

*Megan Sakelarios*  
*Grand Worthy Advisor in Nevada*  
*2016 ~ 2017*



*“Let’s Chase the Adventure”*  
*Grand Assembly Sessions*  
*June 17 ~ 20, 2017*



**Carson #7 Official Visit:  
August 13, 2016**

### **Statewide Service Project Message**

“Dear Veterans,

Those of us who have not served will never fully understand the sacrifices you have made, both in times of peace and of war. We will never fully understand what you were required to do or how you were able to do it. We will never fully understand the depth of your scars. But what we can offer you is this: We see you. We recognize your humanity. And we send you love that is gentle, patient, and healing. With blessings and gratitude, we ask that you remember you are loved and appreciated more than you know. Thank you.”

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, an estimated 640 WWII veterans die each day. Our time to express our thanks to these brave men and women is running out.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created in 2005 to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. They transport our heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at their various memorials. The Honor Flight Network has given top priority to senior veterans – World War II survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill. Although we hear countless stories of the Honor Flight being for just World War II veterans, the Network has many other honor flight programs, such as the Southwest TLC Program, which focuses on ALL veterans, regardless of when they served, who have been recently diagnosed with a terminal illness.

Through the work of the Honor Flight Network and the donations and funding it has received, approximately 160,000 veterans have been flown to Washington DC since 2005 to visit the memorials that have been built in their honor.

As part of this year's Statewide Service Program, our goal is to thank any and all of our heroes. The proceeds earned from the sale of the Grand Worthy Advisor pins and our Official Visit coin marches will benefit the Honor Flight of Nevada and Honor Flight of Southern Nevada, with our ultimate goal being the opportunity to sponsor a veteran for this opportunity, to see first-hand how grateful and proud we are, as a nation, of their unselfish service and patriotism.

A collection for our Statewide Service Program will now be taken.

### **Family Introduction**

Hey little brother- stand in my corner, play cops and robbers, wrestle with me and sometimes let me win, be my superhero, be my pilot, build forts with me and share your toys, help me believe in my dreams and keep my secrets, keep me on my feet, be my partner in crime, and most of all always be my best friend.

Lil Dylan, seems to me that just a few years ago we were drawing up plans to build an airplane, crawling around our drive way making our own little city for our bikes, and seeing how many pieces of your clothing we could fling from the ceiling fan in your bedroom.

Now look at us ~ still standing in each other's corner as we continue to dream about the possibilities of the future and pursue our own goals. I am so honored and impressed by your willingness to support our family, especially at Rainbow – from attending meetings that you can't even attend, to running sound wire and moving paraphernalia at Grand Assembly, flying all night to watch me in Cavalcade at Supreme Assembly, and offering up your insight into all things Rainbow.

I couldn't have asked for a more amazing and insane little brother than you. You truly inspire me. Please know that I will always be standing with you – in your corner – supporting you as you work to accomplish all of your hopes and dreams. And thank you for dealing with all these Rainbow girls for so long, just so you could support me.

Nevada Rainbow- please greet my little brother, Dylan, with all your love.

### Address of the Grand Worthy Advisor



In an episode of "One Tree Hill", Lucas Scott said, "There comes a time when every life goes off course. In this desperate moment, you must choose your direction. Will you fight to stay on path? Will others tell you who you are? Or will you label yourself? Will you be haunted by your choice? Or will you embrace your new path? Each morning you choose to move forward or simply give up."

This quote speaks to me on so many levels. First, look at us - we all decided to get up and move forward this morning, our first success of the day. But is your day going exactly as you thought it would? Maybe you couldn't find your nylons, or your Starbucks didn't taste right, or your car is almost out of gas. Things like this can put your life a little off course. What did you do about it? By the look of things - I would say you chose to not let it destroy this day - that you let it happen and decided to continue on. I am proud of you.

Now think about a day when your life completely flew off course? What happened? What went wrong? Was life just too much to handle right then? Were you struggling with making a decision?

For me, my life was completely thrown off course during the fall semester of my sophomore year in college. Out of nowhere, I found that I had no sense of direction in my life. I dropped out of school and gave up on all my dreams. I labeled myself - I was a failure, a college drop out. I didn't know what to do. I completely wiped my life clean. I held onto a few precious things, like Rainbow and Netflix. (But we all know Netflix won't get you through life.) People told me I was making a bad decision and that I needed to just get through the semester and we could reassess and fix this. But for whatever reason, I just couldn't do that; I couldn't see the path forward.

And that's where my best friend and one of my personal heroes stepped up. Instead of labeling me and telling me who I needed to be and what I needed to do, Zach helped me find my true passion. Not long after I decided college just wasn't for me, Zach invited me to do a ride along with him at REMSA. Little did I know that a 2 hour drive squished between two paramedics, out to the middle of literally nowhere Nevada would change my life in so many ways. After an encounter with a tarantula, almost rolling our Polaris (quad) and losing all of the cool expensive equipment it carried, a visit from Care Flight, and a search for 2 patients that seemed to go on for 9 hours, I knew I had found my direction. Suddenly my completely off course, no course, life, had direction. I knew where I needed to be headed and why.

As a result of this experience, I had decided that I would start my journey in emergency medicine. I took my EMT- basic entrance test and didn't really expect to get in to the training program. Well, I got in and couldn't wait for this new chapter in my life. Over the course of 4 months, countless hours in class and life like scenarios, memorizing everything and anything, and taking 3 major make-it-or-break-it tests, and retaking each of them, I passed my EMT class. But 2 tests stood in the way of me and national certification.

And here I was again, lost and feeling off course. I had failed my first round of (psychomotor) exams and needed to schedule a retest at TMCC with their EMT students, needless to say a month later it was time to take the test. I studied harder than ever, and thanked my years in Rainbow for my last minute memorizing skills. And... I passed. With all the hard work and dedication I had, I achieved a goal I didn't even know I had for myself.

I am haunted each and everyday with my decision to drop out of college, but I fought to find my path and to stay on it, even if I didn't know that this was my true path. I embraced this new path with every fiber in my being and found something that is my true love and I am so passionate about it.

This experience has taught me the value of taking time to consider my options and to choose the right path for me, even if it wasn't the path I originally intended to follow. While having no sense of direction in my life was not the most pleasant experience of my life, it did get me to where I am today and that makes the journey well worth the struggle. Had I not lost my focus, I would never have found what I am passionate about.



I hope I always have the confidence to choose to keep moving forward, even if only a few inches at a time. I want to keep pressing on, moving forward, making progress. Each day, I remind myself not to let what everyone else thinks I should do or feel be my guide, knowing that I am doing what is right for me, based on my values and my passions make any labels I may be given not matter. At the end of the day, the labels that matter are those I give myself. I am not a failure, I am Megan, I am trying, I am growing, I am starting my career as an EMT.

What direction will your life take you? Which path will you chose? Regardless, remember to have confidence in yourself and what you can accomplish. Believe in yourself. In the words of Lucas Scott, “The person you want to be does exist; somewhere on the other side of hard work and faith and belief. And, beyond the heartache and fear of what lies ahead.”

**Mt. Rose #13 and  
Ben Franklin #21**



**Official Visit:  
August 14, 2016**

### **Statewide Service Project Message**

A hero is defined as “a person who, in the opinion of others, has special achievements, abilities, or personal qualities and is regarded as a role model or who is admired or idealized for their courage and noble qualities.” Think of your hero—Are they a man or a woman? Are they famous? Are they a member of your family? What is their occupation?

Many of us have more than just one hero. Whether it is your parents, a sibling, a friend, maybe even your middle school science teacher, they might be in the military or even a famous celebrity.

I, myself, have more than one hero. In fact, based on my personal definition of a hero, my heroes are categorized. I have my personal everyday heroes, and I have my true-awe-inspiring heroes. When I think of my personal everyday heroes I think of my Mom and Dad, my little brother, the teachers that have impacted my life, and my closest friends. Each of them has played a role in my life in one-way or another. They have each shaped me into who I am today.

But when I think of my truly awe-inspiring heroes, I think of our firefighters, our local police, our EMTs and paramedics, and I think of our men and women in the military. I think of those who are our lifesavers and peacekeepers, and those defending our rights.

Think about it for a minute—how many times have you seen a fire truck, ambulance or police car around town? How about on a holiday? How about seeing posts on social media bashing on men and women in uniform? How many times have you hear of our military fighting over seas on the news? It happens almost every day. But how many times have you stopped to thank those men and women? Think about how different our lives would be if we didn't have these heroes protecting us.

This year Nevada Rainbow is focusing on thanking our heroes. Stop by your local fire department or police station with a box of cookies and a thank you card, say “hey” to the EMTs or paramedics working at the Ace's games or the Rib Cook Off, and be sure to thank those in the military every time you see them. Tell them they are your hero. Watch the smile appear on their face, see that they are grateful to be appreciated.

Please join us in showing our appreciation for our veterans by supporting the Honor Flight programs. A collection will now be taken for the Statewide Service Program.

## Family Introduction

Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Campbell

Well, well, well, look who's laughing now. You two probably thought I was going to introduce my family again, like normal. Well I am. You ladies are my family.

Over the course of the last, God knows how many years and cross-country trips, you have grown close to my heart. Without your love and support and laughter, I wouldn't be standing here today.

Mrs. Butler, thank you for always allowing me to help plan our extended trips and laughing with me at stupid little things like the painfully long cavalcade practices. I truly wouldn't have had the Rainbow journey I have without you.

Mrs. Campbell, thank you for your constant laughter and gossip. I know I can always come to you when I don't understand something from Eastern Star. Thank you for always making time for both Rainbow and Eastern Star in your life. And thank you for making your trips to California Grand with me work in that crazy schedule of yours.

