

CLASS OF 2025

Commencement



27 APRIL 2025

OAKLAND

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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 recession 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

Processional

Candidates for the Bachelor's degree

Candidates for the Master's degree

Candidates for the Doctoral degree

Alumni

Faculty

Platform Party led by Marshal Carol Theokary

Associate Professor of Business

National Anthem

Marshal Carol Theokary

Associate Professor of Business

Invocation

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Beth Kochly

Dean, Mills College

Introduction of Undergraduate Student Speaker

Katherine Wildman

Vice Chancellor, Oakland Student Life

Undergraduate Student Commencement Speaker

Teddy Johnstone, '25

Introduction of Graduate Student Commencement Speaker

Katherine Wildman

Vice Chancellor, Oakland Student Life

Graduate Student Commencement Speaker

Diya Deepak Wadhvani, '25

Laurel and Scroll 100 Award Presentation

Waleed Meleis

Vice Provost, Graduate Education

Introduction of Commencement Speaker

Daniel Sachs

Regional Dean, Oakland Campus

Commencement Address

Diane R. Gonzalez

Vice President, Technology, Amazon

Citation Presentation

James Genone

Senior Vice Chancellor, Learning Strategy

Degrees in Course

Daniel Sachs

Regional Dean, Oakland Campus

College of Arts, Media and Design represented by Yulia Pinkusevich, Associate Professor

Khoury College of Computer Sciences represented by Sami Rollins, Director, Computing Programs

College of Engineering represented by Stefano Basagni, Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering

College of Science represented by Elizabeth Bachen, Professor of Psychology

College of Social Sciences and Humanities represented by Mark Henderson, Professor

College of Professional Studies represented by Jared Auclair, Dean, College of Professional Studies

Degree Conferral

Waleed Meleis

Vice Provost, Graduate Education

Honoring of Graduates

Katherine Wildman

Vice Chancellor, Oakland Student Life

Investiture of Doctoral Hoods

Jared Auclair

Dean, College of Professional Studies

Introduction of Alumni Representative

Christie Chung

Executive Director, Mills Institute

Alumni Greeting

Kathleen Sanborn, '83

Member, Board of Trustees

Class Charge

Daniel Sachs

Regional Dean, Oakland Campus

Recessional

Led by Marshal Carol Theokary, *Associate Professor of Business*

Platform Party

Faculty

Alumni

Graduates

The audience is requested to remain seated during the recessional.

Post Ceremony Reception

Music provided by Mariachi San Francisco. Families, friends, and graduates: Follow the mariachi band to the reception in front of the Betty Irene Moore Natural Sciences Building.

We kindly ask those in attendance to silence their electronic devices.

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Commencement Speaker

Diane R. Gonzalez

Diane R. Gonzalez is a distinguished technology executive with over three decades of experience in software management. A staunch advocate for expanding opportunities to pursue STEM careers, she is especially committed to drawing individuals from varied backgrounds into the field.

Gonzalez began her own career as a software engineer at Hewlett Packard. Her ability to grasp complex technical challenges and deliver solutions propelled her through increasingly demanding roles. She later held key leadership positions at Intuit, Citrix, and VMware, where she sharpened her expertise in databases and cloud technologies. Gonzalez joined the tech giant Amazon as vice president of Amazon Web Services Commerce Platform in 2015. Over the course of six years, she transformed her modest team of 150 into a high-performing force of 2,000. Since 2022, she has served as vice president of technology for Amazon's Finance Automation team, where she currently leads initiatives integrating generative AI into the company's operational processes.

Gonzalez attributes her success to her systems-thinking approach—an ability to understand the broader architecture of complex environments—which she developed during her early years at HP. Equally important is her leadership style: She is widely recognized for cultivating collaborative team cultures where individuals feel empowered and valued.

Gonzalez's commitment to perseverance was forged early in life. Raised in 1960s Ohio, she and her family faced discrimination. Her parents, migrant workers, instilled in her a belief in the power of education and hard work. These formative experiences gave her a deep well of resilience, a lifelong commitment to learning, and a sense of solidarity with those who are often excluded.

Today, Gonzalez remains a vocal leader in creating opportunities within the technology sector. She continues to contribute to the company's affinity group, Latinos@Amazon. She also shares her expertise and experience by meeting with students at Northeastern's Silicon Valley campus, mentoring younger workers, and helping to organize the Transatlantic AI eXchange's Remarkable Women in AI conferences. These conferences recognize noteworthy women in tech and strive to create more opportunities for all in the AI field.

Gonzalez earned a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley.

COLLEGE OF ARTS, MEDIA AND DESIGN

Master of Science, Game Science and Design

Yusi Cheng

Qiaochu Wu

Dexter Maceo Delandro

Luan Xing

Trung Viet Nguyen

Jianzhe Zhu

Daksh Sunilkumar Patel

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Media Arts

Yoseline Tatiana Orellana

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Studio Art

Eloni Terese Bickham

Olivia Olson-Roberts
summa cum laude

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Master of Science, Information Systems

Yiran Chen

Yash Tambakhe

Jiang Han

Haipeng Wang

Shuhan Ji

Jing Xu

Anjali Dhanesh Khadake

Zhongwen Yang

Tangchao Li

Yichun Yu

Jiani Lyu

Bailing Zhan

Shubham Krishnakumar Nair

Yan Zhang

Rushikesh Kishan Prajapati

Haoyin Zheng

Tingyi Ruan

Yuchen Zhou

Vikram Dhananjay Sawant

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Doctor of Education

Lizbett Calleros

Christina Vanessa Rodriguez

Katherine Rose Carlin

Antonio Kimble Watkins

Laura Rachel Einhorn

Master of Education

Jamaka E Davis

Master of Science, Global Studies/International Relations

Dominica Marie Dailey

Bachelor of Science, Health Science

Amrih Almalky

Bachelor of Science, Interdisciplinary Studies

Kara Urion

Bachelor of Science, Psychology

Meron Woldezghi Andebrhan

Lyssa Jo King

Kendall Marie Bobo

magna cum laude

Zoe Maikalanimai Burridge

Emily Elizabeth Martinez

Sage Mari De Lafontaine

Joi Owens

summa cum laude

Sydney Marie Scofield

summa cum laude

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

Bachelor of Science, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Erika Jacqueline Rodriguez

Bachelor of Science, Environmental and Sustainability Sciences

Paloma Silva-Navarro

Bachelor of Science, Mathematics

Madeleine Yu

summa cum laude

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Bachelor of Arts, English

Teddy C. Johnstone

Bachelor of Arts, History

Anna Linnea Pizer Ettlinger

cum laude

Bachelor of Arts, History, Culture, and Law

Tomia M Clark

Zeltzin Mozo

Victoria Ixchel Mayorga

Ma'Kaya Washington

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science

Somia Sadeq Kaid

Nia Jeanne Peters

cum laude

Maria Francesca Lucia Mazzella

summa cum laude

KHOURY COLLEGE OF COMPUTER SCIENCES

Master of Science, Computer Science

Agnibha Chatterjee

Yichao Dai

Rohan Conder Hughes

Kaiyue Lin

Zhi Ling

Tarun M

Saugat Malla

Yuqing Qiao

Pranav Raj Sowrirajan Balaji

Prem Bhavesh Vora

Diya Deepak Wadhwani

Qichen Wang

Zhi Wang

Jing Xia

Bachelor of Science, Data Science

Yasmeen Jade Dao

magna cum laude

CLASS OF 2025 AWARD RECIPIENTS

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

Vikram Dhananjay Sawante

College of Engineering

Diya Deepak Wadhwani

Khoury College of Computer Sciences

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

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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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