkable things but what he would say and what I've heard him say is that it was that adversity he faced when he was kicked to the curb so to speak from the company that he founded where he really gained strength and yet more motivation to go forth and do remarkable things things that he would not have been able to accomplished had he not gone through what he went

through at age 30 another example Ellen degenerous we all know Ellen she grew up right down the road she used to go to Saints games at halftime at the old two-lane Stadium I've heard Ellen talk about the moment when she came out and announced that she was gay at that point she was having a pretty sex successful

career little slip she was having a pretty successful career and then once she announced that she for three years she was out of work people would not give her the opportunities that they had before to her that was the toughest thing she ever had to go through but in the end she was being

true to herself and she then received a small opportunity to perhaps host her own TV show her own talk show and I think we all know how that's gone she is perhaps one of the most if not the most successful talk show host

in history and certainly by being a new orinam we love her to death we know what she's

meant to this community not only to our community but to the country and to the world world she is a source of inspiration and somebody who would sit here and tell you that had she not gone through what she went through during those three years that she would not be where she is today so once again the lesson being that adversity is an opportunity adversity will make you stronger adversity will mold you into the person that you're meant to be you all probably

remember the onside kick in the Super Bowl right how could we forget that and I'll tell you the the story behind that you know we had two weeks to prepare for the Super Bowl and I remember Shawn Payton came in to the meeting at the beginning of that twoe preparation for the Super Bowl and said we we have an onside kick that we're putting in the plan and it's not a matter of if we are going to run it it's

when we are going to run it it's going to happen and sure enough it did and it worked thank God so the lesson there it's not a matter of if you will face adversity in your life but when so when adversity knocks on your door seize it as an opportunity for that adversity is being put in your life for a reason it is God's way of providing

you with the strength and the tools to face future challenges and to mold you in the per into the person that he meant for you to be and in the end it is this adversity that will allow you to accomplish things in life that you originally thought were reserved only for your dreams my second piece of advice to you is this find what you love to do and then figure out a way to get paid for

it sounds pretty simple doesn't it find what you love to do and then figure out a way to get paid for it some of you out there think you know exactly what you want to do and then there's others that probably have no idea and I can tell you this that's okay because in a year from now those that think they know exactly what they want to do they might not have any idea at that point and those that don't know

what to do you might have found your passion by then but my point is be patient and don't settle the only way to do great work is to love what you do and as with every matter of the heart you will know when you find it my third piece of advice is to approach every opportunity with an attitude of gratitude and a mindset that whatever you encounter you will leave it better than when you

arrived we have all been part of that here in New Orleans but why stop here in everything you do in life Leave Your Mark leave your mark be a great Steward of the community and to society and to whatever business you are involved and understand that part of your purpose in life is to leave whatever you touch better than when you found it so leave your mark and leave it better than when you found it number four life goes fast

I was sitting in your seats 10 years ago now it's hard to think that that was 10 years ago because it feels like it was yesterday and I guess my point there is don't forget to enjoy the moment and reflect back on the journey from time to time for me standing on that Podium after we won the Super Bowl was a moment one of of the

defining moments of my

life what made it even more special was the fact that I was holding my son and the reflection on everything that we had been through as a city as a team to get to that point and as we watched the confetti come down and world champions come across the Jumbotron and looking out at the hudat

nation just going crazy beads flying everywhere we recognized what a journey that had been and how special that was and there's no City no Organization no group of people that deserve it more I promise you that but the Journey's not over we want

another one also don't forget to enjoy the little things in life sometimes you get going so fast I feel like the last three months have been like that for me but don't forget to enjoy the little things in life watching a sunset with the one that you love taking a walk in uden park sitting in rocking chairs on the

front porch watching the street cars go by throwing the ball with your child out in the front yard you work too hard not to enjoy those little things so enjoy the little things my last piece of advice is don't forget why you were put on this Earth and mayor Landrew mentioned it earlier we were all put on this Earth to serve

others sometimes the more successful that you get people tend to forget that it becomes more about how they can serve you as opposed to how you can serve others so don't forget no matter how successful you become but you all will to serve others as you all sit here on graduation day I believe everyone can agree that we have all been blessed with some great opportunities in our lives be appreciative and respectful of those opportunities and never take

them for granted and with that mindset just think about being able to give back what has been given to you take the time to make a difference in the life of somebody less fortunate it's amazing that the more generous you are and the more you choose to serve others the happier you will be and now for the words you've been waiting for in

closing I'd like to leave you with a quote oh we're going to finish strong don't worry we don't know any other way so here we go in closing I want to leave you with a quote and I could have chosen many profound quotes from presidents CEOs philosophers but I am choosing one from my grandfather he's 85 years old he still lives on a ranch hurting cows in East

Texas his name is Ray Akin and a quote I heard all the time from him when I was growing up was this according to my grandpa there are three types of people in this world there are those that make it happen there are those that watch it happen and those are and then there are those that wake up one day and say what the heck happened so which one are you is what he would tell

me so I leave you today by first saying congratulations to the 2010 graduating class of lyola University and now

let's go make it happen