

Dear Sir and Ma'am,

The years have flown by and I cannot believe I am done with college and heading off across the country to continue my career. The reality of going so far away from home had not hit me until now. Admittedly, I am a bit nervous about leaving my friends and family for a new place three thousand miles away. It will be strange to not be able to stop by and see you every now and then. However, I feel as though you have been preparing me for this all the years I was in your studio. Under your tutelage, I learned how to face new challenges with confidence in my abilities and determination to accomplish all my goals. My dream of getting my PhD is slowly becoming somewhat of a reality, and if I had not gotten my strong foundations as a person from you, I do not know if I would have made it this far. You have had such an influence over my life, even when I was no longer an active student at the studio. You still continued to encourage me and help me do whatever needed to be done to excel in college. You have always been my second set of parents, and though I did not come home as often as I would have liked to, you always welcomed me with open arms and a concerned word of advice. You gave me another family, which was just as close as my biological family, and it saddens me deeply to have to move away from it completely. I know I am not moving away forever, nor will I fail to visit, but that does not make the prolonged separation much easier. Thankfully, you have given me the ability to courageously face my fears, even in a city like Philadelphia. The University of Pennsylvania is an amazing opportunity and I am so grateful to be able to be able to study there. I couldn't have done it without you.

I could say so much, reminisce about all the fond memories I have of growing up in the martial arts and all the amazing experiences I was fortunate enough to have, but I think instead I will go with a simple thank you. You touch so many people in the community with what you do, and for that, you should be greatly commended. You have given so many people piece of mind as to their physical well-being, but more importantly, you have given both adults and children the gift of self-worth and acceptance. I know this, for that is what you have given me. I am secure and confident in the person that I am because of your training and sense of discipline. These qualities will definitely be put to the test in graduate school, and in adult life in general, but I know I can handle whatever life should throw my way. You taught me that I can blame no one but myself for my problems, but also that I am also the best solution against any adversity. Thank you for your patience, your endless generosity, and your extensive compassion. You are truly a couple of great character. I strive every day to be the kind of person you would be proud to call one of your students. Your respect means so much more to me than any kind of transitory accolades. I hope I can continue to earn it as I become a full-fledged adult. May God bless you as you continue to be the inspiring, incredible people you have always been. I truly love you all and will think about you every day as I do my best to continue to make you proud. I may be leaving the state, but you will never leave a special place in my heart. I will send email updates to stay in touch and should be stopping by around Christmas time. Tang Soo!

Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lexy Stanley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Love,".