LIFE HACKS

Graduate with Down Syndrome Makes History at Olympia College

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During his life, Dylan Kuehl has been often told that he shouldn't do something or that he can't do something.

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But, he believes that no one has the right to tell him this. And, he actually proved all these people wrong.

He recently graduated from Evergreen State College. The 38-year-old also made history as the first living graduate with Down in the 51-year existence of the college.

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Kuehl said of his graduation that when life gives us lemons, we should make lemonade.

Down Syndrome College Graduate Makes History

Kuehl got a BA in writing.

His two favorite subjects were dance and painting. Before getting his diploma, Kuehl was one of the only three students of the 900 graduates who were picked out to give a ceremony speech.

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He said in the message he recorded that the greatness in all of the graduates is evident. However, he never thought he would come so far. When he started this journey, many people told him he was not ready.

He confesses that this discouraged him; however, he never gave up, and rather built a 'yes team'.

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He explains that his colleagues, teachers, tutors, and his mom helped him a lot on his journey. However, he says earning the degree was mostly his own doing. And, he's hopeful that his story will be an inspiration and motivation for others.

He Is Maybe the First, but Certainly Not the Last

He says that we all need to celebrate our abilities and live life with pride and ambition. He also stated that he may be the first to graduate from college, but that he's not the last. His 'yes team' consists of past and present Evergreen faculty, as well as friends he made during college, and his family.

This is a group of people that always supported him and advised him to pursue his dreams when others were constantly telling him no. Dylan praised the college for making sure their school is an inclusive environment for everyone. This college is all about acceptance.

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He believes that other students like him deserve to be a part as well. Diversity and inclusion benefit everyone and ensure the community is well-rounded.

Towards the end of his emotional speech, he advised students to rejoice in tier abilities. Indeed, what a historic achievement, right?

Check out his full speech below:

Sources:

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