



Office of the President

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President Nariman Farvardin
154th Commencement Address
Undergraduate Ceremony
May 20, 2026

Class of 2026, today is your day, and it is a great one. So, to start, I offer you my sincere and heartfelt congratulations.

I want to begin with a simple observation. You are graduating into one of the most consequential moments in modern history. Our nation is marking its 250th anniversary. Artificial intelligence is reshaping every field you will enter. And the world is asking, with real urgency, who is prepared to lead through this transformation.

My answer is: You are.

I say that for two reasons. First, because of where you studied. Stevens was founded in 1870 by America's First Family of Inventors on a single conviction — that rigorous thinking and practical invention can improve lives and change the world. That conviction is in Stevens' DNA, and it is now in yours.

Second, because of when you studied. You did not read about the AI revolution in a textbook. You lived it. You learned to work alongside these tools, to understand what they can do and what they cannot, and to apply your own judgment where machines fall short. That is a rare and valuable combination — and it is exactly what this moment demands.

I want to say a word about the future you are entering, because I know it has been the subject of many headlines and many anxious conversations. There is real concern about the role of artificial intelligence in shaping the careers of your generation. I would offer you a different perspective. AI will indeed transform work that is physically or cognitively simple or repetitive. But the work of solving complex problems, of bringing technical excellence and human wisdom



to bear on the challenges that matter most — that work is not diminishing. It is expanding. And you have been prepared, at Stevens, to do precisely that work.

As you embark on this next chapter, I encourage you to embrace innovation not merely as a concept, but as a mindset. Innovation is about challenging the status quo, pushing boundaries and seeing possibilities where others see limitations. The world has more problems than it has problem-solvers, and Stevens has spent the last four years preparing you to close that gap.

Before I close, a word to the families and friends in this audience. Today is your achievement, too. Thank you for everything you have done to help these graduates reach this moment and congratulations to all of you for reaching this happy moment.

Class of 2026, you are joining a network of nearly 60,000 Stevens alumni worldwide. Lean on them. Give back to them. And no matter where life takes you, you will always be part of the Stevens family.

The next 250 years of American innovation belong to you.

Congratulations!