



Sawyer Keene, Networks Northwest, Cadillac High School Youth of the Year Acceptance Speech

I'd like to open this speech by saying thank you. Thank you all for the opportunity to be up on this stage let alone claiming an award. I also want to thank everyone who paved this path for me, and the compromises made to put me where I am today.

This year at the Career Development Conference, many of you have had differing experiences. Some may have topped the bracket at JMG bowl, others may have gone all out in Creative Problem Solving, and a few have made the best video presentation they will ever make.

Many of you have had these individual experiences today, good or bad, but how will they shape the "You" in a year? What about 5 years? What about 6 weeks? The question is, how will these experiences affect the new You?

This is what I believe JMG is all about. Handing as many people these experiences to help build the life skills and knowledge that would lead them to the rest of their education and maybe even beyond that. While this award is a great honor that will still find its way stuck to the fridge with a magnet, I really want the main take-away from this monologue to be this.

Focus on your experiences, and let them guide you to new possibilities. As Samuel Butler foretold, "Life is like playing a violin solo in public and learning the instrument as one goes on." So everyone listening, keep playing that violin, no matter how scratchy that chorus sounds.

Shout out to my friends and family, Laura Quist, Cheryl Miller, [JMF Specialists] and everyone else at JMG. It wouldn't be possible to be here without these amazing people. Long Live Jobs for Michigan Graduates!