



Office of the President

1 Castle Point Terrace
Hoboken, NJ 07030
stevens.edu

September 1, 2023

To Faculty, Staff and Students:

As the sun sets on summer and we begin a new academic year, I extend a warm welcome to new and returning students, new faculty and all my colleagues on this first day of the Fall 2023 semester. Whether you are beginning your Stevens journey or returning to our beautiful campus, your unique experiences and contributions will surely enrich our shared community.

The Fall semester unofficially began with a series of highly coordinated, celebratory, fun and informational events to [welcome new and returning students back to campus](#).

Led by the Division of Student Affairs with many faculty, staff and student volunteers contributing, these events included:

- New Undergraduate Student Orientation, with seven different pre-orientation programs, 53 peer leaders, 101 events and activities and new orientation programs for international and transfer students
- New Graduate Student Orientation, staffed by 42 peer leaders, running 16 orientation events and activities and conducting 212 airport pickups for arriving international students
- “Unpack the Quack” Move-In Days, supported by 436 staff, faculty, students and alumni, including 175 faculty and staff, 13 alumni, 68 resident assistants, 53 peer leaders and more than 100 student volunteers. Twenty-seven student affairs and campus operations staff meticulously planned, organized and executed this series of events, successfully moving in 1,984 students to their campus residence halls

It fills me with pride to see the selfless collaboration and boundless spirit of generosity of this community. My special thanks go to all who contributed to this event, particularly to the Student Affairs, Campus Police and Facilities and Campus Operations teams.

We hope students will carry this warm welcome with them as they begin classes today, September 1, and will join us for new student Convocation on September 6.



Much has happened at Stevens since we were all together at the end of the Spring semester. I am delighted to share a few statistics and highlights of recent progress:

Undergraduate and Graduate Student Enrollment

This week marked the official induction of the Class of 2027 into the Stevens community. This incoming cohort of undergraduate students is remarkable in many ways: Members of the Class of 2027 were chosen from a record-breaking pool of 14,170 applications — 13% larger than last year. This class is also among the most academically distinguished in our history and includes a record number of international students — 58% greater than last year — from 25 different countries. In total, we welcomed 1,085 new undergraduates, an intentionally modest increase over last year to ensure tight alignment of our overall enrollment with our campus infrastructure, while improving admissions selectivity and making progress on other enrollment goals. With this new class, the number of new and continuing undergraduates reached 4,094 for Fall 2023, consistent with our Strategic Plan goals. I offer heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to the Offices of Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid as well as all the collaborating offices and dedicated faculty who contributed to these achievements.

Similarly, a new cohort of graduate students joined our ranks, selected from a pool of 15,593 applicants, marking a new record that is 5% higher than last year. We also significantly improved our graduate admissions selectivity, welcoming 1,719 new graduate students this autumn. Total graduate enrollment currently stands at 4,821, including 85 new Ph.D. students. These numbers are as of August 31 and may increase in the coming days.

The Graduate Admissions Office, the faculty and the Division of University Relations have worked together effectively and seamlessly to broaden outreach and recruit an impressive new cohort of graduate students. My thanks go to all involved!

Student Experience

In an effort to further improve our students' experience during their Stevens years, we are piloting the First Year Experience Course, a full semester introductory course that provides support and encouragement as new undergraduates make their personal and academic transitions into our university community. This course presents an opportunity for dialogue and discussion among peers, faculty and staff in a small-group setting as students learn about themselves in the context of the Stevens experience. Students will learn essential skills for success in college, including leadership skills, cultural competence, ethical decision-making,



academic and career development skills, personal wellness and the use and optimization of our many campus resources.

Student well-being and safety remains our highest priority at Stevens. We continue to enhance our mental health resources for students and staff responders through the newly established Duck Support Network of trained students, staff and faculty in Mental Health First Aid. We have significantly expanded point-of-care testing available in Student Health Services and have added staff in all wellness offices to better meet increased student demand. The State of New Jersey has also generously provided free teletherapy to all New Jersey college students through [Uwill](#).

