



**STEVENS**  
INSTITUTE of TECHNOLOGY  
THE INNOVATION UNIVERSITY

**President Nariman Farvardin**  
**144th Commencement Address**  
**Graduate Ceremony**  
**May 25, 2016**

To the Stevens Graduate Class of 2016:

I am proud and privileged to address you on this momentous occasion—your graduation from one of the nation’s premier, technological universities.

Today, you will be joining the ranks of a distinguished and august group—alumni of Stevens Institute of Technology. Forty-thousand alumni across the globe represent Stevens Institute of Technology. You are joining such luminaries as the co-founder of General Motors Corporation, the inventor of Bubble Wrap packaging, the visionary behind Verizon Fios, the founder of the scientific management movement, the inventor of email protocols, the inventor of the mobile art form, a director of NASA and many, many more whose contributions have literally changed the world.

And that is what I expect from you—to change the world. You have the education. You have the tools. You have the work ethic. You have the drive. You also have the responsibility.

For it is people like you...problem-solvers, innovators, masters of technology grounded in a deep understanding of the world and its problems and opportunities...who need to step up, who need to create the future. Let me share a few statistics about you—the Class of 2016:

More than 1,500 of you will be receiving graduate certificates, master’s degrees, degrees of engineer or Ph.D. degrees today. You are a diverse group. You hail from the United States as well as 27 countries around the globe including Afghanistan, Brazil and China, to India, Israel, Togo and Viet Nam.

Your focus at Stevens has been wide ranging, from algebraic cryptography to prosthetic controls to fuel cells and much, much more. During your time at Stevens, you have developed intellectual property, you’ve presented at research conferences, and you’ve participated in some long-standing traditions, such as Chinese New Year, and developed some new ones, such as the Stevens Language Exchange Club.

And, your next steps will be just as diverse. Some of you will be joining the financial sector, at Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, and Morgan Stanley; or the consulting industry, at Deloitte, Ernst & Young, and PwC. Some of you will enter the tech sector, at companies like Google, Amazon, Verizon, and Facebook; and some will be joining some of the world’s leading employers of engineers, at companies such as ExxonMobil, Honeywell and Northrop Grumman. Yet others of you will be pursuing doctoral programs, at Yale, Johns Hopkins, St. Johns University and at Stevens.

Wherever you go, you will always have the Power of Stevens—this incredible network of alumni—with you.

I'd like to ask you to take a moment to start that networking process right now—Shake hands with those around you. Say hello. Wish the graduate next to you congratulations on his or her accomplishments. These people around you are your classmates, your friends, your soon-to-be fellow alumni, maybe your future colleagues and business partners. They are the movers and the shakers who will change the world.

As you leave here to take on the challenges that lie ahead, I ask that you remember the Stevens motto, *Per Aspera Ad Astra*, through adversity to the stars. In your career and in your life, you will, no doubt, encounter difficulty. You will face challenges. You will find yourself in situations where you are not sure of the correct path. At these times, think back to those challenges you overcame here at Stevens...those difficult problems, those demanding professors, those classes you struggled with. And now, look at where you are today. Think of the toolkit that helped you through those situations ... perseverance, hard work, help from friends and faculty, whatever it took to make it to today. You will rely on those same tools over and over again throughout your life.

As you embark on your next phase—whether it is a job, a company you have started, a research position, another degree, or something else entirely—I encourage you to embrace the challenges. Look for interesting problems to solve. Step outside your comfort zone. Find a support system. And, importantly, act with integrity.

This is my advice to you.

That, and one last thing.

Come back and visit us often. You will make us happy.

*Per aspera ad astra.*