Without the two of you, I wouldn't be quite the prankster I am, and I wouldn't have the memories I do. I found a quote the other day that might remind you of me, but only because you ladies played such a significant role in helping me become who I am. It goes like this "In my defense I was left unsupervised."

Nevada Rainbow- please join me in greeting these amazing women with all your love and laughter.



### Address of the Grand Worthy Advisor

I found myself on Facebook the other day watching this video that one of my friends had shared. I probably was only watching it because it involved jellybeans, but as I watched it had an absolutely amazing message. It really got me thinking about my life and how I'm choosing to live it. And I would like to share that with you today.

The man in the voice over of the video asked, "What will you do with your time?" And then throughout the video used one jellybean to represent one day in your life. He then took away jellybeans to show how much time we spend doing things in our lives and how much time that all of those things take out of our lives.

This is one jellybean. Representing just one day in your life.

This is 365 jellybeans. Just one year in your life. Yes, I counted them.

Now that we know what one day and one year look like, let's think about some of the things brought up in the video.

The video starts out with 28,835 jellybeans, representing each day that the average American will live. Some of us may have more days, and some of us may have less. But this is just an average of the time in our lives.

Take away one bean for the day you were born. An exciting day. The beginning of your journey through life. Add 364 more jellybeans and you have the first year of your life. And we are left with 28,470 jellybeans.

5,475 beans represent your first 15 years. This brings us to the beginning of our adult lives, the start of high school, the older girl years of Rainbow. You are now left with 23,360 jellybeans.

The next part of the video shows, on average, what we will do with all the time, or jellybeans, we have left.

We will be asleep for a total of 8,477 days. Maybe more if you're in college or just love your naps. But then again this is just an average. 14,883 jellybeans left.

We will be in the process of eating, drinking, or preparing food for 1,635 days. Again maybe more for all of us, especially our adults. 13,248 jellybeans left.

We will be at work, hopefully at our dream job, or at least doing something we don't completely hate, for 3,202 days. 10,046 jellybeans left.

We will spend nearly 1,099 days commuting or traveling from one place to another. Yes, we probably have a lot more days because of rainbow, but this is just an average. 8,947 jellybeans left.

On average we will watch television, in some way, for 2,676 days. 6,271 jellybeans left.

Our household activities, such as chores, tending to our pets, and grocery-shopping take another 1,576 days. We are left with just 4,695 jellybeans.

We will care for the needs or well-being of others, such as our family and friends, for nearly 564 days. This is another one of those-probably more for us things. 4,131 jellybeans left.

We will spend roughly 671 days bathing and doing all other bathroom related activities. 3,460 jellybeans left. Another 720 days we go to community activities like religious or civic duties, or charity events, or taking classes. This number would definitely change for all of us, but again, the average American is not always as charitable and giving in our community as we are.

After removing all those beans- we are left with just 2,740 jellybeans, or days in our life. This is time for laughing, texting, Instagram-ing, snapchatting, going on hikes, playing a sport, going to the beach, running, and experiencing new things.

So what will you do with this time? What would you do if you had only half of that time? What would you do differently? What if you only had a quarter of that time? How much do you think you've already used up? How much time do you think you've spent worrying about what you are going to do with that time? What if you had just one more day?

This jellybean video really helped me put my life in perspective. It helped me realize how much time we really spend doing things in our lives. This video doesn't name the amount of time we spend at school. It doesn't talk about how much time we spend on social media. It shows just the basics and look at how much time that takes from our lives without us even noticing it. We all have just one life to live and look at how we choose to live it. How many times did you think- well that's probably more for Rainbow girls? I know I did, almost every time. And for that I am proud of all of us. I am proud that we choose to give up more of our lives to others, just to make their lives a little better.

After watching the video a few times it really got me thinking. What do I want to do with my 2,740 days that I have left? But then I wondered how many of those days already went to Rainbow meetings and events.

It's hard to tell how many days we have left after that. But I decided that I wanted to spend my life doing something greater than myself. I decided that the time I have given to Rainbow was worth every minute of every day. Because without it, I wouldn't be where I am today.

I also thought about how much time we spend at school. Now how many days do we really have left? But again, another great investment in our lives.

This really opened my eyes to some of the things I decided to do with my life now. Days I used to spend sitting around doing nothing all day, watching Netflix, and only getting up to eat- have turned into days I go get my car washed, or go visit my family in Carson, or I even go to the beach or on a hike, and maybe even a trip to the gym.

Our lives are so fast paced and connected with social media and all the technology that we often forget to do some of the small stuff. We can spend some of our time enjoying nature, or going to church, even thanking

those we don't always think of thanking, or maybe we can go to school and visit that teacher that helped us find and set our goals and dreams.

Days seem to go by fast when we are just going through our routines. But unless we take the time to appreciate life, we will be old and have no stories to tell, and our life will soon be over.

2,740 days of free time. What are you going to do with it?



**Nevada Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star:  
October 2, 2016**

Worthy Grand Matron, Worthy Grand Patron, Grand Officers, Distinguished Guests, Rainbow Supporters and Friends—  
Good Afternoon!

It is an honor to be here today to bring greetings on behalf of Nevada Grand Assembly, not only as the Grand Worthy Advisor but as a 5th generation member of Argenta Chapter in Virginia City.

This year Nevada Rainbow is "Chasing the Adventure" with the Absolutely Ambitious Alligator Grand Officers. And we have been on quite a few adventures already this year! From our Grand Officer Leadership Weekend, to our Founders Day Celebration, a trip to Rhode Island for our International Supreme Sessions and even our first Official Visit in Virginia City- Nevada Rainbow has been very busy!

And along the way, we have been blessed with tremendous support from our adults, many of whom are members of the Order of the Eastern Star.

First I would like to ask you- by show of hands- who has been to a Rainbow Meeting, in the last year? Thank you so much for your support!

Who knows a girl between the ages of 11 and 20 who is not in Rainbow?

This year, our statewide membership goal is to DOUBLE OUR MEMBERSHIP in Nevada Rainbow. Can you imagine the impact that would have on our Masonic family, as a whole? I mean, the girls who join Rainbow will come with moms and dads and grandparents, who may choose to join our Masonic family And our girls will eventually become adults, which means they will be eligible to join Eastern Star.

It makes sense that we work together to grow Nevada Rainbow, which will in turn grow our Nevada Masonic family.

I have a deal for you to consider. I will commit to reaching out to all of our members as they reach the age of 18 and personally provide them with an application for membership in the Order of Eastern Star, if you will commit to providing applications for membership in Rainbow to your daughter, granddaughter, niece, neighbor's daughter, or even your boss's daughter, or invite them to one of our incredibly fun membership events! Our Membership Committee, with the leadership of Grand Faith- Derika, is determined to double our membership, and to keep Rainbow in Nevada growing!

Membership is not our only goal this year; goals have been established for our fundraising.

Our Fundraising team this year is working hard to raise a total of \$10,000 to support our scholarship program and to support advancing some of the technology we use at our Grand Assembly. Our goal is to fund at least 12 \$1,000 scholarships. Personally I wouldn't be able to pay for a lot of my college expenses without my Rainbow Scholarships. We are also very excited to be able to livestream our Grand Assembly Sessions online, but updating our equipment for today's technology is very expensive. We would welcome your support at any – or all – of our fundraising events this year.

This year our Statewide Service project is focused on thanking our heroes our military men and women, veterans, law enforcement, and first responders, just to name a few. And, we have already started by bringing cookies and snacks to a local fire department and even sharing our appreciation and taking photos with some local Police Officers in New York City on our extend trip at Supreme Assembly.

We are hoping to partner with Honor Flight this year to raise funds and provide volunteer support to our veterans. One of my goals for the upcoming year is to raise enough money through the sale of my Grand Worthy Advisor pins and our Official Visit coin marches to be able to sponsor an Honor Flight for a very deserving veteran. So if you haven't purchased a Grand Worthy Advisor pin, if you would like to purchase additional pins, or if you would like to make a donation to the statewide service program, please come see me! The pins are just \$5 and the proceeds go to the Honor Flight of Nevada.

This year Nevada Rainbow is committed to working on so many new and exciting things! And to help motivate us and keep us on track, Mrs. Haartz has made us a promise. If we meet our Membership and Fundraising goals by Grand Assembly 2017, she will work with our girls and adults to ensure our Grand Officers can participate in the Leadership training program offered by Disney. We are SO excited!

I would like to invite you to join us at our events throughout the year and I would like to personally extend a personal invitation to each of you to join us at the Peppermill on Father's Day weekend for our 83rd Grand Assembly Sessions. It is going to be an amazing adventure!

Thank you and may your Grand Sessions be amazing.



**Daylite #22 Official Visit:  
November 5, 2016**

**Statewide Service Project Message**

I woke up at 5 a.m. one morning a few weeks ago, and could not for the life of me figure out why. But I knew something just wasn't right in the world. Just about an hour later, I got call from my mom. So, I answered and immediately asked, "What's up? Everything okay?" Little did I know that it was not all okay.

As I slowly came to full awareness I realized what my mom was saying to me. "Grandma and Papa are being evacuated because of the fire in the valley. I need your help." I didn't realize what she was saying right away, so I stopped her and said, "Wait, you're saying Grandma and Papa are being evacuated because there is a fire?" she responded quickly with, "Yes Megan, and I need your help". I got up quickly and looked outside, I could tell it had been windy and rainy all night, and the mountains even had snow on them, but it wasn't until I was driving towards the house that I saw all the smoke.

