

CAL TEACH SPEECH – May 18th, 2011

Phew, hi everyone. Well I guess I should introduce myself a bit, I'm Michelle Allen. A Math Major, Education Minor, and graduating senior! And I'll be a Math for America Fellow at Claremont Graduate University... next week! Woo! I'm actually really surprised how many faces I don't know in the audience right now, which of course is sad because I would love to know all of you, but it's also a fabulous thing. Right here is a clear indicator of the massive growth this program has made over the past few years. And I'm so happy I was able to be a part of that and really help the Cal Teach club to get off and running.

So a little about me: I grew up in San Diego with my mom and my younger brother, and since my mom worked a lot to take care of us I became a really independent child and pretty much figured everything out on my own. When it came time to choose a college I wasn't really sure where to start, and since my mom didn't go to college she didn't know what to do either. So I started with my counselor, which was difficult because there were 600 seniors and only 3 counselors. I found out about a program called CalSOAP, and this advisor helped me along the way. He actually put UC Irvine on my radar, saying that he thought I would love it here. So I checked the box on the UC application that said Irvine and a few months later I was

accepted! The moment I stepped onto the UCI campus I knew it was right. It was a feeling of serenity, comfort, and endless opportunity.

CalTeach. Wow, I owe more gratitude than I can ever express to the wonderful people that make this program work everyday. My freshman year I enrolled in PS 5 because my roommate was taking it and she didn't want to take it alone. This is when it was a TINY class ONLY offered on Friday nights in the little trailers behind the science library. Jose and Carlos would come in and pitch the resource center at us almost every week and honestly, I never went in. It wasn't until my second year when we started the CalTeach club that I was really bonded with these people and this program. I went into the resource center for the first time, nervous out of my mind and not really sure what I was doing there...and met people that I will never forget: Amanda, Lyndsey, Khanh, Tracy, Danielle, Teffany, Kim, Tanvi. We worked so hard that first year, and saw some progress. Then my third year I was Vice President under Amanda, she WHIPPED that club into shape. Holy cow, it was exactly what we needed at that point.

And this year. Wow this has honestly been the best year of my life. I was club president and had a fabulous group of officers to work with, I was Housing Assistant for the Careers in Teaching house in Arroyo Vista and fell madly in love with my

residents, but also faced and overcame challenges I never thought I would have to deal with. And then I joined a sorority with all the free time I had left.

So many people have helped me along the way, and I don't want this to sound like an Oscar's speech, but I am so thankful for each and every one of them.

Amanda: Wow, you are one of my favorite people ever. Even though you're a mean teacher you're a wonderful friend and I am SO glad we were shut-ins in Texas together.

Fabulous officers: Bri, Lyndsey, Maddie, Kim, Grace, Julie

You girls have done such a great job this year, and put up with a lot from me. I am SO proud of you and can't wait to see what will happen next year with those of you that are returning.

Club members: Huy, Samantha, Christopher James, Tyler, Sella...

Thanks for coming out to everything and being really supportive, the club wouldn't be what is it without you guys.

Kris, Karajan, Terry, Sue Marshall: Thank you for your endless guidance and help, for paving the way for this incredible program and allowing students like me the leadership opportunities to grow and accomplish great things.

Gisela and Jose: honestly the best sponsors a HA could ask for, so supportive and willing to jump at the drop of a hat if something isn't right. Thank you for everything you did this year, and our fabulous lunch dates.

SERGIO: YOU are going to rock it next year!

I know this is getting kind of long, but if you're zoning out here's the part where you should pay attention.

If I could give any advice to you guys doing the four-year program, to those trying out teaching with the intro classes, those that still aren't sure...it would be to be true to who you are but push yourself! College is the time to try new things, to make mistakes and overcome them. Don't doubt yourself, you really can do anything you want to do...and if teaching is your calling then Cal Teach can give you everything you need to get there. Surround yourself with people that care about you and don't let stress or the chaos of life get you down for too long, no matter what it is, it will always pass. The people in this room are some of the most wonderful people I have ever met, and I am so excited for what lies ahead of each of you.

I can't believe my time here really is almost over: I'm going to miss our officer meetings every week, giving people "the look" when they won't stop talking, I'm going to miss my residents so, so much. I'm going to miss walking into the office and seeing Lyndsey knocked out on the couch. I'm going to miss Maddie's boobie

obsession. Sorry if these are inappropriate Jose. JOSE! I'm going to miss Jose a lot to, he put up with all my of questions that I could have probably looked up myself. But I'm also full of excitement for what life has in store for me. I have an unbelievable opportunity to be a Math for America Fellow at Claremont Graduate University, where Jose goes to school right now btw, and in September I'm going to be a real live math teacher, working somewhere in LA County. I know that everything happens for a reason, and Cal Teach is the reason I was meant to come to UCI.

Thank you :]