



18 MAY 2025 SILICON VALLEY

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This program is for ceremonial purposes only and is not to be considered an official confirmation of degree information. It contains only those details available at the publication deadline.

We ask those in attendance to kindly silence their electronic devices and to remain in their seats until the platform party has left the stage and the graduate recessional has finished.

#### A UNIVERSITY ENGAGED WITH THE WORLD

### THE HISTORY OF NORTHEASTERN

Founded in 1898, Northeastern is a global research university, the recognized leader in experiential learning, and renowned for its innovative approach to education. Yet it had humble beginnings.

At the end of the 19th century, immigrants and first-generation Americans constituted more than half of Boston's population. Chief among the city's institutions committed to helping those new to the country improve their lives was the Boston YMCA, where young men gathered to hear lectures on literature, history, music, and other subjects considered essential to intellectual growth.

In response to the enthusiastic demand for these lectures, the directors of the YMCA organized the "Evening Institute for Young Men" in May 1896. Frank Palmer Speare, a well-known teacher and high school principal with considerable experience in public schools, was hired as the institute's director. Two years later, under Speare's direction, the YMCA advertised the creation of the "Department of Law of the Boston YMCA," and on October 3, 1898, Robert Gray Dodge taught the first class. The program, an immediate success, marked the birth of Northeastern University. Speare would later remark, "We started with an eraser and two sticks of chalk."

When demand for other courses grew, Speare moved to add more programs, and in 1909 the full-time day colleges began instruction. That same year, the Evening Polytechnic School announced "cooperative engineering courses," in which students would have an opportunity to apply classroom knowledge in the workplace—the beginning of Northeastern's signature cooperative education program.

#### Decades of expansion

The school continued to grow, and in 1922 the College of Business was founded. More space was needed. The university purchased the former home of the Boston Red Sox in 1929, and in 1934 the Boston architectural firm Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbott was awarded the contract to design Richards Hall. Using what was to become the campus signature—white brick—Shepley, Bulfinch presented plans for a neoclassical building. Opened in 1938, Richards Hall was the first building to appear on the front quadrangle.

As the campus grew, so did Northeastern's programs. In 1935, the College of Liberal Arts was added, signaling that Northeastern was on its way to becoming a major university.

When Speare stepped down as president in 1940, he was replaced by Carl Stephens Ell, dean of the College of Engineering. It was under Ell's leadership that Northeastern first admitted women to full-time day programs.

In the postwar world, Northeastern, like its peer institutions, saw a phenomenal increase in the number of people attending college. The university expanded its programs to accommodate this growing population of increasingly diverse students. In rapid succession, additional programs and colleges were established: College of Education, 1953; University

College, 1960; College of Pharmacy, 1962; College of Nursing, 1964; Boston Bouvé College, 1964; College of Criminal Justice, 1967; and College of Computer Science, 1982.

This expansion of programs brought with it a need for more buildings—and land. When Ell retired as president in 1959, he was succeeded by Asa S. Knowles. Under his leadership, suburban properties in Weston, Nahant, and Burlington were acquired. The Boston campus blossomed with new buildings, including various undergraduate dormitories designed to accommodate the increasing number of residential students at what had been primarily a commuter campus.

#### Transforming the Boston campus

When Knowles retired in 1975, he was succeeded by Kenneth G. Ryder, who had begun his career at Northeastern as a member of the history department and had risen through the ranks to become executive vice president before his election as president. Under his leadership, the university expanded and enriched its programs, particularly in the arts and humanities, and continued to improve its facilities. Plans for Snell Library were finalized during Ryder's tenure, and the campus was beautified. During these years, Northeastern also deepened its commitment to Boston and its neighborhoods.

In 1989, Ryder stepped down as the fourth president of the university. He was succeeded by John A. Curry, Northeastern's executive vice president and its first alumnus to become president. With President Curry in charge, the university embarked on a series of ambitious undertakings, including a new science and engineering research center, a state-of-the-art classroom building, a recreation complex, and several new graduate and undergraduate programs.

