



**Commissioner Cynthia Brann
Graduation Ceremony Remarks
November 29th, 2017**

- Good morning recruits, DOC staff, family, friends and distinguished guests. I am honored to welcome everyone to this very special day.
- To our Recruit Unit, Application Investigation Unit, and Commanding Officer Warden Penny Jones and the Correction Academy staff—your outstanding work has once again achieved the unimaginable and successfully brought in and trained more than 1,140 recruits—the largest class in NYC Correction’s history!
- To our honored special guest, Assembly Member David Weprin, thank you for your continued support of DOC and all that we are trying to achieve.
- And to our newest recruits—Congratulations!
- After months of rigorous training and endless testing of your academic and physical skills, you are about to become members of New York City’s elite Law Enforcement family.
- It is a special honor and privilege to be standing here as your Commissioner, looking out into a sea of blue and seeing the great hope and promise for the future of this Department.
- As Correction Officers, you are embarking on an exciting and rewarding career path in one of the most vital and challenging professions in New York City.

- I know that none of you reached this day alone. So please join me in giving a big round of applause to your family and friends.
- To the family, friends, and loved ones here today; you too are about to embark upon a journey with these courageous men and women.
- They may spend their assigned tours with us, but they will come home to you. Home is where they should find peace and solace.
- They will need your support, understanding and encouragement more than ever as they take on the duties and responsibilities of keeping our city safe. We thank you for sharing them with us as we answer our call to duty.
- Recruits - you are about to feel the weight of public service on your shoulders.
- As the largest academy class in the history of the Department of Correction, much will be expected of you.
- Yes, your duties as officers are care, custody, and control, but at the DOC, more is required. Here, you are more than an officer.
- You are teachers, mentors, counselors, community leaders, activists, and reformers. I know that most of you are already aspiring to these roles.
- During a visit to the Academy, one of your classmates told me that he doesn't just want to be an officer working a post. Instead, he wants to open the inmates' eyes to unimagined dreams and possibilities.
- Another classmates told me she hopes to influence people, who may have made a bad decision, to look toward a brighter, more productive future.
- There is a strong sense of compassion and motivation for improving lives, and ensuring public safety already instilled into this class.
- That attitude will be key for achieving the high standards we have set for ourselves.
- We are an agency of change and are pioneering a set of unprecedented safety reforms. We remain focused on running safe jails, sustaining our reforms, transforming lives within our communities, and returning the word "correction" back to its true meaning within the criminal justice system.
- Changing lives and improving communities is an enormous mission, especially when the work goes unseen and unrecognized.
- A renowned historian once said: "In our world of big names, curiously, our true heroes tend to be anonymous."

- But we will continue to do this work and do what is necessary in the spirit of purpose-- not praise.
- But I'm not going to sugar coat things. Lack of recognition and the many naysayers will get to you. Your jobs will be extraordinarily difficult. You will face some of your greatest challenges while wearing the uniform.
- On those days when things go wrong or everything seems impossible, I want you to reach back to what you feel today- the pride, the enthusiasm, the faith that you will be successful. Remember why you chose this profession....and push on.
- I believe in you and that you are prepared for anything.
- You are already shaping the history of the Department. In fact, there will likely never be a class of this magnitude again.
- By size alone, your class will greatly impact all of what we do as an agency for decades to come.
- You will infuse the Department with new ideas, techniques and personalities.
- You will treat each other with respect and courtesy and remain committed to accountability.
- You will uphold the oath above all else
- "Do your job," and do it with pride, integrity, and professionalism.
- I and every member of the senior leadership team will do the rest.
- We promise to ALWAYS support you and provide you with the tools and resources necessary to be safe and successful.
- In a few short moments, you will begin the official transformation from citizen to law-enforcement officer.
- Your job begins as you swear an oath – the same oath sworn by those who have come before you; who have had the courage and commitment to do a challenging and dangerous job that most people do not understand and either could not or would not do.
- Know that you are not alone.
- You will have tens of thousands of BOLD men and women who are already on the frontlines, at your side, and watching your back.
- Remember, Boldness does not mean rude, loud or disrespectful. Being Bold is being firm, fair, confident, fearless, strong and resilient.

- It means you are willing to go where you've never gone; willing to try what you've never tried and willing to trust what you've never trusted.
- Boldness is quiet, not noisy.
- So let us be Bold, let us be Brave and let us be Together.
- Recruits, welcome to your new home and your DOC family.
- Congratulations to all of you on today's achievement.
- I wish each of you a long, safe career.

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