My family had practiced evacuating our house many times before, we even have packed emergency supplies and "go" bags; but we had never had to go through with an actual evacuation. I didn't know what to think.



I texted my best friend, Zach- who works for REMSA, hoping he could shed some light on what was happening. He did. There was a fire in Washoe Valley and, with the winds gusting upwards of 50 mph, they didn't really know where it would go, and there was another smaller fire near Galena High School, so the fire department had started voluntary evacuations.

That's when it really hit me. Countless firefighters were out trying to figure out how to stop this from getting out of control. As I continued to drive to my grandparents' house, I saw more and more emergency responders heading toward the fires.

When I sat down to write this speech, the Little Valley Fire had burned about 3,460 acres was 55% contained, it threatened about 500 buildings, and has claimed about 23 homes and 17 out buildings, despite having 670 personnel on the scene. Some of those personnel including the Nevada Division of Forestry, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, Reno Fire Department, and even the Nevada Air National Guard. I was amazed. All of these heroes came together for one purpose.

Today I am thankful for our first responders, for everything they did to help fight this fire. Without them, the beautiful valley I grew up loving, would be just another empty scarred valley.

The next time you see our everyday heroes, like fire fighters and paramedics, and especially those men and women in the military, thank them for being brave enough to go forth and fight the battles many of us could never imagine fighting.

A collection for the Honor Flight of Nevada will now be taken.

### **Family Introduction**

Families are like branches on a tree. We may grow in many different directions, yet our roots will always remain the same. Without Rainbow my family would be a lot smaller and less confusing. Not many people can say that they have more than just one "mom" or more than one "dad", and call them by these names and be acknowledged.

Mr. and Mrs. Bolshazy: The two of you demonstrate what our relationship goals should be. You are both amazing Rainbow adults and role models, from always having open minds and hearts, to your open home, and even your open kitchen and checkbooks. I cannot thank the both of you enough for all the love, support, and grilled cheese you have given me. From our random ice cream trips after OV's, to taking the long way home so we can get strawberries and cheese for our post OV snack, and even our just laughing at my craziest moments. You have become my Rainbow parents.

Rebekah: Momma Bekah- wow, I never thought I would bond with an "older" girl like I did with you. I knew from the moment you helped me put my hairpiece on for the first time, you would be one of the older sisters I never had. I mean who else would tuck me in on Rainbow trips, and share their parents with me? You are such an inspiration, and I hope that one day, some crazy little girl looks up to me like I look up to you.

Alyssa: Oh geez. You were my first Grand Worthy Advisor and that's where our bond really got started. I knew right from Washington/Idaho Grand we would only grow closer. You have never failed to put a smile on anyone's face, and I like to think that some of my craziness comes from spending wayyyy too much time with you and Bekah. I am so excited to be a part of the GWA-fia and to continue our friendship and laughter for many years. I have always looked up to you and now to follow in your footsteps, I couldn't be more excited. Thank you for all of your love and support over the years!

Nevada Rainbow, please join me in thanking my crazy, amazing second family with all of your love.

### **Address of the Grand Worthy Advisor**

There is an Arab Proverb that says, "Sunshine all the time makes a desert". At first I was like well obviously, even I could've told you that. But then I kept re-reading this proverb, and it really got me thinking. And when I

realized what the message was in this short sentence, it really hit home. The proverb wasn't literally saying that sunshine all the time makes a desert; it was saying that things always going perfectly and as planned, would make life boring. That without a little, or sometimes a lot, of rain, nothing would grow. Without the bad days to balance out the good days, we would have nothing. We wouldn't have the opportunity grow and learn from our mistakes. We would have no sense of hope or appreciation. We wouldn't be able to shape our lives into what we want them to be, and even reshape them again. We wouldn't be able to follow God's plan for us. We wouldn't bloom and grow where we have been planted. And we wouldn't have a beautiful garden of experiences to enjoy and to learn from. We would be living in a desert.

We all have some bad days, and sometimes we think that there is no way we will make it through what life has thrown at us. But without that rain in our life, where would we be? If everything in our lives went just as we hoped or planned, what would our lives look like? I'm sure we all imagine being millionaires, living in mansions on the beach, with puppies running around.

But in all seriousness think about where you would be if your life went perfectly planned up until right now? Where would your life be headed? Who would be in your life? Who might not be in your life because your paths and life experiences wouldn't have brought you together? It is all kind of crazy to think about.

Speaking for myself, I can tell you that I definitely wouldn't be where I am today. My life would be drastically different. I wouldn't have gone through the battle I did a year ago that showed me that my true passion is emergency medicine. I wouldn't be an EMT. I wouldn't have met my best friend. I wouldn't have the relationship with my parents, or friends, that I do. I probably wouldn't even be in Rainbow. And that's the toughest part to imagine.

But in letting my life take its course, with all the sunshine and rain- my life is right where it should be. I went through some bad times, but once the storm cleared, I found myself again. I fought with my parents in high school - constantly, and now I talk to both of them each and every day. I made and have lost many good friends, only to find those that I know, without a doubt, will stick by my side no matter what. I overcame my "Rainbow just isn't for me" phase, and am now standing here as Grand Worthy Advisor. I never imagined my life would be like this. But it is and I am blessed to call it mine.

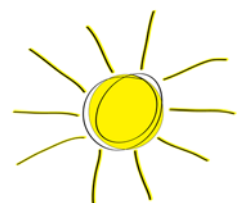
Every heartbreak. Every cherished memory. Every fight. Every smile. Every new adventure. All the sadness, and tears. The sleepless nights, and moments I've cried from laughing so hard. I wouldn't trade a minute of my life for anything.

If you had asked 6-year-old Megan, where she thought she would be when she was 20 years old, she would have told you, without hesitation she wanted to be a firefighter, and she would be married to her kindergarten "boyfriend", while driving a green pickup truck.

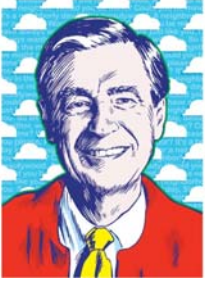
Now if you had asked 12 year-old Megan where she wanted to be in the future, she would have told you she wanted to be in the secret service as a sniper, because she was very in touch with her size and was willing to sit in the smallest of places to defend our president.

I can tell you right now. My kindergarten "boyfriend" is out doing his own thing, and we keep in touch every now and then, but have no plans to get married. I can also tell you that firefighting has come back around and might be my next adventure. Now as for my goal to be a sniper in the Secret Service, I can assure you that I have looked into joining the military, and I will have to get back to you on that.

Now think about it, look how much has changed. For the better, and for worse, and everything in between. And I wouldn't trade even my worst days for anything. Those were the days that really pushed me to consider the possibilities and to move forward and look closely at what is important to me. I hope we can all feel this way about our lives. No matter what we are going through, how much we are hating life, or how much we are loving it- make sure to take a step back and be thankful and trust in the plan. After all, we live in a desert as it is- we don't make our lives one too.



**Boulder #8 and Las Vegas #9 Official Visit: November 6, 2016**  
**Statewide Service Project Message**



Mr. Rogers once said, “We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It is easy to say, ‘It is not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.’ Then there are those who see the need to respond, and I consider those people my heroes.”

Every day we watch the news and hear about all the bad things happening in the world, about wars being fought, about police officers being fired upon, and about countries in ruins with little or no hope to rebuild. And we often brush it off, because it is not affecting us directly and there for it is not our problem. But how often do we stop to think about those who are directly affected? Veterans, active members of the military, those in law enforcement or emergency response, or even the countless families, friends, relatives, and communities that have been affected. Many family bonds have been broken because of what is happening in our world. And yet so many people continue to see the need to respond to these bad things, by taking responsibility to address them and to help make our communities better and safer places to live.

Did you know that as of January 2015 there are nearly 1.4 million active duty members of our military? This means that nearly 0.4% of the American population is active military personnel. Stretching across the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and the Coast Guard, and each of them has seen the need to respond and act on the things that are happening today.

And it is our responsibility to thank them for their sacrifices in support of our country and bettering our world in any way they can. We can do this by not only supporting the Honor Flight this year, but by thanking local heroes. I know that all of my friends in the military, and even first responders, appreciate every thank you they get. Whether it’s a simple “thank you for what you do” text, or a note, or even a care package during the holidays. They cherish it and it all helps keep them motivated and excited about what they do.

I encourage each of us to say thank you to at least one of our heroes every day.

A collection for our statewide service project, the Honor Flight of Nevada, will now be taken.



### **Family Introduction**

Sister Marshal, you will escort my brother Dylan behind the bow for introduction.

Like most kids, Dylan and I attended daycare. We went to an in home daycare, so it was a lot like a second family. Dylan and I made some really great friends with the other kids because we were a little family, so Dylan and Charlie, another little boy, often joked about being brothers from other mothers. But despite their closeness, they grew to be each other’s biggest enemies. First it was arguing and fighting over who had the coolest Hot Wheels, or who was the best at whichever video games. And it continued to get worse. Our families and the daycare provider had hoped that with starting school and having less time with each other would help the boys become friends again. Unfortunately, they always ended up in the same classes at school and the bullying just wouldn’t stop. Dylan was rarely mean to Charlie, yet Charlie continued to pick on Dylan.

Charlie picked on Dylan for nearly 8 years before Dylan stood up for himself. And I couldn’t be more proud of my little brother. Not only for his endurance and tolerance but for his endless kindness to the kid that bullied him non-stop. This must stop. If more of us could follow our lead to do what is right, even though it may not be easy, we-and the world around us- would be more kind, generous, and more amazing.

