

CLASS OF 2025

*Commencement and
Pinning Celebration*



2 MAY 2025

CHARLOTTE

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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

Processional

Procession led by Marshal Chris Bolick, *Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, College of Professional Studies*

Platform Party

Faculty

Candidates for Doctoral degrees

Candidates for Master's degrees

Candidate for Undergraduate degrees

National Anthem

Marshal Chris Bolick

Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, College of Professional Studies

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Angela Hosking

Regional Dean and CEO, Charlotte Campus

Introduction of Student Speaker

Grace Buttriss

Bouvé ABSN Program Director

Bouvé College of Health Sciences Student Commencement Speaker

Ohunene Adetutu Johnson, '25

Introduction of Student Speaker

Joseph Griffin Sr.

Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Professional Studies

College of Professional Studies Student Commencement Speaker

Atticus Simpson, '25

Introduction of Commencement Speaker

Angela Hosking

Regional Dean and CEO, Charlotte Campus

Commencement Address

Cassandra Friend, '24

Citation Presentation

Mike Jackson

Vice Provost, Curriculum and Program

Degrees in Course

Angela Hosking

Regional Dean and CEO, Charlotte Campus

Bouvé College of Health Sciences represented by Amanda Choflet, *Dean, Bouvé School of Nursing*

College of Professional Studies represented by Joseph Griffin Sr., *Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Professional Studies*

Degree Conferral

Mike Jackson

Vice Provost, Curriculum and Program

Honoring of Graduates

Marshal Chris Bolick

Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, College of Professional Studies

Investiture of Doctoral Hoods

Corliss Thompson

Associate Dean, Graduate School of Education

Pinning Ceremony

Amanda Choflet

Dean, Bouvé School of Nursing

Introduction of Alumni Representative

Joseph Griffin Sr.

Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Professional Studies

Alumni Greeting

Phil Echols, '23

Class Charge

Angela Hosking

Regional Dean and CEO, Charlotte Campus

Recessional

Led by Marshal Chris Bolick, *Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, College of Professional Studies*

Platform Party

Faculty

Graduates

The audience is requested to remain seated during the recessional.

Post-Ceremony Reception

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

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Commencement Speaker

Cassandra Friend

Cassandra Friend is a courageous military veteran and dedicated healthcare leader with an unwavering entrepreneurial spirit. A former lieutenant in the U.S. Army Cavalry (Stryker Armor Brigade), Friend has combined her firsthand experience in the military with a steadfast commitment to service, advocacy, and innovation—emerging as a force for change in both healthcare and the veteran community.

At just 17, Friend founded her first nonprofit organization, aimed at reducing rates of teenage depression and suicide. This early act of leadership launched her lifelong dedication to mental health advocacy. Her passion for service deepened while working as a medication technician, and was further inspired by her grandfather's service in the Marine special operations units. Motivated to follow in his footsteps, she joined the U.S. Air Force Reserve before transitioning to the U.S. Army. She served with distinction as a lieutenant until three spinal fractures led to a medical discharge in 2023.

Refusing to let adversity define her, Friend redirected her energy toward healthcare, enrolling in the accelerated nursing program at Northeastern University's Charlotte campus. There, she distinguished herself as a gifted student and a natural leader, presenting her work at national healthcare conferences and advocating for military-connected students. After graduating in 2024, she began a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree while working on the emergency trauma team at Prisma Health, where she blended clinical expertise with calm, steady leadership in high-pressure situations.

While at Northeastern, Friend also served as the university's military and veteran liaison, launching initiatives that increased veteran engagement by 85 percent and building a campuswide support network to connect students with essential academic, career, and health resources. She also founded the National Student Nurses' Association Charter at the Charlotte campus, serving as its inaugural president and advancing student leadership in healthcare.

In 2024, she co-founded Kavalyn Custom Solutions, a Charleston-based, veteran-owned consultancy that supports service members as they navigate life after military service. As principal consultant, Friend blends medical expertise with policy advocacy and community outreach, providing personalized guidance for veterans transitioning to civilian life.

Her outstanding achievements have been recognized through numerous honors, including membership in Northeastern's Lux. Veritas. Virtus. Society, the Heart of Charlotte Award as Community Leader of the Year, the Betty Garrison Nursing Award, and the National Student Nurses' Association's National Core Values Award.

Friend holds a Bachelor of Science in nursing and a Master of Business Administration from Western Governors University.

BOUVÉ COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Master of Public Health

Megan Ann Georgen Ahluwalia

Hamza Jahangir

Suruchi Santosh Lele

John Daniel Ralyea

Carly Gabrielle Shea

Master of Science, Applied Behavior Analysis

Hannah Rae Booth

Elasia Campbell

Rosena Chan

Rachell Arzaluz Fernandez

Emily Grace Watt

Bachelor of Science, Nursing

Sujeey Acero Santana

Elizabeth Mary Antoshak

Chynna Ann Brintle

Samantha Gail Browning

Kimberly Griffin Burke

Hannah Christina Bush

Kimberly Bianca Casas

Katherine Milena Castillo Pallares

Rebekah Jane Conner

Jenna Kristine Couture

Ele Perez D'Angelo

Reinaldo Borges De Souza

Jada Monét Dixon

Amanda Michelle Drake

Colin Edward Guentensberger

Mya Gracie Guevara

Kaylee Rose Hanooman

Sokkeang Heak

Jasmine Joy Hills

Kristen Taylor Johnson

Ohunene Adetutu Johnson

Kelle Marie Knopp

Kristen Lattner Krysa

Haley Elizabeth McGuirt

Lové Marie Melton

Lileth Christine Oglesbee

Tishawn Ornella Reid

Alyssa Nicole Robertson

Debora Shapiro

Jessica Sharon Simon

Olive Blessed Somah

Brooke Alexandra Steeley

Tamera Nicole Thorpe

Aaron Andrew Warshauer

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Doctor of Education

Stephen K. Neequaye

Adam Glenn Oxendine

Atticus Justin Simpson

Michael Chad Watlington

CLASS OF 2025 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society Inductees

Kimberly Burke

Mya Guevara

Ohunene Adetutu Johnson

Kristen Krysa

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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*

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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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