

CLASS OF 2025

Commencement



11 JUNE 2025

ARLINGTON

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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.

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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

Procession

Platform Party led by the Commencement Marshal Youna Jung
Associate Teaching Professor, Khoury College of Computer Sciences
Faculty
Candidates for Master's Degrees

National Anthem

Marshal Youna Jung
Associate Teaching Professor, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

Welcome

Ronna Halbgewachs
Associate Dean and Campus Administrator, Arlington Campus

Introduction of Student Commencement Speaker

Paul Nooney
Director, Student Services, Arlington Campus

Student Commencement Speaker

Soumya Hukkeri, '25

Laurel and Scroll 100 Award Presentation

Deb Franko
Senior Vice Provost, Academic Affairs

Introduction of Commencement Keynote Speaker

Jamie Miller
CEO and Regional Dean, and Advisor to the Provost, Arlington Campus

Commencement Address

Alex Orfinger

Citation Presentation

Deb Franko
Senior Vice Provost, Academic Affairs

Mary Ludden

Senior Vice President, Global Network and Strategic Initiatives

Degrees in Course

Jamie Miller

CEO and Regional Dean, and Advisor to the Provost, Arlington Campus

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

Khoury College of Computer Sciences represented by Nate Derbinsky, Teaching Professor and Associate Dean, Global Campus

College of Social Sciences and Humanities represented by Jun Ma, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies

Degree Conferral

Deb Franko

Senior Vice Provost, Academic Affairs

Honoring of Graduates

Ronna Halbgewachs

Associate Dean and Campus Administrator, Arlington Campus

Introduction of Alumni Representative

Jun Ma

Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, College of Social Sciences and Humanities

Alumni Greeting

Joe Lillis, '93

Class Charge

Jamie Miller

CEO and Regional Dean, and Advisor to the Provost, Arlington Campus

Recessional

Led by Marshal Youna Jung, Associate Teaching Professor, Khoury College of Computer Sciences

Platform Party

Faculty

Graduates

A reception will follow the ceremony.

The audience is requested to remain seated during the recessional. We kindly ask those in attendance to silence their electronic devices.

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Commencement Speaker

Alex Orfinger

Alex Orfinger is a respected media executive and civic leader whose work has shaped business journalism and community engagement across the U.S. As market president and publisher of the Washington Business Journal, he has played a pivotal role in elevating the visibility and impact of the private sector within Washington, D.C., one of the nation's most politically driven cities.

Early in his career, Orfinger led transformative growth at the Atlanta Business Chronicle and the Dallas Business Journal, building their reputations as trusted resources for regional business insight. After arriving in Washington, D.C., in 1996, he reshaped the Washington Business Journal into an indispensable platform for local executives, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. Under his stewardship, the publication has become a model of excellence in business journalism, known for its relevance, credibility, and civic-minded programming. And in a region long dominated by government and policy, Orfinger has consistently championed the idea that business can be a powerful force for good in society.

Orfinger has distinguished himself as a convener of leaders and a catalyst for collaboration and partnership. He has created impactful programs and events—including the Book of Lists celebration, the Business Philanthropy Summit, the Women Who Mean Business Awards, and the Diversity in Business Awards—which recognize achievement and foster dialogue across sectors. His belief in inclusive leadership has ensured that often-overlooked voices have a place in the business conversation.

In 2014, Orfinger took on broader responsibilities as co-leader of 40 publications within American City Business Journals, demonstrating his ability to scale excellence and innovation nationally.

Community engagement has always been central to Orfinger's work. At Jubilee Housing, he serves as board chair and played a key role in raising more than \$10 million to support affordable housing for Washington, D.C.-based residents. He also served as board chair for Leadership Greater Washington, the region's incubator for leaders promoting powerful connections among a diverse group of community influencers.

Orfinger earned a bachelor's degree in history from Vassar College and a master's degree in foreign affairs from Georgetown University.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Master of Science, Software Engineering Systems

Dhairya Milindkumar Gundechia

Xu Liu

Master of Science, Information Systems

Carli June XiaoBo Arbon

Soumya Satish Hukkeri

Jiawei Chen

Suhas K M

Yao Chen

Di Liu

Tharun Cota

Mingyue Liu

Rucheng Fan

Ashwini Jyant Puranik

Neha Gopinath

Leqing Wu

KHOURY COLLEGE OF COMPUTER SCIENCES

Master of Science, Computer Science

Mangalpady Ankur Baliga

Marsh Royden Joseph Sundar

Sayantan Datta

Akash Deepak Sancheti

Liuxuan Ding

Ethan Dominic Virgil

Shen Fang

Pingsi Zhong

Yiyang He

Pengwen Zhu

Hancheng Huang

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Master of Public Policy

Jackson Ian Beauregard

Kevin Lopez Pelaez

Fiona Elizabeth Forrester

Uduakobong Nkanga

Ludmille Toussina Glaude

Manushi Sharma

Daisy Gomez Palacios

CLASS OF 2025 AWARD RECIPIENT

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

Manushi Sharma

College of Social Sciences and Humanities

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David Madigan, *Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Michael Armini, *Senior Vice President for External Affairs*

Kenneth W. Henderson, *Chancellor and Senior Vice President for Learning*

Mary Ludden, *Senior Vice President for Global Network and Strategic Initiatives*

Diane Nishigaya MacGillivray, *Senior Vice President for University Advancement*

Thomas Nedell, *Senior Vice President for Finance and Treasurer*

Mary B. Strother, *Senior Vice President and General Counsel*

UNIVERSITY DEANS

Gregory Abowd, *College of Engineering*

Jared Auclair, *College of Professional Studies*

David De Cremer, *Dunton Family Dean, D'Amore-McKim School of Business*

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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Donald L. Williams
Richard R. Yuse

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