

It is an honor to have this opportunity to say a few words today.

The Center for Bioethics at the University of Minnesota is a very, very special place. The faculty are experts in their fields, enthusiastic and generous about educating and mentoring the next generations of bioethicists, no matter how difficult that may be.

As one of a handful of veterinarians with a formal education in Bioethics, and the first veterinarian at the Center for Bioethics here at the University of Minnesota, the road to this point in my professional life has been non-traditional, and I would never have it any other way. I will be forever grateful the center took a chance with me, and encouraged me to explore new ways to think about what is and what ought to be, and is providing me with opportunities to teach in the near future.

There are so many people to acknowledge. Thank you to Drs. Song, DeBruin, Miles, and Liaschenko. Thank you to Margie, LeeAnn and the support staff at the center, thank you to my husband, my parents, my family, and my friends for the encouragement and support in all that I have accomplished.

It was my parents who instilled in me the love of education. I know that higher education is a privilege and with privilege comes great responsibility. Armed with degrees in veterinary medicine, public health, and bioethics, I am dedicated to giving back to my community and am working towards a career as an educator, a policy maker, and a professional who will advocate for that which benefits animals and the health of our society, and to be part of the checks and balance that is so desperately needed today.

Thank you and congratulations to all the graduates here today!