In addition, five new [Living-Learning Communities \(LLCs\)](#), residential communities that connect students with faculty and staff around a common theme, launched this semester. In addition to the three LLCs established last fall, the new themes that launched this semester include: Scholars House; the Arts; Service and Leadership; What's Next? (a second-year experience); and Stevens' Chefs.

Thirty new faculty members have joined the Stevens community this fall, bringing our total full-time faculty count to 334, a new high. Of this new cohort of faculty, 22 are tenured/tenure-track faculty and eight are non-tenure stream faculty. I had the pleasure of meeting our new colleagues recently, and I eagerly anticipate the contributions they will make to our community in the years to come.

Research Awards

Stevens has set another new record for externally sponsored research funding. Research awards totaled \$76.6 million in FY23, up from a record \$60.4 million in FY22. Furthermore, FY24 research awards are off to a strong start with over \$17 million in funding received thus far.

In July, we announced that [Stevens secured \\$960,000 in federal funding](#) to enhance our computing infrastructure, particularly in areas like artificial intelligence, flood prediction and fintech. This financial support, championed by former New Jersey U.S. Rep. Albio Sires (NJ-8) and U.S. Sens. Robert Menendez and Cory Booker, will directly benefit both the Stevens Flood Advisory System (SFAS) and our high-performance computing cluster (HPCC). Additionally, during the same month, the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education awarded Stevens a \$3.5 million New Jersey Higher Education Capital Facilities Grant, which will be allocated to further bolster the HPCC. With combined federal funding and state support, Stevens



is strategically positioned to upgrade our entire HPCC system, amplifying our experiential learning capabilities and advancing our expanding research impact.

Alumni Engagement and Fundraising

We recently launched several new initiatives to help advance our Strategic Plan goals related to alumni engagement. More than 2,000 members joined [StevensConnects](#), a career engagement networking tool for alumni and students, in its first six months. Alumni can provide students with career advice and connections through the StevensConnects platform, laying the groundwork for a formal mentoring program that will begin later this year. Alumni engagement opportunities also grew in FY23: New Industry Torchbearers networks were established for alumni working in the IT, construction and civil engineering, and healthcare fields, and regional alumni clubs were added in Dallas/Oklahoma City, Boston and Philadelphia.

At the close of FY23, gifts and pledges to Stevens totaled \$18.3 million, an increase over FY22. This philanthropy enables much needed support for students, faculty and programs, and includes significant gifts to endow professorships and scholarships and to name the new tennis courts at the University Center Complex. The Stevens community also rallied around two major fundraising initiatives, the All Rise Challenge in support of Stevens Athletics and the Stevens Day of Giving, both of which exceeded their goals.

Athletics Success

The Stevens Ducks will begin the Fall 2023 season coming off another successful year, earning 18th place in the NCAA Learfield Director's Cup of all 437 Division III institutions. Highlights from the last year include:

- 1 national champion: Men's Volleyball
- 2 national top 10 finishes: Men's Soccer (3rd) and Wrestling (7th)
- 10 team conference championships
- 12 NCAA appearances
- 11 All-Americans (not counting honorable mentions)
- 6 College Sports Communicators Academic All-Americans
- A Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) Woman of the Year: Laura Mathews
- A Region IV DIIIICA Student-Athlete of the Year: Hunter Gutierrez
- An Elite 90 Award (for highest GPA at the Men's Volleyball Championship): Brandon Rogers
- 3 NCAA events hosted in Hoboken (selected as hosts by the NCAA)



We all look forward to cheering on the Ducks' success this fall!

Facilities and Campus Operations

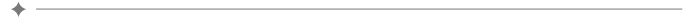
Significant campus improvements were made over the past year to enrich the experience for everyone at Stevens. This includes the addition of two classrooms, two labs and 25 faculty offices to accommodate our growing community. Other improvements include the construction of new bathrooms in Palmer Hall, the installation of fresh turf on DeBaun Field, the upgrade of study areas in the Babbio Center and the introduction of new furniture in 19 classrooms. In addition, upgrades were made to the University Center's seating, ADA signage across campus was added and the Campus Police Dispatch Center was relocated to the Kidde Building for improved security. Our commitment to sustainability is demonstrated through projects like the replacement of the Rocco building's roof and HVAC system, roof upgrades on the Burchard Building and the ongoing overhaul of McLean Hall's HVAC system and LED lighting. The introduction of Stevens Commute, our new parking management system, provides a more automated and user-friendly campus parking experience.

