



HARVARD-WESTLAKE

On the first day of school, middle and upper schoolers gathered on Ted Slavin Field to officially begin the 2023-2024 school year at convocation. Brand-new seventh graders, seasoned seniors, and everyone in between watched the newly elected prefects don their robes for the first time and listened to speeches from President Rick Commons, Head of School Laura Ross, and Head Prefects Bari LeBari and Davis Marks. Davis's and Bari's words are excerpted below, reminding us all to be kind to each other—and that it's not whether you win or lose, it's what you learn along the way.

Cheers, [Ed Hu](#) | Head of External Relations

A Class Act







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It's clear that the way to be excellent at Harvard-Westlake is not to be cum laude or win CIF—although those are admirable achievements. Excellence means being great at little things that truly matter—like cheering on friends during rehearsals or practices, being there for people during Peer Support, and lighting up this community with a smile. The bonds we create, the empathy we demonstrate, and the kindness we extend to others—whether they're a close friend or not—is the legacy that will endure, far beyond any academic or extracurricular achievement.

Live in the moment and appreciate the simple joys that often go unnoticed—whether it's conversations with friends during lunch or walks to Starbucks and Sportsmen's Lodge. While these may seem insignificant, one day you'll look back and realize they defined your experience here.

Take a look around you. There's not a grade sheet nor trophy in sight, just 2,000 people who encourage each other, give comfort to each other during difficult times, and experience life together. When I think of Harvard-Westlake, this is what I picture, and that is why I love this place so

much.

Davis Marks '24



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To open my speech, I would like to ask anyone with their hands free to place their left hand up in the air in the shape of an L. And now, do the same thing with your right hand, also placing it in the shape of an L. That's 2 L's, at least from this point of view. But if you bend it a little bit...now it's a W.

2 L's make one W.

For those who may be a little confused, the letter L stands for a loss, while the letter W stands for a win. So the saying 2 L's makes a W means that mistakes in life can be seen as successes when spun in a positive light.

Yeah, I know I just blew your mind. "2 L's make 1 W" started off as just an inside joke with my friends. Whenever I would do something stupid, my friends would always call me out, and I'd always respond, "Well, 2 L's make 1 W." Of course, I was just a kid trying to be funny. However, as time passed, the saying has stuck. In fact, as corny as this sounds, I use this quote to help me out in my day-to-day life.

The W's may not always be obvious, but there is always something you can take away from every negative experience. Maybe failing an assignment taught me to not procrastinate on studying. Maybe getting rejected by a girl was a sign she wasn't the right one for me. Maybe I suck at a sport, but it's motivated me to get better.

You might stumble. You might even fall. And most likely, you're going to find failure many, many, many times. But remember...turn your situation around and spin it positively, and you'll see how 2 L's make 1 W. Have a brilliant school year!

Bari LeBari '24







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