To support these new ventures, Curry led Northeastern in a successful fundraising campaign. His years of leadership also featured significant restructuring as the university prepared to enter its second century. In June 1996, after four decades of service, Curry retired from Northeastern. To succeed him, the trustees elected Richard M. Freeland as the university's sixth president.

#### Elevating experience

A distinguished historian and administrator, President Freeland brought to the university a renewed sense of energy and mission. His programs were designed to support his vision of Northeastern as a university that would be student-centered, practice-oriented, and urban. Northeastern developed the West Campus with architecturally acclaimed residence halls and teaching facilities for the health sciences and computer science and added new spaces to enrich student life on campus.

When Freeland stepped down in 2006, he was succeeded by Joseph E. Aoun, an internationally known linguistics scholar. Northeastern's seventh president came from the University of Southern California, where he served as dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences. President Aoun developed an academic plan outlining the university's vision in several areas: experiential learning, global outreach, use-inspired research, urban engagement, and intellectual life. He greatly expanded global co-op opportunities. He also aligned the university's research with three worldwide imperatives—health, security, and sustainability—with a focus on interdisciplinary solutions.

#### A rising global profile

Under Aoun's leadership, Northeastern launched a system of campuses designed to be platforms for lifelong learning aligned with area economies. The first two opened in Charlotte, North Carolina (2011), and Seattle (2013). Additional campuses followed in Silicon Valley, California (2015), and in Toronto (2016).

In 2016, Aoun led the development of a new academic plan, *Northeastern 2025*. The plan was a blueprint for transforming the university into a global university system—featuring networks of learners and innovators—designed to empower people to succeed in this era of unprecedented technological change. Accordingly, the university expanded the role of its global campuses to serve as platforms for learning, research, and industry partnerships. In 2019, it opened another location in Vancouver and acquired New College of the Humanities in London, now officially Northeastern University London and offering undergraduates a unique opportunity to earn a dual U.S./U.K. degree. Later in 2019, Northeastern launched a research campus in Arlington, Virginia, an addition to two existing research campuses in Nahant and Burlington, Massachusetts (formed in 1967 and 2012 respectively).

Then in January 2020, technology entrepreneur David Roux and his wife, Barbara, made an investment in the university to open the Roux Institute in Portland, Maine. The institute focuses on graduate studies and research in fields such as AI, digital engineering, and advanced life sciences, amplified by industry partnerships. It was specifically designed to be a model of how higher education can ignite economic development in regions of the country largely bypassed by the innovation economy, setting a new bar for what the global university system could achieve.

#### Resilience and momentum

The same revolutionary vision for global learning and discovery that inspired *Northeastern* 2025 infuses the university's latest academic plan, *Experience Unleashed*. The plan is designed to deepen the impact of Northeastern's global network by maximizing the power of experience to understand and solve the world's interconnected, ever-evolving challenges.

In 2022, the university took a significant step in realizing the potential for its global system by merging with Mills College in Oakland, California, becoming the first university with comprehensive residential campuses for undergraduate and graduate students on both U.S. coasts. In 2023, Northeastern opened a campus in Miami, with graduate education and innovation partnerships aligned with South Florida's economic growth. The following year, the university announced the addition of a campus in New York City through a merger with Marymount Manhattan College.

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our university community, Frank Palmer Speare's "eraser and two sticks of chalk" have evolved into one of the world's most innovative universities. Our faculty collaborates more fluidly with experts across industry, government, and community-based organizations. Ideas and solutions can be scaled. And our students are empowered to be true global citizens, scientists, entrepreneurs, and creators—prepared to make an impact wherever they go.

