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

Mark Ferraiuolo