Dylan, you continue to be one of the greatest inspirations in my life. You stand up for yourself and others, no matter what. You don't let the harsh words and actions of others affect how you go through life. When other kids, or even me, called you weird for loving airplanes so much- you kept your dreams on track and have already visited a college that offers a degree in aviation. Keep your head up little brother, don't ever change who you are, and always know that you inspire me and continue to make me the proudest big sister around.

Nevada Rainbow- please greet my little brother with all your love and pride.

### **Address of the Grand Worthy Advisor**

I recently read about a lesson a teacher taught her students in class about bullying, and it has forever changed me. Today, with the help of our Grand Officers, I would like to share this lesson with all of you- and hope it speaks to you as it spoke to me.

Ladies, take out that piece of paper I gave you earlier.

Alright- now crumple it up. Smash it. Fold it. Step on it. Rub it around on the ground. But be careful and don't rip it.

Now unfold it, and smooth it out. Look at your piece of paper. It is scarred? Dirty? Weekend? Worn out?

Now tell your paper you're sorry for crumpling it up, stepping on it, and smashing it. Try to fix your paper. Make it like it was when I first gave it to you.

Look at the scars that are still left behind even though you apologized and tried to fix it. Those scars will never go away. The paper will never be the same as when you first received it.

Thank you ladies.

This activity symbolizes how bullying scars people, and the fact that no matter how hard you try to fix things and apologize, the scars still remain.

Bullying doesn't just happen at school on the playground. It happens online, on Facebook and twitter, in classrooms and in lunchrooms, in the workplace, and sometimes even in our Assembly rooms. It can happen anywhere, at any time, at any age. And its effects can last forever. Research shows that childhood bullying can impact people even into their adult lives.

I first dealt with bullies in school. I was often the smallest girl in my classes, I rode in a booster seat in the car until I was 12, I weighed less than 100 pounds until my junior year of high school, and I was picked on for that. Every day it was another short joke, another "friend" resting their arm on my head because I fit perfectly under it, or another "can you even see over the dashboard?" joke. I'm not going to lie- it hurt. But every day I became stronger.

One day I came to terms with the fact that if I accepted myself for who I am, it would take out a lot of the hurt the bullies were causing. I realized that if I focused on believing in myself and being confident in who I was becoming, then the bullies making fun of me would no longer matter. If I could be confident enough to make fun of myself, then the bullies wouldn't get that same satisfaction out of bullying me. So that's exactly what I did. I made up my own jokes and comebacks about my height and weight. And the bullying stopped. At least the bullying at school about my body image stopped.

As I mentioned before the sad truth about bullying is it can happen anywhere, even in our assembly rooms. I am sure you are all very aware with who my family is. But let me take a second and remind you. Mrs. Heidi Haartz is my mom. She currently serves as our Supreme Deputy, and she is also a Past Grand Faith-twice, Past Grand Fidelity, Past Grand American Flag Bearer, Past Grand Representative of WA/ID, a member of Carson Assembly, Past Director of Grand Officers for nearly 13 years, and Past Mother Advisor.

Mrs. Joanie Jacka is my grandma. She is currently Supreme Worthy Associate Advisor and member of the House of Gold and will serve as Supreme Worthy Advisor in 2020. She has also served the Supreme

Assembly as Supreme Immortality and Patriotism, as well as Supreme Inspector, and Supreme Deputy. She has been Nevada's State Grand Deputy, Mother Advisor for Carson and Ben Franklin Assemblies, and even a charter member of Ben Franklin Assembly. And they are both Masters of the Grand Cross of Color. Just to name a few of their accomplishments in Rainbow over the years. These are tremendous accomplishments and they demonstrate their commitment to our order and to the generations of Rainbow girls, families, and adults they have been a part of.

But would you believe me if I told you I have been bullied for who my family is? I often ask myself, "I didn't pick my family, or their involvement in Rainbow, so why am I getting bullied?" I have often heard of stories about why I got what Grand Office I did, or why I was allowed to travel so much with Rainbow, and none of those stories have ever been close to the truth. I have worked really hard to do my own thing in Rainbow - by myself. So the good, and the not so good- are mine. And my family has supported me through it all. Everything I have accomplished in this organization was mine to be proud of. Yet here I was being bullied because my accomplishments were seen as something I got only because of who my family is.

Throughout my years of Rainbow, I have gone home in tears because of these rumors. Why was I getting picked on so much because of who I share my genetics with? Did anyone see how hard I was working? Would it ever stop? Should I just quit? And then after a very long heart to heart with myself, I realized how much I love Rainbow and how it has changed my life- with and without the bullies. Having these harsh things said about me hurt, but it ultimately helped me grow.

Without the hurt I felt and feeling undeserving of the opportunities I was given - I don't think I would have pushed myself so hard to be who I am. I wouldn't have spent countless hours perfecting my speeches, or spending days planning out the most amazing term. But even today, I still feel the hurt. Like the paper, I have been crumpled and smashed, I have been pushed in the dirt- but I challenged myself to rise above this hurt. I dust myself off and make the best out of what God has given me- an amazing and supportive family, and countless amazing opportunities through Rainbow.

Think back to that piece of paper. Before we smashed crumpled it, what if we had written the name of one of our Rainbow sisters on it? Now how do you feel about smashing and crumpling that piece of paper?

Rainbow should be our safe place. We should be able to come to our meetings and fun events, without feeling bullied. At Rainbow, we should focus on the positives, not just the negatives. We have the power to lift our sisters up and to help each other become so confident in ourselves that bullies don't affect us anymore.

Even the smallest acts of encouragement can lift one of your sisters out of that, "I feel bullied at Rainbow" feeling. So comment on each others selfies, send random "I appreciate you" texts, go to Starbucks together and just chat, be your sisters biggest supporters. Let's build each other up, rather than tearing each other down. Let's stop crumpling each other's papers, and start adding glitter over those scars. Rainbow is the greatest sisterhood and support system in the world- we should be proud of this and of our involvement in this organization, so why are we bullying each other?





## Grand Lodge of Nevada, F&AM: November 8, 2015

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Distinguished guests, Rainbow supporters and friends, good morning!

I would like to start by saying thank you so much for having me at your banquet last night. The easiest way to this Rainbow Girl's heart is food, so thank you!

I would also like to thank you all so much for your support of Nevada Rainbow over the last year. From supporting and performing my crowning ceremony at Grand Assembly, to inviting us to serve at your Grand Lodge dinners, and attending our cherry pie night at my home assembly in Carson, and even providing some financial assistance to girls that they may attend Rainbow Camp, our Grand Assembly, and even some out of state Grand Assemblies.

Now I would like to share with you what Nevada Rainbow has been up to so far this year. During this Grand year we have set some very ambitious goals for ourselves, with our incentive being a trip to Disneyland for Leadership Training! Our fundraising team has set a goal of raising \$10,000 to help fund twelve \$1,000 scholarships and to help purchase equipment so we can live-stream our Grand Assembly sessions online! Our membership team has set a goal of DOUBLING our membership this year that means initiating 400 new members. With the support and leadership of our Absolutely Ambitious Alligator Grand Officers- I know we will do everything we can to achieve these goals.

This year, our Grand Officers have chosen to "Thank Our Heroes" for our statewide service project. With this we are thanking all our military men and women, our police, firefighters, paramedics, teachers, and so many more people we consider our heroes.

I'm curious with a show of hands, how many of you are veterans??

Thank you for your service and your willingness to protect and defend our great nation and everything it stands for.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created in 2005 to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. They transport our heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at their various memorials. The Honor Flight Network has given top priority to senior veterans – World War II survivors. Although we often hear stories of the Honor Flight being for just World War II veterans, the network has many other honor flight programs, such as the Southwest TLC Program, which focuses on ALL veterans, regardless of when they served, who have been recently diagnosed with a terminal illness. Through the work of the Honor Flight Network and the donations and funding it has received 159,703 veterans have been flown to Washington DC since 2005. With the sale of my Grand Worthy Advisor pins, donations, and our Official Visit coin marches, we hope to raise funds to sponsor an Honor Flight for a veteran. So, If you would like to help support our Statewide Service Project- please see me and I will be happy to sell you one of my Grand Worthy Advisor pins!

In closing, I would love to sell my Grand Worthy Advisor pins to each and every one of you! I would also like to extend to you an invitation not only to all of our local Rainbow meetings, but to our "Lets Chase the Adventure" Grand Assembly Sessions June 17-20, 2017 at the Peppermill in Reno!

Reno #1 and Tonopah #15 Official Visit: March 26, 2017

## Statewide Service Project Message



*\*\* Recite the American's Creed. \*\**

The American's Creed has always been my favorite flag tribute ever since it was my first office in my assembly. But as I have grown up and really understood the American's Creed, it has grown to mean so much more to me. We have all heard this flag tribute said many, many, times. But have you ever really thought about what you are actually saying?

"I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed."

This first sentence is one that often stands out amongst the others. It states that you personally believe in your country. A country whose government is made up of its people and by its people, but is still guided by the government formed by regular citizen – like you and me - and our Constitution – which was written by men, many of whom were members of the Masonic fraternity.

"A democracy and a republic, a sovereign nation of many sovereign states, a perfect union, one and inseparable."

This second phrase talks about how we are a nation made of many smaller states, but are still one and we are inseparable from each other. Each state may have different laws and views and things, but we all make up the United States of America. Every state is equal and important, regardless of its size or the number of people who live there.

"Established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots have sacrificed their lives and their fortunes."

