



**STEVENS**  
INSTITUTE of TECHNOLOGY  
THE INNOVATION UNIVERSITY

**President Nariman Farvardin  
145th Commencement Address  
May 24, 2017**

Class of 2017: Today, you become graduates of Stevens Institute of Technology, the Innovation University.

As you embark upon the next phase of your lives and your careers, you will build upon the distinguished legacy of our founders, the Stevens family, and of many prior generations of Stevens graduates over nearly 150 years. Their achievements have benefited individuals and society and have transformed the lives and work of millions of people worldwide. Their examples illuminate your journey as newly-minted Stevens alumni.

You will follow in the footsteps of Stevens graduates such as Alexander Calder, who invented a brand new art form called the mobile, and Mark Crispin, inventor of the IMAP protocol, which made email accessible and efficient for users worldwide.

Former NASA Administrator Aaron Cohen, under whose leadership humans were first able to explore the surface of the moon and Betsy Bailey, who played an instrumental role in deregulating the airline industry, are examples of Stevens graduates whose careers have had far-reaching impact.

Graduates such as Nate Davis, former CEO of XM Satellite Radio and Sang Beom Han, president and CEO of LG Display, as well as alumni and current Trustees Lawrence Babbio, and Chairman of the Board Virginia Ruesterholz, who held executive leadership positions in telecom giant Verizon ... these are but a few examples that demonstrate the widespread and profound impact Stevens alumni have made in diverse fields and in far-flung countries across the globe. Their education prepared them to pursue extraordinary career success and also to achieve personal success. Like them, you will become leaders, innovators, and catalysts for change.

You will go on to make an impact in fields ranging from computer science and cybersecurity, to medicine and healthcare, to finance, transportation, energy, telecommunications, media and entertainment, education, and more. During your careers, you will work on innovations that will be as transformative to future generations as the Internet, cloud computing, and big data have been in the recent past.

One can imagine the impact of innovations such as driverless cars, routine commercial space travel, 3D printed organs, brain-computer linkages, and the many yet-to-be created innovations that will constitute the next chapters in the story of the human race. And you will be the authors of that story.

As you progress in your career and in your lives, you will look back on your time at Stevens and realize that your education has prepared you with some unique and distinctive capabilities that

define you as Stevens graduates and that differentiate you from the many thousands of students celebrating Commencement this year:

Number 1: During your education, you have been immersed in technology in virtually all aspects of your classes. Whether you are a computer science major, a mechanical engineer, or a music and technology major, your deep exposure to technology gives you a perspective and an expertise that sets you apart from graduates of other universities. We all must acknowledge that technology is an integral and pervasive aspect of our present and our future, and its advancement will undoubtedly create challenges and opportunities. As graduates of Stevens Institute of Technology, you will be well-prepared to thrive in such an environment.

Number 2: Your work ethic. Would any of you graduating today say that you got through Stevens without working incredibly hard? This is an important differentiator that you probably didn't appreciate while at Stevens, but it, too, will set you apart in your career.

Number 3: Your focus on solving problems, and on innovation and entrepreneurship. We know that companies large and small value most those employees who can frame problems, identify solutions, think creatively, work with diverse colleagues and stakeholders, and be innovative and entrepreneurial. Your education has prepared you well with these skills.

As you enter the next phase of your lives, you will observe that our world will continue to undergo profound transformation as a result of technological innovation. With your Stevens education, and the personal, social, and professional experiences you have gained, you can be confident that you will be well-prepared to interpret and take advantage of emerging opportunities, to identify and solve complex problems, and to be the next generation of pioneers, technology innovators and global citizens that our world needs.

As you bring your innovative spirit and energy to your chosen profession, I want to remind you of your great responsibility to innovate yourself, too. Continue to seek opportunities to learn and to build upon the knowledge and skills you have gained at Stevens. Be a responsible citizen and an active and engaged member of your community. Lead honorably and inspire others to work hard and do good.

And finally, don't forget that while we expect you to move forward at full speed, we hope that you will always remember to reach back. You are a lifelong member of the Stevens family, and we hope that you will always call Stevens home.

Congratulations, Class of 2017!