



Office of the President

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President Nariman Farvardin
151st Commencement Address
Undergraduate and Graduate Ceremonies
May 24, 2023

Let me take this opportunity to welcome this magnificent gathering of proud parents and families, friends, supporters, faculty, colleagues, members of the Board of Trustees, Old Guard alumni, and Governor Murphy, our distinguished honoree to today's ceremony. This is our largest graduating class in Stevens' history—2,300 students will receive bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees today, and there are more than 13,000 of us who are here to celebrate them.

I want to start by recognizing and thanking the parents and families of our graduates who have, themselves, sacrificed and supported these students throughout their academic career and through all the ups and downs along the way. I see that you are beaming with pride, and I'd like to ask the parents and family members to please rise for all of us to give them a huge round of applause.

And now, I address you, the Class of 2023: It gives me enormous pride to stand here before you today in celebration of all that you have accomplished during your time at Stevens.

Now comes the next phase of your journey, the next chapter in your book, and with this comes even more responsibility. Whether you planned for it or not, armed with your experience and education, you are a leader of your generation. And the world needs your leadership now more than ever, whether as a high-ranking officer of a corporation, whether you go on to start your own venture, whether you one day decide to run for elected office (and perhaps follow in the footsteps of our esteemed honoree, Governor Murphy) or simply as an educated and informed citizen of your community.

I know you thought you were done with classes, but if your time at Stevens taught you anything, it's that learning is a lifelong commitment, so let me offer you a final lesson before you head out into the world. I will share five key leadership lessons that will help you grow into a leader throughout your career.

First, good leaders know the importance of communication. Communication is exceedingly important, in business and in life. Use your skills of communication to energize, to motivate, to bring people on board. And communicate to inspire people to take action.

Second, effective leaders earn the trust of colleagues and their community by being honest and forthright. Always adhere to the highest standards of integrity and deliver on your promises.

Third — and because you have made it through your Stevens education to today, I know you are familiar with this one — good leaders must work exceedingly hard and always strive for excellence. Pay attention to details, be relentless and continue to hone the work ethic you developed here.

Fourth, leaders must demonstrate courage because, from time to time, you will be called upon to make difficult decisions. Have the courage to step outside of your comfort zone when needed. A true leader rises to the occasion to make difficult but necessary decisions for the good of the organization.

And fifth, be selfless and humble. Let your priority be the organization or your community. This approach generates trust, camaraderie and support, all necessary for leaders to bring people together and move forward.

If you follow these five leadership principles, I am confident that—along with the rigorous education you have experienced, the life lessons you have gained and the network of Stevens alumni of which you are now a part—great success will follow.

Finally, to Class of 2023, thank you for everything you have done for Stevens. You are the future. Our state, our country and our world need you now more than ever to solve problems facing our society, to create new opportunities, imagine new possibilities and to act as ethical and responsible citizens.

There will always be a place for you as part of the Stevens family, and we hope you will stay in close touch and become engaged and enthusiastic ambassadors for your alma mater.

I wish you strength, resolve and old-fashioned good luck as you make your mark on the world.

And finally, let us congratulate the graduates of each of our schools—bachelor's, master's, and new Ph.D. graduates.

Will the graduates of the College of Arts and Letters please rise to be recognized?

Will the graduates of the School of Systems and Enterprises please rise to be recognized?

Will the graduates of the School of Business please rise to be recognized?

And will the graduates of the Schaefer School of Engineering and Science please rise to be recognized?

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!