



# graduation poem

I join-----in gentle sadness and silent tears the pride of the class  
of Twenty Twenty in accepting their duty

I join-----the unheard steps across the stage  
And the shouts when that diploma is put in their hands

I join-----the bravery of the class of Twenty Twenty in understanding:  
some gave their health; some gave their lives; some gave their possibility  
of kindness because of the selfishness of others

I join-----the understanding of forgiveness

I join-----my students in writing about their first kiss and

I join-----them in the heartbreak when he is gone

I join-----the laughter after a winning football game  
And the pouts when UVA finally almost evened the score

I join-----our parents who struggled to make this day a possibility that is not  
possible that will always be possible because The Hokie Nation is the possibility

I join-----us all in the struggle to be a better nation through the betterment  
of ourselves

I join-----those who hope our campus will find room for a monument to  
celebrate these youngsters. Most of our monuments honor those who cannot  
know how we praise them.

I join-----those who praise the living

I join-----all of the Hokie family who welcome the newest Hokie members  
Who one day will bring their grandchildren to show “See? I was a different soldier  
in a different war”

I join-----the pride we take in the Hokie family  
The Class of Twenty Twenty has been gracious and brave

I join-----all of us all over the globe who applaud their sacrifice

I join-----the sun shining for your warmth and the rain for quenching your thirst  
Spring will come and winter will be embraced

I join-----all people of goodwill wishing you congratulations



*Phil Gervais*