This part always hits me really hard. Our country has been built upon our belief of being free and having certain rights, certain freedoms. Whether that freedom is religious, or political, it is our right to have and to share different views and to support anything we want to. Equality has come a long way in our history. From ending slavery, to ending segregation, and even letting women vote- equality continues to evolve. Justice and Humanity have always been relevant in this country. Through our court systems and our natural rights, we stand behind these principles each and every day. Our commitment to humanity means that we value the lives of our citizens and we put people first. These are principles Americans have kept to our hearts, because that is who we are and how we were raised. But even more importantly, we cherish our freedom and humanity because American patriots have sacrificed their all for us. They sacrificed their lives at home and as a whole, just so those of us that followed their legacy could continue to enjoy our freedoms.

"I, therefore, believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies."

This last sentence is by far and away the most meaningful to me. It states that I personally believe it is my duty to stand up for my country, to support it and to defend it. To our soldiers, this means being willing to do anything to support, protect and defend it. From obeying the laws and respecting the flag, to defending it against any and all enemies, including those within our own country and those from other countries. And the most important duty to our country—is to love it.

The American's Creed has always been close to my heart. It makes me proud to be an American; it makes me feel humbled to be an American and to have the opportunities we have in our country. I hope that each of you have a greater appreciate and respect for our country and its flag, based on this closer look at what we are saying or hearing each time we present and honor our Flag.

Our veterans have given everything for us, so that we may have the freedoms we love so much. It is our turn to show our veterans how thankful we are for the sacrifices they have made that we may live a better life in a truly amazing country. This year we are raising funds to support the Honor Flight of Nevada, in hopes that we may sponsor a veteran's trip to Washington DC to visit the memorials, the memorials built in their honor and the memorials built in honor of those who served before and possibly after them.

Thank a veteran. Respect our flag. And most importantly, love our country.

A collection for the statewide service project, the Honor Flight of Nevada, will now be taken.

### **Family Introduction**

Sister Drill Leader you will escort Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Koscik behind the bow for introduction.

"Kindness is a wonderful way to let another struggling soul know that there is still love in this world."

You ladies have each played a big part in my Rainbow life, whether you realized it or not. And I can't thank you each enough for that.

Mrs. Fitz—thank you for always being there to support me in all things - life and Rainbow. Although I may have a bit of an attitude a lot of the time, I do truly appreciate your willingness to do anything to be supportive, not only for me but for our assembly as well. You have always been there to read my speeches or to kick Maddie and me in the bum when we missed our deadlines. And you are always sharing with us those messages that we so desperately need to hear. You are so amazing and inspiring - in all things you do. From being Worthy Grand Matron, to taking on the role of Grand Deputy for our crazy Carson Grandies, to supporting your family in Rainbow, Eastern Star, and other organizations. You always make time for your Rainbow Girls and I thank you and appreciate you for that.

Mrs. Koscik—first of, thank you for always planning Rainbow Camp, it is hands down my favorite part of Rainbow. But truly, thank you for being you. You have always supported Rainbow Girls 110%. Even in the small town of Tonopah, you have made Rainbow the place girls want to be. I would also like to thank you for sharing your daughter, Becky, with me. Even though it was for just a short time, she was one of my greatest friends in Rainbow. We were attached at the hip, especially at camp. I am forever thankful that she and I could do our own thing when we got just a little bored of normal camp stuff. And I am honored to have received a scholarship in her name last year, because it reminded me that Rainbow friendships are capable of crossing all barriers.

Thank you both for supporting Rainbow with your everything. And for supporting me and loving me throughout the years. You are an important piece of my Rainbow family.

Nevada Rainbow, please greet my Rainbow family with all of your love and support.

Sister Drill Leader, you will escort Mrs. Fitz and Mrs. Koscik to their seats.

### **Address of the Grand Worthy Advisor**

"We are all going to die. We don't get much say over how or when but we do get to decide how we are going to live. So, do it. Decide. Is this the life you want to live? Is this the person you want to love? Is this the best you can be? Can you be stronger? Kinder? More compassionate? Decide. Breathe in. Breathe out. And decide."

Over the course of the last few years, Grey's Anatomy has become a huge part of my life. Some may call me crazy, but some may see it the way I do. I don't know what Shonda Rhimes was thinking when she created the show, but I am thankful she did.

In this twisty, dramatic, medical based, show- there are some really great moments. Moments when doctors and interns do the impossible; save lives that they thought they couldn't; and do things they never thought possible, like saving a man's life by doing open heart surgery in an elevator. But there are also times when everything comes crashing down around them. Tragic things happen to their loved ones and around the hospital, they fight with those around them, or they make the wrong call about a medical emergency.

But somehow each character makes it through everything thrown at them, until you fall deeply in love with their lives and their successes and then Shonda decides it's time for that character to exit the show in the most tragic and heartbreaking way. Whether it be George O'Malley getting hit by a bus on his way to ship out to join the Army, or Lexie Grey dying in a plane crash, or worst of all, Derek Shephard, a neurosurgeon and Meredith Grey's husband, dying from a brain injury after being in an accident and hit by a semi-truck.

And in the middle of all of this drama is Meredith Grey. She began as an intern with a famous mother, then over the course of several seasons she becomes an extraordinary surgeon. Meredith has been through it all. She has drowned, been in a plane crash, removed a bomb from a body cavity, and so many other real and not so real events. But through it all she is there for everyone else, and makes it through whatever life throws at her.

She decides how she reacts to different situations, somehow she always manages to keep herself composed and grounded. She decides what life she wants to live. Who she wants to love. She becomes stronger through trial and error and growth. She becomes kinder, choosing to take the high road in many situations. She is more compassionate. She decided.

Throughout the years in your life, you don't have very much input on the things that go on. You don't get to pick your bad days, or choose to have only good days. But you do get to decide how to react to them. Whether you learn from them and grow from what you have learned, or if you choose to just let life happen to you. It is all up to you.

I know that Mrs. Haartz has a very thought out and planned life, not only in her personal life but in her work and Rainbow life as well. And that works best for her. She often plans out her weeks and even months, so she knows exactly what she should be doing and when. And often times any variation from that plan can throw her off, but she decides. She decides what must be done and she decides what can be put off until later. She decides how she will deal with what life gives her.

But for me, I have a "let life happen and we'll deal with it as it comes" attitude, and that works – for me. I often have no plans for the weeks ahead, or even the months ahead. But that is okay with me. I like to see what my life will throw at me each day and take it all one day at a time. I decide that I will figure my life out as it happens to me. I breathe in. I breathe out and I decide.

I would have never thought that I would be a 2 time college drop out. But I also wouldn't be an EMT or Grand Worthy Advisor, had I given up on everything in my life. I decided to learn from what I had done, to accept it was an opportunity to grow. While the path I was on wasn't taking me where I planned, I found a new path, a new way to succeed. I found ways to make sure I was being the best that I could be.

Decisions in life aren't always easy, they are not always black and white, and there are not always right and wrong options. Decisions are not always fun, but they are necessary. Times will get tough, but it is up to you to decide how to deal with them. Look for opportunities and appreciate your successes, even when you feel like you are being pushed to your breaking point. You, were, after all, strong enough to allow yourself to be pushed to that point.

"Yes or no. In or out. Up or down. ~~Live or die~~. Hero or coward. Fight or give in. I'll say it again to make sure you hear me. The human life is made up of choices. ~~Live or die~~. That's the important choice. And it's not always in our hands."

Breathe in. Breathe out. And decide.



**Sparks #3 and Winnemucca #10 Official Visit: April 22, 2017**

### **Statewide Service Project Message**

Dan Lipinski once said, "On the battlefield, the military pledges to leave no soldier behind. As a nation, let it be our pledge that when they return home, we leave no veteran behind."

Believe it or not I found this quote on twitter. And wow is it true. When you join the military, you make a promise to leave no soldier behind, no matter what. Those fighting the battles next to you are your brothers and sisters and you promise each other that you will never leave one another behind. When you come home from that battle, it is then our job, as a proud and grateful nation, to never leave our veterans behind. It seems like we, as a nation, don't always keep that promise to our veterans.

In supporting the Honor Flight of Nevada this year, we have been working to help make sure that no veteran is left behind. We are helping the Honor Flight give veterans an opportunity they otherwise may not have gotten if it wasn't for our support.

This year, with the support and generosity of our Masonic Families, I have sold all of my Grand Worthy Advisor pins and sold more than 100 t-shirts, the proceeds of which will benefit the Honor Flight of Nevada. But we still have 54 days until Grand Assembly, and I know we can do more to fulfill our commitment to our veterans, showing them that we will never leave them behind.

That is why we are now kicking off our last fundraising event for our statewide service project, which we are calling "Pounds or Patriots".

"Pounds for Patriots" came about while Mrs. Haartz, Mrs. Butler and I were driving to Las Vegas a month ago, and I am so excited that our kick off day is finally here. This fundraiser is based off of a "Penny War, but instead of counting coins for positive and negative points, we will be weighing buckets that look just like this one! Now you may be thinking, well, who will have these buckets, because I want to donate!! Well the 8 last year Grand Officers will each have their own bucket that they will bring to every Rainbow event between now and Grand Assembly. The two assemblies without last year grand officers will also get a bucket. The goal is to try to collect the most pounds of money for our statewide service project.

What's that? What about cash? Every \$10 received in cash in our buckets will count as 1 pound. We will start this fundraiser today, and our first "weigh in" will be at the Grand Worthy Advisor's Reception, then again on Friday of Grand Officer Practice at Grand, and for the final time following the Sunday night session of Grand Assembly.

The two assemblies without last year grand officer, Las Vegas #9 and Mt. Rose #13, will get to decide which buckets they would like to support on each of the various weigh in dates. They can decide to put all of their money in a single bucket- perhaps mine, or they could to put handfuls of money in several buckets.