### **PROGRAM**

#### Processional

Candidates for Master's Degrees

Faculty

Platform Party led by the Commencement Marshal Ilmi Yoon

Teaching Professor and Director of Computing Programs, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

#### National Anthem

Marshal Ilmi Yoon

Teaching Professor and Director of Computing Programs, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

#### Welcome

Dawn Girardelli

Associate Dean, Bay Area Regional Campuses

## Introduction of Student Commencement Speaker

Karen Pryor

Director of Student Services, Silicon Valley Campus

## Student Commencement Speaker

Purvish Thakkar, '25

#### Laurel and Scroll 100 Award Presentation

Waleed Meleis

Vice Provost, Graduate Education

### Introduction of Commencement Keynote Speaker

Caroline Simard

Regional Dean, Bay Area Regional Campuses

#### Commencement Address

Rama Akkiraju

#### Citation Presentation

Waleed Meleis

Vice Provost, Graduate Education

Mary Ludden

Senior Vice President, Global Network and Strategic Initiatives

### Degrees in Course

Caroline Simard

Regional Dean, Bay Area Regional Campuses

College of Engineering represented by Stefano Basagni, Associate Dean, Global Engineering Campus

**Khoury College of Computer Sciences** represented by Alan Mislove, *Professor and Senior Associate Dean* 

**College of Professional Studies** represented by Uwe Hohgrawe, *Professor and Associate Dean, CPS* 

### Degree Conferral

Waleed Meleis

Vice Provost, Graduate Education

### Honoring of Graduates

Dawn Girardelli

Associate Dean, Bay Area Regional Campuses

### Introduction of Alumni Representative

**Uwe Hohgrawe** 

Professor and Associate Dean, College of Professional Studies

### Alumna Greeting and Video

Isha Thakkar, '24

### Class Charge

Caroline Simard

Regional Dean, Bay Area Regional Campuses

#### Recessional

Led by Marshal Ilmi Yoon, Teaching Professor and Director of Computing Programs, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

Platform Party

Faculty

Graduates

### COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Commencement Speaker Rama Akkiraju

A visionary and pragmatic leader, Rama Akkiraju has been at the forefront of advancing, scaling, and integrating AI and machine learning into real-world systems. With a rare combination of technical expertise and strategic insight, she has shaped the evolution of these fields through groundbreaking research, cross-functional leadership, and a deep commitment to translating complex technologies into impactful solutions.

As vice president of AI and automation at NVIDIA, Akkiraju leads the application of futuristic technologies that enhance the analytic power of large businesses and improve the management of critical processes like customer service and supply chain. From building decision support systems to creating chatbots that can answer employee questions about childcare, she has been instrumental in harnessing high-performance computing chips in ways that are changing not only how companies function, but how people access services and experience the world.

Having served as a leader at IBM for more than 20 years, Akkiraju earned recognition as an IBM Fellow and Master Inventor. Overseeing a team of more than 600 engineers, she established the technical vision for the Watson AI Operations product, an intelligent system that dramatically improved how IT incidents are detected, resolved, and prevented. Earlier, Akkiraju led the creation of a body of innovative, cloud-based AI services that allowed companies to interpret emotional tone, personality traits, and sentiment—transforming decision-making across sectors including retail, HR, entertainment, and public relations.

A gifted communicator, she is able to simplify complex science in ways that make it accessible despite the enormity of the task. As Akkiraju explained to one audience: For engineers, building generative AI applications for enterprise can feel like "solving a Rubik's cube, blindfolded, while riding a unicycle."

Generous with her time and talents, Akkiraju is widely recognized for her deep wealth of knowledge, inventiveness, and thought leadership. She is a highly sought-after presenter at industry and academic events, has co-authored more than 100 technical papers, and holds more than 50 patents, with 20 more pending. She leads the industrywide dialogue around creating guardrails for responsible AI use in enterprise settings. Further, she has been honored as an innovator in the fast-evolving AI field by Forbes, Fortune Magazine, and leading industry organizations.

Akkiraju holds an MBA from New York University, and an MS in computer science from Utah State University. She earned her bachelor's of technology from Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University in India.

### COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Master of Science, Cyber-Physical Systems

Saniya Athani Shital Dilip Dere

### Master of Science, Information Systems

Venkata Manoj Amara Yu Jen Lee Ingkar Bakytbek Dongyu Li Panchami Laxminarayan Baleri Xinyi Li Qiuchen Bian Yuexin Li Zhe Cao Tianyu Liu Jiamin Chen Ting-Hao Liu Jingyi Chen Zhiyang Liu Qian Chen Mu Lyu

Na Di Sukruth Keshavaram Mothakapally

Yi Ding Gauri Subhash Nerkar

Xintong Du Shatarupa Sarma

Amrita Dubey Jiaqi Shang Xinyue Gao Hongji Shi

Srushti Ghatage Jin Shi Yaning Guo Xian Shi Shuyao He Beilei Tan

Wanyu He Rishita Thota
Yanxiao He Chao Wang
Mei Yin Ho Jiahao Wang
Xinyi Hu Ning Wang

Luqing Huang Yan Wu

Yunlu Hu

Yang Jiang Decheng Xu Sachi Kothari Junzhe Xu Aishwarya Vijay Kulkarni Shiyun Yu Anusha Dheerendra Kulkarni Xinzhe Yuan

Divya Kulkarni Luna Yumiki

Xianchu Wen

Gan Zhang Chenru Zhao
Jinhong Zhang Jiading Zhou

Lu Zhang

## KHOURY COLLEGE OF COMPUTER SCIENCES

Master of Science, Data Science

Chin Yuen Au Jennifer Lee
Pratyaksh Bhalla Zhaojing Liu

Varun Guttikonda Harshika Santoshi

Yue Huang Qiushi Xia

Harshal Rajendra Jorwekar

### Master of Science, Computer Science

Songtao Bao Yushi Cui

Xingjian Bi Zhanshuo Dai

Edward Dunham Burke Han Deng

Irene Cai Vicki Analisa Diaz Rodas

Ninghui Cai Shivam Rajendrakumar Dixit

Kun Cao Lana Phuong Ngoc Do

Cen Chang Mengxiao Du
Chih-Yun Chang Muqing Fan
Yiren Chang JieHua Feng

Chuyang Chen Jing Feng
Jingvi Chen Ke Feng

Kexuan Chen Yazhe Feng
Lixing Chen Zhihan Feng
Xinyao Chen Yonghua Fu

Yao Chen Srija S. Gadiraju

Zihan Helen Chen Kewal Kishan Gokuldas

Wenhu Cheng Shuting Gong
Yisong Cheng Tianchou Gong

Yidan Cong Mohitha Mahesh Gowda

Jiawen Gu Ziyang Liang

Lingping Gu Han Liao

Weihao Gu Brook Liu

Hsin Yu Joy Guo Chang Liu

Yashan Guo Chang Liu

Jiali Han Chenzuo Liu

Xinyue Han Dingwen Liu

Jiajie He Haotian Liu

JiaWei Liu

Lingjing Liu

Shuyuan Liu

Siving Lu

Linrui Luo

Yanqiong Ma

Qin He

Hla Htoo

Wengiang Hu

Xinyuan Huang

Xi Jia

Yue He Kuizhi Liu

Hui Hu Menglu Liu

Jin Hu Mengyuan Liu

Yuqi Hu Wenbo Liu

Zhengyan Hu Xiaolin Liu

Chuanzhao Huang Xiaoshu Liu

Riqi Huang Xinyi Liu

Tianhui Huang Huajing Lu

Yanyan Huang Yifeng Lu

Xiran Jia

Zijun Jiang Anusha Mannava

Elio Khouri Anshul Mathew

Kaichun Lee **Zuqing Meng** 

GuoWei Li Triet Minh Ngo

I Hsin Li Wenyu Pan

Peiyao Li Xuedong Pan

Yuchen Li Yun-Chi Pang

Yumeng Li Yadhukrishnan Pankajakshan

Zhuoran Li Agllai Papaj

Jiachen Liang Aniali Pathak

Rushan Liang Zhiyan Pei Wenxin Qi Yue Wu

Xin Zhu Qi Zhijie Xia

Zhuojing Qiu Dongjun Xie

Raman Yixiang Xie

Tairan Ren Qiwen Xiong

Francisco Rovirosa Tingting Xiu

Almog Karinne Sagir Jiangzhe Xu

Linjing Xu

Ferran Sulaiman Qingyun Xu

