

Good Evening,

My name is Bobby Richardson and I am a 2016 graduate from Rutland High School. First off, I would like to thank God for letting me see another day, being able to enjoy this moment with my family and friends, and most of all I thank God for being the king above all! When I first started Camp Zion, I was this short, big head kid who always wanted to play basketball with the big boys and loved to play the drums.

I remember the times I would walk up to Dj and ask, "If could I play with them?" He would always tell me, "NO"! He didn't want me to get hurt.

I will cherish the memories of walking into the gym and seeing all the people I grew up with such as: Jarred, CeCe, Robyn and many more that has been there with me from the start. Camp Zion has been the best of times and the worst of times, but it has been amazing. I love everything about this camp, from gym, to breakfast, to step class with Ms. Kiera, to abstinence with Mr. Harvey and Ms. Shawanda, to meeting new people every year and trying to spread the joy and love that Pastor Parker would want all over.

Through Camp Zion, I was able to experience things that I don't think I would have experience anywhere else, I found my best friends here, got on my first roller coaster and boat ride here, learned how stressful it was to make a music video, how to manage my money, traveled to different cities and states within the U.S., and I found some awesome people that mean the absolute world to me! I want to thank you all for making my camp experience so memorable and spontaneous. To my mom, thank you for never giving up on me and standing beside me through all the hard times. You are a strong black queen and I'm blessed to have you in my life. I love you so much. I want to thank Mrs. Keisa for giving me this opportunity to come to camp each and every year to show off my personality and intellectual skills. I will continue to strive to be the best young man I can be. I want to thank Mr. Harvey and Ms. Shawanda for embracing me as one their own. You guys have taught me so much and you all allowed me to be myself when nobody else would and I greatly appreciate it. Last but not least - I want thank Camp Zion for putting up with me for 12 long years.

Being here I have develop a new family and I wouldn't trade it for anything. Tonight, my camp experience comes to an end, but my new journey begins on August 4th at Savannah State University and I will be majoring in Mass Communications. I want to end this speech with these words of encouragement to my fellow Zioners: "Don't ever let anyone tell you different, don't ever doubt yourself and keep your dreams alive."

I love you all and goodnight!