After each weigh in the buckets will be emptied and we will keep a record of the weight of each bucket. On Monday evening of Grand Assembly, we will announce who has raised the most weight and total funds through "Pound for Patriots", just before we reveal how much we have raised for the Honor Flight of Nevada.

Just think of how many pounds we can collect, and how many dollars that will turn into to support the Honor Flight, and countless veterans.

We will begin "Pounds for Patriots" immediately following today's Official Visit. In the meantime, a collection for our statewide service project, the Honor Flight of Nevada, will now be taken.



## Family Introduction

Will all members of the Order of the Eastern Star please stand for Family Introduction?

This year, I have focused on introducing my Rainbow family, and how could I forget my sisters and brothers from Eastern Star. Without each of you and your love and dedication to our Masonic Family, many of us wouldn't be here today.

Although I am sad to be approaching the age of majority; I am beyond excited to start my journey in the Order of the Eastern Star. You all have been there to support me through everything Rainbow, and I can't thank you each enough for that. I can only promise you that I will do my best to follow the incredible example you have set for me, in supporting Rainbow so enthusiastically and unconditionally, for the rest of my life.

To my Rainbow Sisters, look at these girls and adults. What would you do without them? I cannot even begin to imagine!

Let's keep our family ties going and strong, and when each of you turn 18 - I hope you join this amazing Order. You will not regret it. I know that all of our Star chapters in Nevada are looking forward to initiating you. And if you are worried about attendance at Star and Rainbow, just join Argenta Chapter, in Virginia City, that where I am a member—they have VERY, VERY strong Rainbow ties and seem to understand the time commitments we face as busy girls and adults.

Thank you all for being an important part of my Rainbow Family.  
Nevada Rainbow, please join me in greeting my Eastern Star family with all of your love and appreciation.

## Address of the Grand Worthy Advisor

In my first Grand Worthy Advisor Address, I started my speech with a One Tree Hill quote, and I thought it would only be fitting if I started my last Grand Worthy Address in exactly the same way.

Today's quote is from Brooke Davis; in an episode of One Tree Hill, she talks about being labeled and says, "In life people are going to label you, but it is how you overcome those labels- that is what matters."

Think to yourself, have you been labeled before?  
Have you labeled yourself?  
Have you labeled someone else?  
What were those labels?  
Were they mean?  
Were they positive?  
Were these labels accurate?

My whole life I have always labeled myself. I have always felt too small, too short, too skinny, too pale, too blonde, too lazy, too motivated, too loud and even too confident. I have even added some labels to my list. Recently I have felt that I am too over powering, too emotional, too harsh, and I like attention too much. I have even labeled myself as a failure.

But through my life, and more specifically this last year, I have learned that labeling myself is not going to get me anywhere. So I stopped labeling myself, and I embraced the things that have made me-- ME.

Yes, I have always felt too small, or too short, or even too skinny—but that is the body type I have. And I am thankful for it.  
Yes I have always felt too pale or too blonde—but that is what the rest of my family looks like and I am proud of where my genes came from.

Yes I have had moments of feeling dumb or lazy—but those moments have been answered by moments of insane motivation and confidence.

As I reflect on the labels I have given myself, I have realized that there are some that I cannot change, and others I can. I can work on being more gentle and less harsh. I can let others be the center of attention, especially as I transition from being a leader, to being a supporter in Rainbow.

The hardest labels to change are those that others have given me, because I have no control of what other people are thinking or saying about me, or when they are making those judgments. For example, I am sure my Advisory Board has given me many different labels as I have transitioned from a Pledge Girl to a Rainbow Girl, to a very young Line Officer, to a repeat Worthy Advisor, to a Grand Officer, and even now, as I serve as Grand Worthy Advisor.

Today, I want to take away one of those labels. Today I am labeled as Megan Sakelarios, Grand Worthy Advisor, but right now, I just want to be Megan.

As I take my crown and my Grand Worthy Advisor pin off, I am taking off the things that symbolize my label as Grand Worthy Advisor. Without them I am now just me. Just another Rainbow Girl, who loves being a part of this great sisterhood and learning how a life of active service can help me be the best person I can be—for the rest of my life.

I now have nothing to label me Grand Worthy Advisor, I am just Megan. And believe it or not- it is truly freeing. For this moment I am not the focal point, I am just one of many. I am just another girl enjoying an Official Visit. And as Megan, just the Rainbow girl, I can focus on all of the fun we have together. Whether it is looking back on memories from this year, or even looking forward to our sleepover tonight, I am just as excited and ready to spend time with my sisters as every girl here. And that is who we all are. Just Rainbow Girls and sisters forever.

As just Megan, I want to share with you that labels can also be kind and meaningful.

Notice I took away all my labels, except for one. The label that I have received, and when I did, I vowed to never expect any further recognition for the service I give. I left my Grand Cross on. Which to me, is my most meaningful label. Yes I am labeled a Master of the Grand Cross of Color, but it also shows that I have taken vows and stay true to them. One of which is that I will never speak evil of any girl, and that I am no better than any girl. Both of which, are the vows I hold closest to my heart.

Each of us will receive labels for everything we do. But it is not the labels we receive that determine how our lives will be. The way we live our lives and label ourselves is what makes us who we are. We will always be too much something for someone: too big, or too small, too loud, too soft, too edgy. But if we round out our edges, we lose our edge. We must apologize for our mistakes. But we shouldn't ever apologize for who we are striving to become.

No matter the labels we should do our best, and focus on the positive labels we give ourselves. And we should give positive labels to others as well. Giving people mean or hurtful labels is only going to give us labels of being mean and hurtful, and nobody wants that.

So today in this last address I leave you with a quote from Mother Teresa, "People are often unreasonable and self-centered- forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives- be kind anyway. If you are honest, people may cheat you- be honest anyway. If you find happiness, people may be jealous- be happy anyway. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow- do good today anyway. You may give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough- but give your best anyway."



**Reception Honoring Grand Hope  
Chaslynn McAllister:  
April 22, 2017**



I'm going to begin by being honest: I am so happy there is such a hype about the Netflix series "Thirteen Reasons Why"; for those of you who do not know the storyline, I'll give you the basics. The story begins with a recording of Hannah Baker - a simple "hey, it's Hannah, Hannah Baker. That's right. Don't adjust your...whatever device you're hearing this on. It's me, live and in stereo." The story, Hannah's story, is the story of why she killed herself.

One of the most important lessons Hannah and Clay mention throughout the season is how you never know how much your action can affect another person or what is going on in their life. You can never know what you say or do can affect their life. So be nice to people for no reason. Smile to people you walk past. Make an effort to say hi and maybe with all the attention this show is getting, people will understand the lesson quoted directly from the show: "I guess that's the point of it all. No one knows for certain how much impact they have on the lives of other people."

You don't get to choose what happens in your life but you do get to choose how you react. You get to choose what happens next, where you go from her. No one can force you to get out of bed and participate in life. You have to do it and you have to do it for you.

Stand outside and look up to the starry nights when you feel alone; we all are standing under the same stars. Look up to the stars and not down to your feet – change your perspective and surround yourself with the good.

For those of you who are very informed of my school life know that last semester I took a course called the Psychology of Death and Dying and it was one of my favorite classes, in fact that's the only class I talked about. Strange, isn't it?

However, in Rainbow we have a lesson dedicated to the lesson of Immortality. So maybe it isn't as strange as it seems. There is a particular novel I want to share with you that changed my perspective titled "Tuesdays With Morrie". Morrie is a retired professor who later is diagnosed with ALS also known as Lou Gherig's disease which is a progressive neurodegenerative disease meaning he is slowly dying until his throat collapse causing him to suffocate. Although Morrie's disease is terminal that does not stop Morrie from living his day to the best of his ability. His perception of life is different than those of us who are living every day without a degenerative disease.

Mitch is a former student of Morrie; at his graduation, he promised his favorite professor, Morrie, who was crying, that he will keep in touch however, he has failed to keep his promise. Sixteen years pass from Mitch's graduation and he finds himself frustrated with the life he has chosen to live. Mitch abandons his failing career after his uncle dies of pancreatic cancer to become a well-paid journalist. Quickly, Mitch's life is consumed in his work – failing to keep promises to his wife and neglecting to notice anything related outside of his work.

Mitch reaches out to his beloved professor and arranges to meet with him in person. Mitch stalls outside of Morrie's house because he is preoccupied talking on the phone with his producer, a decision he later regrets.

They met on a Tuesday, then the next Tuesday until it becomes a regular meeting. Mitch returns regularly every Tuesday to listen to Morrie once again as if he was Morrie's student listening to his lecture. This last encounter allows Morrie to have one final class, create a final thesis together – Morrie wants to leave behind one last lesson, he teaches Mitch "The Meaning of Life".

Each Tuesday Morrie provides a new lesson – lessons Morrie has learned over the span of his lifetime; lessons Morrie has learned from the perception of a dying man. Morrie did not allow his disease to take away

the joy in his life, the illness may have taken his ability to do the things he loved but not his perception. He encouraged Mitch to reject the popular culture – to accept a more individualistic culture that is founded on love, acceptance, and human goodness, a culture that upholds a selflessness, challenges social norms – stating Mitch should cry freely and participate in things he enjoys and not be as wrapped up in his work, accepting death and aging as both are inevitable. Morrie lived every day to the fullest and loved to his fullest extent until his last break.

