



**President Nariman Farvardin  
148th Commencement Address  
Undergraduate and Graduate Ceremonies  
October 18, 2020**

Class of 2020, welcome to your Commencement ceremony. You have traveled a long and difficult journey to get to this point—and this is not the celebration we all imagined—but our virtual celebration does not diminish in any way, the immense pride we take in you, in your accomplishments, in your perseverance and grit, and in your contribution to our rich and diverse intellectual and scholarly community. Each of you has overcome numerous obstacles and the most unusual circumstances in recent memory—a global pandemic—to reach this moment.

Each of you has personified the Stevens motto, *Per Aspera Ad Astra*—through adversity to the stars.

And that is where I know your Stevens degree will take you—to the stars. Your opportunities are, quite literally, limitless.

At this point in history and perhaps more than ever before, the world needs the special breed of graduate that you have become—grounded in science and technology, analytical, entrepreneurial, collaborative, and, most of all, solution-oriented. Over 150 years, Stevens graduates have earned a reputation as leaders and problem-solvers. Today, you join the ranks of 50,000 Stevens alumni who have made their mark in the world. And now, it is your turn.

Graduates, my message to you is simply this: Don't be afraid of challenges. They are there to overcome. Don't complain about the world around us. Change it. Use the tools you have acquired over your years at Stevens to make the world a better place.

Congratulations on your magnificent accomplishments. Now, go and make us proud.