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David Wolfe Bender · Apr 2, 2020 · 3 min read

Thank You, Park Tudor: A Message to Our Classmates

Earlier today, Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb announced that all Indiana schools will close for the remainder of the school year. As a result, the Class of 2020 will not return to campus this year. In September 2019, Holly Rogers and I were named the Class of 2020's representatives to the Park Tudor School Alumni Board. We wrote this message last week, and we wanted to share it with our friends, families, and the community.

To the Class of 2020 (and the rest of the Park Tudor Community):

It wasn't long ago that we were reminded of something Mr. Gareth Vaughan (Head of Park Tudor School) said to the incoming 9th grade class at the beginning of the school year: "Think not of how you want to start Upper School, but of how you want to finish." (We should note that may not be an exact quote; it's been a few months).

The statement is about legacy. Every class leaves something when they leave Park Tudor. Every student leaves something when they leave this community. We started to ask ourselves the obvious questions: How will the Class of 2020 be remembered? What will people say about the Class of 2020?

Of course, we both found that we had a lot of time over the last few weeks to answer those questions. It's not an easy question. But after putting a lot of thought into it, we thought of a few moments that we think exemplify just what our legacy will be.

Park Tudor's Class of 2020 is one of closeness, friendship, and kindness. Many of our favorite memories from Upper School occurred on the various Model United Nations trips a lot of us took over the last four years.

The wait to board our plane to Chicago felt like an eternity. We sat in the terminal for almost an hour and fifteen minutes before we started boarding. But while we waited, our class didn't split into groups. We sat together in a huge circle by our departure gate and played card games together. We just all wanted to be together, as one group.



We had a similar experience almost two years later when we traveled to The Hague for our final Model United Nations conference. A lot of us didn't do the best job of sleeping on the plane, so when we arrived at 6 AM local time, we were all drowsy and tired while we were waiting for a bus to pick us up at the airport. That, however, didn't stop all of us from crowding around Jordan Snow's iPhone to play "Head's Up," while we screamed clues at the top of our lungs (much to the dismay of other travelers in the airport).

Of course, we would be remiss if we did not mention that the Class of 2020 will be remembered for unrivaled, unparalleled school spirit.

The Class of 2020 brought so many students to the major sporting events that the student section literally needed to be moved to a different spot in the football stadium. Additionally, for the first time since we entered Upper School, our student section during some basketball games touched the back wall of our

Park Tudor's Model United Nations Team poses for a photo in The

Park Tudor's Model United Nations team poses for a photo in the
Hague, Netherlands

gym.

Our class brought a new take on our homecoming pep rally "run in," jumping around and dancing to various High School Musical numbers. Through the entire week, we showed exactly what "school spirit" really means.



Photo Credit: PT Photos

That's how our class will be remembered; it's our legacy. And it really hurts that we have to leave it. The good news is: we don't have to leave.

At most schools, when you graduate, you leave. But at Park Tudor, you don't leave. Instead, at Park Tudor, you join a family – a family thousands large – in the Park Tudor Alumni Association. It is in the Alumni Association where our class will form a new legacy, one not only based on our love for one another, but also a legacy based on our support for the school that gave us so many opportunities and friendships.

This is a very exciting time for our community. Just months ago, the Board of Directors approved the groundbreaking of a brand new athletic and wellness center, a building that will propel our school into its next generation. We are so excited for this class to continue its excellent reputation as alumni.

The Class of 2020 will be the 50th graduating class since the merger of Park School and Tudor Hall in 1970. While this year will not end the way we all imagined it would, just remember: we will always be Panthers.

It's been the honor of our lives to go to school with all of you, and there are not words to describe just how much we'll miss all of you.

Sincerely,

David Wolfe Bender and Holliday Rogers
2020 Class Representatives, Park Tudor Alumni Board

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