What do these two stories have in common? You are never truly alone and perception is everything. Hannah's tragic story of her death and Morrie's perception of life as he battles his degenerative disease is a reminder that you may not be able to control what life may throw at you but that you can control how you react to the situation. Hannah's story mentions how she is surrounded by friends and family who cared but her perception was different, she felt alone and hopeless. Morrie, who's consciously is aware of his slow death chooses a different perception of life – allowing a few minutes to cry then moving forward with the day. Surrounding his self with individuals he cares deeply about and choosing to see the positive in each situation. Morrie's degenerative disease may stripe him of his independent day to day actions but he views it as a chance to live happily as a young child again, having to rely on someone to take care of him.

Now I know you're wondering how on earth do these stories relate to my experiences in Rainbow – an organization I have dedicated the last eight years to? My perception of Rainbow and life has changed a lot in these past eight years. As the days come closer to Majority, I must look forward to my next adventure. Do I choose to be sad as I reach the end of this journey or do I celebrate the lessons I have learned?

Rainbow teaches girls a variety of lessons such as leadership, etiquette, and philanthropy. But some of the greatest lessons we learn in Rainbow are not stated out loud but taught through the warm hearts and kind words of those around us. We are taught that hope always awaits us. Hope will guide us through the darkest nights to the light of tomorrow.

Life is not perfect, there will be times of despair, but no matter how hard it may get – remember the lesson of hope. As these next few months come flying by, I face a variety of upcoming changes such as graduating the college in a few weeks, moving back to Nevada to Winnemucca and then moving to Elko, all while preparing for my last Grand Assembly as an active girl. I find myself constantly reflecting on my Rainbow career as the days get closer. I think back to the memories and friendships I have made as well as all the incredible individuals who have helped me along the way. From my first memories in this lodge, the countless hours spent on the highway, the sleepovers and jokes made with girls across Nevada, to today and my last two bittersweet months until the moment I retire my jewel and take on a new journey.

Through the lessons I've learned in Rainbow, I believe I am ready to take on my next adventure in Elko where I will attend the Great Basin College to earn my Bachelor's degree then to grad school where I will receive a Master's in Counseling. Each of you have helped me become the young woman I am today and I am eternally grateful. I cannot thank Rainbow enough for shaping me into the young confident woman I am today – for teaching me the importance of service and preparing me to take on life. But most importantly, for making me feel wanted and surrounding me with constant love and support. I may receive Majority this year but Rainbow will always be a part of my life and I cannot thank Nevada Rainbow for these past eight years. Do not forget that: "when it rains look for rainbows, when it's dark look for stars".

**Reception Honoring Grand Charity**  
**Caitlin Katzenbach**  
**March 26, 2017**

Picture yourself in a world of wonder. A world of magic. Here you leave today and enter the world of yesterday, tomorrow, and fantasy. This is the motto posted on the front of Disneyland. It's introducing you to the magical world that is Disneyland. For me this is my happy place. The place where I can be as whimsical as I am and have that be considered normal. A place where all the whimsical fun and magic of my childhood finally comes to life.

In total, I've been to Disneyland and California Adventure four times. I'm not really sure what the first trip was like since I was four. My second trip was once with my siblings, my cousin, and my grandparents. This trip was taken on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, which meant that the park was all decked out with crystals and snow and sparkles. Then was the trip to a Disney Christmas where my family learned how to rock around the Christmas tree with Mickey and his gang.

Seven years had then passed and I had been reunited with my great love. Reunited with a place where my family was all able to come together and work towards one goal. The goal of getting to the next ride and finding the most characters. While attending to all of the rides, you get to be transported into a world that doesn't exist in our reality. At Disneyland I can travel to all seven continents in a matter of 13 minutes, fly through space and still reach land five minutes later, scream for five straight minutes and not get funny looks, go under the sea without losing my breath, and stay at a haunted hotel that isn't right in my hometown. Disneyland is a place that defies the odds and goes against all of the rules. Instead when people say that they can't, Disney comes up with a bigger and better invention to prove that not only could they do the impossible, but that they could exceed it. They take the rules that most would stray from and improve on them with new and exciting little details.

For example, Disneyland took the unlucky number 13 and made it great. Since 13 is considered an unlucky number, many companies would believe in the superstition and stray away from the unlucky number. However Disney went against the superstition and used the number not once, but twice when deciding it naming the street in which Disneyland is located. While most places would be given the street name based on the location of the property, Disneyland was given special permission to name its own location. Disneyland's address is at 1313 Disneyland Drive. The number 13 was chosen because the thirteenth letter of the alphabet is "m." Together two m's stand for Mickey Mouse. This just shows how creative and detail-oriented Walt Disney was. He faced adversity and made it something that could become an asset.

I realize that not everything will be as simple as a snap with a pinch of pixie dust. In your journey towards the end of the Rainbow, you will encounter many instances where you've lost your magic pixie dust touch. Times where you have to learn how to work with other people to solve the problem and find the missing link. Remember in these difficult times, that you need to stay positive, otherwise you may add to the chaos. Jack Sparrow once said, "The problem is not the problem, the problem is your attitude about the problem." If you are negative and condescending about a problem, than you start to have a problem with the problem. But if you face your problem with an optimistic and positive attitude, than you can easily turn the problem from a problem, to a situation that just needs a different solution.

Normally I would say goodbye at this point, but that is not how Disney works. Peter Pan once said, "Never say goodbye because saying goodbye means going away, and going away means forgetting." But how could I ever forget the impact that this order has had on my life. That being said, I leave here not saying goodbye, but rather "high hoe, high hoe, it's off to new work I go." Thank you!







**Reception Honoring Grand Worthy Associate Advisor  
Lesley Lechuga Gomez  
May 6, 2017**

When I was younger I wanted to be a marine biologist because I loved sea creatures and I wanted to be able to help them as much as possible. I had a career change my senior year of high school, when I realized that science was not my strong suit, and in order to be a marine biologist one needs to know how to swim, and that's something I don't know how to do. I decided I wanted to be a teacher instead. Once I got to college, and started taking Education classes I realized that I didn't want to be a teacher. I didn't want to work with high school students for the rest of my life, or constantly be grading papers. However, those education classes did help me in some way because it helped me realize that I wanted to help education beyond the classroom. I'm currently a Social Work major because I want to help reform our education system. I want to help all students, and not just the ones in my classroom. There are other things that I want to do as a Social Worker, but the basis of it all is helping people. I love helping people. That love stems from me being a Rainbow girl. It's thanks to this organization that I had plenty of opportunities to go and serve my community, and for that I am thankful.

I'm also very thankful for my fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Nott because if it wasn't for her I would have never become a Rainbow Girl. Her daughter, Jessica Eichsted and the girls of Ben Franklin Assembly came to my elementary school before school started, and did a presentation of what Rainbow is. When they said that they had plenty of ice cream parties I was hooked, and took home a petition that day. On April 15, 2008 I was initiated into Ben Franklin Assembly, and it is still the best decision I ever made. Rainbow came at a time where I was confused, and unsure of anything. My parents had just gotten divorced, and one of my really close uncles had passed away. I didn't know how to cope with it all, and when I joined I found a safe place – somewhere I was able to freely be myself.

When I first joined Rainbow I was very shy and timid. If you're having a tough time hearing me now, when I was 11 you'd have to really strain your ears. It took me some time, but I was able to come out of my shell. Through my Rainbow career I have had successes and I have had failures. Every time that I failed at something in and outside of Rainbow I always took the time to reflect on what I did wrong and how I'm going to change my approach the next time. I'm glad I had these failures because I learned so much from them. The first time I went through the line one of my fundraisers was not a success, and in my eyes it was a failure. Instead of looking just letting it be I looked at why it was a failure, and what things could I do differently instead. In life people are always going to fail at something, and that needs to be recognized. When we think about failure we think about it in a negative light, and something that must be avoided at all times. That mindset needs to change because without failing we can't grow. Those who have failed, and have bounced back from it recognize that failing was essential to them because it ultimately led them to succeeding. Taking risks and sometimes failing at them is a part of life, and it's from those risks that you learn, and you also learn more about yourself at the same time. I work at a daycare, and when babies are learning to walk they always fall, but they get back up and try again until they finally succeed. Failing hurts, and it hits you hard but it's necessary.

Another thing I learned from my time in Rainbow is to be patient. I can be impatient, and when something is not getting done quickly enough I can get frustrated. As I've grown I've learned that things take time, and if you want to make those things great than don't rush into it, and really look at what you're doing. I've also always focused on the future, and wanting things to happen quickly, but in doing that I didn't focus on my

present too much and let things slip. I'm still constantly working on being patient, and it's a skill I haven't fully mastered. This past Sunday, at the Leadership Summit, we got to hear from different leaders in the Reno community. One leader that really struck a chord with me is Sherriff Chuck Allen. When he graduated from high school he didn't immediately go to college, and instead focused on helping his family. He didn't know what he wanted to do, but he knew that he wanted to be in the law enforcement. It took him time to figure out what he wanted to do with his life. He joined the National Guard, and from the National Guard he went on to do many other things that didn't happen all at once. One thing he said that stayed with me was to, "Make every day count." This statement may seem simple, but I've taken a lot from it. I've learned that every day I am given the opportunity to change something, to be happy, to make a difference, and to really cherish my time here on Earth because it may not seem like it but time goes by fast.

Before I leave I want to leave you with some tips on how to be happier. Also, these tips were given to us by Mr. Kenny DuPree at the Leadership Summit.

1. Reading is important
2. Do something kind for someone else everyday
3. Stop obsessing over the outcome
4. Write in a journal for five minutes a day
5. Always say thank you, and I love you

**Reception Honoring Grand Worthy Advisor  
Megan Sakelarios  
May 7, 2017**

When I sat down to write this speech, I had no idea how to approach it. I never imagined this day would actually come. Yet, here we are. When you are born into Rainbow, you never really think about the fact that your journey will one day come to an end. You never have those "one day this will all be over, and I'll be an adult" thoughts.

