



Office of the President

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To the Stevens Community:

As you know, last month I [appointed a Task Force](#) to fully understand the planning, execution, operational and decision-making failures that led to the chaotic events that occurred at the May 2023 Commencement ceremonies and to make recommendations for the future. The Task Force sought to answer three questions:

1. What was wrong with the planning of Commencement 2023?
2. What went wrong with the execution of the plan?
3. What are the key lessons learned and recommendations?

The Task Force worked tirelessly and on an accelerated schedule to produce a thoughtful and thorough analysis of the planning and execution of Commencement and has identified specific recommendations to ensure that all future events operate in a manner consistent with our institutional priority of “Excellence in All We Do.” The report is [posted](#) for review by our community.

I am deeply appreciative of the Task Force’s hard work and diligence and immensely grateful to all who cooperated in their work. I particularly want to recognize and thank Mr. David Fernandez, Chief Risk Officer, who chaired the Task Force. The important document the Task Force produced will guide the planning for Commencement 2024 and beyond. You will hear more in the coming weeks and months about the structure and planning process for our next Commencement.

We are embarrassed by the way in which Commencement 2023—in particular, the ceremonies held at Newark Symphony Hall—unfolded, causing anger, frustration and disappointment by many members of our graduating class and their families. We will learn from our mistakes. We commit to doing better, and we will work hard to rebuild the trust and confidence of the Class of 2023.

Per aspera ad astra,

Nariman Farvardin
President