Weize Sun Shu Xu

Mozhi Shen

Ziyang Tai Wanting Xu

Jiaxing Tan Xiaoliang Xu

Siting Tang Yilu Xu

Sichun Teng Rujun Yan

Senay Argaw Tilahun Bin Yang

Yan To Jiekun Yang

Komal Upadhyay Liu Yang

Vijay Shankar Venkatesan Qirui Yang

Haonan Wang Tianshu Yang

Hua Wang Weihong Yang

Mingxuan Wang Wenhanfu Yang

Tianchang Wang Xu Yang

Yilin Wang Tongle Yao

Yuan Wang Huijing Yi

Yu-En Wang Bolang Yu

Yulun Wang Chang Yu

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Yuxin Wang Guoqing Yu

Zicong Wang Huiying Yu

Ziting Wang Richard Samuel Yue

Lujie Wen Kewei Zeng

Thanda Myo Win Haozhe Zhang

Cuichan Wu Liu Zhang

Hypnos Kin Wu Luopu Zhang

Yue Wu Sicong Zhang

Xiangyue Zhang Yiqing Zhao

Xinjia Zhang Yi Zheng

Xuecheng Zhang Zihan Zheng

Yahui Zhang Chuang Zhou

Yi Zhang Na Zhou

Yuanmeng Zhang Yukun Zhou

Zhiqian Zhang Zhenzhou Zhou

Zinan Zhang Ziwei Zhou

Jiaqi Zhao

## **COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

#### Master of Professional Studies, Analytics

Trupal Jeevan Chaudhari Wen Luo

Nai-Cih Chen Sangen Mei

Ziheng Chen Mansi Ved Patel

Sayali Deshmukh Luyun Qi

Jingjing Fan Qifan Qin

Jiaqiao Feng Qing Shen

Niyati Ashok Gala Yi Sun

James George Shumin Tu

Chuanzhe Hu Yi Xu

Zilu Ji Xiaohan Yu

Chin-Cheng Liu Xiaoge Zhang

Sijia Liu Yingxiang Zha

### Master of Science, Project Management

Neelima Bitla Xiaozhou Huang

Athul Blesson Preeti Jaswanthraj Jain

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Hina Gianchandani Maalavika Manjunatha

Jussara Oliveira Barbosa Puja Singh

Peichun Pan Purvish Thakkar

Maitreyi Purandare Tian Wang

Aishwarya Rishiraj Yu Xie

Omayra Rodriguez Rodrigues Hari Chandana Yalavarthi

Harshvardhan Akshay Sanghavi Ansen Yang Ayushi Sawla Haonian Yin

Ayushi Sawla Haonian Yir

Ekta Jayantilal Shah Yue Zeng

Jiahui Shao Yating Zhuang

Ziling Shen Dhruti Rashmin Zinzuwadia

Chaolan Zhou

Weikang Si

Vani Swapnil Shah

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Laurel and Scroll 100 Recipients for the Academic Year 2024–2025

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Harshika Santoshi Khoury College of Computer Sciences

Purvish Thakkar College of Professional Studies

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Jared Auclair, College of Professional Studies

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James R. Hackney, School of Law

Elizabeth Hudson, College of Arts, Media and Design

Beth Kochly, Mills College at Northeastern University

Elizabeth D. Mynatt, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

Carmen Sceppa, Bouvé College of Health Sciences

Hazel Sive, College of Science

Kellee Tsai, College of Social Sciences and Humanities

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