I will be absolutely honest, this speech has been hands down the hardest for me to write. How do you write a speech to sum up your entire Rainbow journey?

It took me quite some time to think about what I wanted to say in this speech, and I knew it would, which is why I wrote a first draft in December, another in January, and two more versions in April. Come to think of it, this speech is nearly 21 years in the making. I was truly lost for words; and you all know me, I always have words.

I was not valedictorian of my graduating class, so I've never had to write a speech that was both nostalgic and inspiring, concluding with goodbye. I have written countless speeches in my Rainbow career, especially this last year; but this speech felt like it needed to be so much more because it means so much to me. I mean what do you say about an organization that has been part of your life since before you were even born? How do you say thank you to so many? How do you share the countless memories? Well I'm here to tell you, it is almost impossible

When I thought of the things I could say about my last 20 years in Rainbow – okay, really only 9 - so many thoughts and words and quotes and appreciation came to mind. And then I get stuck on how to continue this speech. Then I did what I usually do, I turned to Pinterest, with its thousands of quotes. Pinterest, of course, came through for me again. Shocking, right? I found a quote that really hit it out of the park for me. It is a simple, 8 word quote from Buddha. Eight words helped me understand my struggle and how to move beyond

it. Buddha once said, "The trouble is, you think you have time." Each time I read this quote, I thought of today and how relevant it is at this time in my Rainbow journey.

At 8 years old on the night of my initiation into Pledge, I was not thinking that it was the beginning of the end. I was thinking it was the beginning of my journey. Nothing more, because I had plenty of time. I was full of excitement and happiness, as I attending my first meeting as an official Pledge member. I was looking forward to all the fun and laughter and memories I was about to make: from learning my first part, to getting to eat first at Rainbow Camp with all of my other Pledge sisters, to all of the fun crafts Mrs. JJ had planned for us, and the best part—getting to hang out with all those super cool Rainbow Girls.

Before I knew it I, was turning 11, and it was time for me to join Rainbow, as I had pledged to do just 3 short years before. Wow, it had already been 3 years! Again the familiar feelings of excitement and happiness filled my soul. This was it! I had literally waited my WHOLE life for this day! I would finally be a Rainbow Girl! ME, Megan Sakelarios, member of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls! The little girl who was at every Rainbow event for the past 11 years would now be an official sister! And although I knew would miss getting to eat first at Rainbow Camp, this meant that I was now allowed to stay for ALL of Grand Assembly and be able to attend all of the Official Visits and other Assembly's meetings. The excitement and anticipation of the new experiences and memories I was about to make was unreal! And I thought - I still had time, plenty time.

Then, while I was still holding firmly to the hand of Faith, I was elected Faith and began journey through the Line. Serving in each line office was a milestone toward serving as Worthy Advisor. As each milestone passed, I remained confident, I had time, lots of time. Then, before I know it, it was my turn to assume the gavel and wear the crown, leading my Assembly as Worthy Advisor. I was beyond excited. I had planned my term, finding that perfect balance between fun and work. We were a small assembly, so I was given many opportunities to fill vacancies in our Line and to serve as Worthy Advisor. I was allowed to serve as Worthy Advisor five times. Our adults were even brave enough to allow a Leadership Team, consisting of Kayla, Carly and me. This was my favorite term, because I was able to lead the Assembly alongside some of my best friends and more importantly, my closest Rainbow sisters. I was honored to have been given this extra time. There was no rush, there was plenty of time.

In the midst of all the fun and excitement I was having rotating through the line and serving as Worthy Advisor, I was appointed to my first Grand Office. I felt so humbled by this honor; I cried. Do you remember that, Shelby? I literally cried at Grand Installation. But how could I not? My whole life I had looked up to the Grand Officers and now I was a part of that family. Thank goodness, I had time – to enjoy and share this experience.

Before I felt like I had learned to put my hairpiece on properly, I was being appointed to my second, third, and fourth Grand Offices, and was being sent all over our country. I went to many out of state Grand Assemblies, Supreme Seminar, and even Supreme Assemblies. Traveling with Rainbow became second nature to me. And, over the years, traveling with my Rainbow Sisters has become one of my favorite things about Rainbow.

Suddenly, it was April 2016 and I was filling out my LAST Grand Officer Application and writing my LAST confidential letter. I was so excited! All these years brought me to this point - my LAST year as an active member. In that moment, the possibilities were endless. But there was still time and I still had work to do, as I had the privilege to serve as Acting Grand Faith at Grand Assembly 2016.

After what felt like just moments after completing initiation at Grand Assembly, I was announced as Grand Worthy Advisor! I still can remember that feeling of sitting on the floor of the Grand Assembly room with Lesley, ugly crying our hearts out, as our names were called. I was over the moon excited for the year – a whole year, so much time to do so many amazing things.

The Past Grand Worthy Advisors warned me; this year would go by faster than I could imagine, much faster than any of the years before. Looking back, I wonder if they were familiar with those eight words spoken by Buddha: "The trouble is, you think you have time." Well guess what? I did not heed their warning; I had an entire year, tons of time! Let me tell you, those ladies right. This year has gone by faster than I thought possible. I cannot believe that Grand Assembly is just around the corner.

My years in Rainbow have flown by, so fast that I do not feel that I have had time to appreciate them. I thought I had all the time in the world, when in reality, I didn't. The end of my journey in Rainbow always seemed so far in the future and so unreachable, just like a real Rainbow whose position changes as you get close to it. But here it is. In just 44 days, I will shake the hand of Majority, and my journey to the end of the Rainbow will be finished. Or will it?

Rainbow has made me who I am today, whether I like it or not. Rainbow has allowed me to not only find myself, but to be myself. From finding what sets my soul on fire to allowing me to break some rules, and even allowing to be my whole, true self and learning to love every bit of my crazy self.

Before Rainbow, I cried a lot. Okay, I still do, but it used to be so much worse. I cried at my initiation in to Pledge when I was 8; I cried when saying my obligation to earn my Merit bar, I cried when I had to do classroom presentations, and I even cried when we split into groups at Rainbow Camp. But look at me now, the water works only happen some times.

Rainbow taught me to be confident in who I am, no matter what. Rainbow has allowed me to grow from a little girl crying in class, so I wouldn't have to give my family heritage presentation to an adult, standing here before you today, confident enough to give this speech. Without the confidence I learned through Rainbow, I never would have had the self-confidence to be open and honest about my own life in the speeches I have given this past year. Rainbow taught me that it is okay to fail, just as long as I learn from that failure.

That being said, I won't stand here and tell you that I have always loved Rainbow because that wouldn't be true. During high school and even after, I decided Rainbow just was not my thing. But, I stuck with it, because I was a Grand Officer and I did not want to let my fellow Grand Officers down. I also did not want to let my Assembly down. All of the girls and adults looked to me for support and leadership. How could I just leave them? So I continued on as a Grand Officer, and I did the bare minimum amount of work expected of me and that was it. I am not proud of not giving my all, but I learned from that experience. I learned that people do notice if you are not giving it your best and it hurts everyone – not just you. The girls and adults in my Assembly needed me to give my very best; after all, they were giving their very best. I look back on those 3 years and the disappointment I brought on myself. I don't ever want to disappoint anyone like that.

As I prepared my last application to serve as a Grand Officer, I really struggled. I didn't think I wanted to take another Grand Office. I had experienced plenty of time as a Rainbow girl, and I was ready to move on. I was done with Rainbow controlling my life. One of the hardest things I have ever done in my life was to sit down with my mom and my grandma to tell them that I thought I was done with Rainbow, and that I was not sure if I wanted to take another Grand Office. They encouraged and supported me through my little melt down, and ultimately, I submitted my application. It was a long three months between when my application was submitted and Grand Officers were announced. During that time, I had battles with myself, had I made the right decision?

I am so glad I made the decision to apply for my last Grand Office. And, I am glad that I had to battle that inner struggle, because I think it helped me better appreciate the honor of serving as a Grand Officer, not only for myself, but for my Assembly and our adults.

I will never regret any of my experiences in Rainbow - the good or the bad. The good experiences created amazing memories, which I will cherish forever! And, every failure taught me an important lesson or skill that I needed in order to achieve success, to prepare me to be who I have become.

This year has been everything imagined and so much more. I have always had high hopes for my last year as a Grand Officer, but they never included being Grand Worthy Advisor. This last year has been an absolutely unforgettable blessing. I will forever cherish the love and support I have received this year. I will never forget all of the selfies and laughter. I may not miss all the hard work, but I will miss the amazing feeling of relief after I met a HUGE deadline. I will never forget my years in Rainbow.

Rainbow, without a doubt, will always hold a special place in my heart. I cannot wait for the moments I get to use the phrase “well when I was in Rainbow—”. In fact, I hope I am that old lady in the nursing home who rattles off stories about my Rainbow sisters and the memories we created together. Although the people taking care of me might not have a clue what I am talking about, I hope they will listen anyway, knowing just how much Rainbow mattered to me.

Now this is where the valedictorian of the senior class would leave you with some inspirational words about conquering the world and achieving all your hopes and dreams. But today I will leave you with these words from our ritual, “I hope you will let Rainbow hold a real place in your heart”. I hope, with all of my being, that each of you will truly live the life you have obligated yourselves through Rainbow to live. Always remember to live in each moment. Cherish every memory. As Buddha so profoundly said, “The trouble is, you think you have time.”

And may every sunset be a reminder to us all that endings can often be beautiful too.

*Megan Sakelarios, Grand Worthy Advisor, 2017*

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