

Good morning,

My name is Annie Manganaro and I am speaking on behalf of my cohort of student registered nurse anesthetists at the University of Iowa. With the guidance of our professor, Kathy Andersen, the resources provided by the university, and most importantly your family members our donors, we were fortunate to have an immense learning experience that was second to none. It is an incredible honor, to stand here before you all to give our thanks and our respects to you and your family members for their donation.

On our first day of class last May, our cohort walked into the lab ..quiet and nervous as we met our assigned donors for the first time. Our professor Kathy gathered us around and introduced us to them, discussing their ages and the cause of their passing. With a quiver of pride and protection in her voice, Kathy told us that the lab was her church, and that the donors were better teachers than she could ever be. For anyone who knows how incredible of a teacher Kathy is, that is very high praise. But she is absolutely right. The donors taught us the complexities of the human anatomy that no textbook, diagram, or video could ever teach. From the smallest nerve rootlets to the largest blood vessels in the body we were guided through our semester with hands on experience that was the highlight of our weeks and the kickstart to our careers.

Starting the semester as strangers, our cohort grew stronger and bonded over conversations as we stood with our donors over the 12 weeks. Lab sessions were filled with continuous learning, excitement, and pride as we would show off to our fellow classmates the unique discoveries we found in our donors. When we made these discoveries, I believe it is possible we were able to see glimpses of the beautiful lives they lived...the stories that made

them who they are...and the challenges they may have faced. Strong layers of muscle suggested to us that they lived an active life. Strong hands showed us years of hard work and sacrifice. Mature organ systems, including the liver, hinted to us that our donors lived a full life..filled with cheers to family members celebrating the good times. These were all things we were able to discern throughout the weeks from our teachers, the donors. As a spiritual person, I truly believe they were with us through all these moments and guided our learning. As I said my final goodbye during our lab practical of our final exam, I remember feeling a sense of sadness saying the goodbye. Your family members were truly such an important part of our semester, and I can speak for all of us that we are so grateful for their donation.

Prior to the start of our program, we were all intensive care nurses who have experienced the delicate line between life and death. We were there for the moments when families had to say goodbye to their loved ones, held a hand for the last time, and witnessed last breaths. No matter how often we experienced these moments, they never got any easier. But as sad and as numbing as death is, there are moments of peace and respect that are really beautiful. The University of Iowa's Deeded Body Program is a perfect example of this. Standing here today to celebrate the lives of your family members and give thanks to them is truly beautiful and it is an incredible honor to be a part of.

What we learned from our donors is never ending. The knowledge base we gained will succeed far past the 12 weeks of our course. My colleagues in healthcare that are standing here today can all agree that we will take what we learned with us for the rest of our careers and our future patients will benefit.

.....May your family members rest in peace; Their selfless gift to education and to healthcare will rest in our hearts forever. Thank you.