The Division of Information Technology worked over the summer to launch digital toolkits for faculty, students and staff to enhance students' academic journey and safeguard our digital landscape through the "Protect Stevens" program. In collaboration with Campus Operations, IT set up 13 new hybrid classrooms and improved IT processes for better classroom technical support. The division also launched a laptop purchase program and upgraded Wi-Fi connectivity with an additional distribution point on campus for redundancy. Additionally, IT launched three major initiatives: Research Computing Service, including planning for the new HPCC utilizing the grants mentioned earlier; Enterprise Data and Analytics; and Zooming Ahead: The Campus Phone System Upgrade. These technology enhancements will create a more seamless digital experience for the Stevens community.

I am grateful to the Division of Facilities and Campus Operations and to the Division of Information Technology for their dedicated efforts in shaping a more beautiful, sustainable and efficient campus environment.

Rankings and Recognition

Stevens continues to be recognized as one of the nation's best institutions for undergraduates in [The Princeton Review's annual college guide, The Best 389 Colleges: 2024 Edition](#). Only about 15% of America's 2,700 four-year colleges are included in the listing, which was announced two



weeks ago. In addition, over the summer, [Money magazine announced a new college ranking system](#) that awarded Stevens 4.5 out of 5 stars and named the university among America's best.

Late last semester, [U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate School Rankings](#) placed several Stevens programs in the Top 100 — and one in the Top 50 — nationally. Notably, the Stevens School of Business rose 24 spots to No. 53 Best Graduate Business School in the nation and No. 2 in New Jersey. The School of Systems and Enterprises jumped six spots to No. 41 in the nation, while four graduate engineering programs in the Schaefer School of Engineering and Science ranked in the Top 100: Biomedical, No. 79 (up from No. 82); Chemical, No. 84 (up from No. 97), Computer, No. 71 (up from No. 79) and Environmental, No. 77 (up from No. 81).

Our faculty and colleagues have distinguished themselves as thought leaders in a variety of prestigious media outlets, from *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, to CNN, *Forbes*, *Scientific American* and *The Times of India*, on topics ranging from AI to Oppenheimer to helping students transition to college. Overall, [placements in prestigious media](#) increased 32% in FY23 over FY22, while engagement in institutional social media channels increased 261% over the same period and website pageviews increased 117% since launching in November 2022.

Lastly, I am honored to have recently received the [2023 Chief Executive HR Champion Award](#) from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR). This recognition aligns with our Great Place to Work Certification™, a testament to our dedicated faculty and staff who earned the notable recognition with their voices and excellent service. Both achievements are a tribute to the remarkable dedication and collaborative spirit of the entire Stevens community. I extend heartfelt gratitude to everyone for their contributions to this shared success and for their ongoing dedication to Stevens Institute of Technology.

In the Wake of the SCOTUS Decision

The recent Supreme Court of the United States decision regarding race-conscious admissions holds immense significance for tens of thousands of students, including many within the Stevens community. We understand the importance of creating a diverse and welcoming community in higher education and at Stevens, and we have reaffirmed this commitment not only in our current Strategic Plan but also in the wake of this significant decision. To learn more about the impact of this decision and access resources, I invite you to visit [our dedicated webpage](#).

As we embark on a new academic year, I encourage you to embrace the opportunities for growth, connection and exploration that this Fall semester offers. Our collective dedication to



excellence, innovation and collaboration is what sets Stevens apart, and I have no doubt that we will continue to make remarkable strides in the pursuit of knowledge and progress. I look forward to witnessing the positive impact we will undoubtedly create!

Per aspera ad astra,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "N. Farvardin".

Nariman Farvardin
President