

Concluding Remarks by Dr. Ludwig Nitsche, Associate Dean

To close out the Honors and Awards festivities today, I would like to add my heartfelt congratulations to the happy chorus of congratulations we've heard thus far.

Reflecting on the various wards and recognitions earned by all of our students in SEAS (Deans List; Straight A, High Honors, Highest Honors, Top Students; Special Service Award; 2020-2021 Lockheed Martin Scholars and Projects; Awards and Internships; Publications; Scholarships; Graduate School; Admission; Successful Job Placements; Graduation), we see that excellence and achievement have multiple dimensions, and they portend of significant things, great things that you will do. Seeing and celebrating so sterling an outcome draws attention to additional, dimensions of fortitude, grit, determination, resourcefulness and perseverance that you had to draw upon to achieve so much in the year of the Covid pandemic and the hardship, uncertainty and obstacles that it brought. It's not over yet, but there certainly are good reasons for hope, and there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

A degree in engineering or computer science represents not only attainment of knowledge, but practice in learning how to learn – which we hope you will keep doing from now on. More than that, I've always thought the degree, especially the bachelor's degree, as a kind of acculturation in the profession. A profession of dedicated people who keep thinking, keep trying and don't give up until they have made this community, this country, world a better place. Along the way, I trust you have made new friends, built network and a community of peers to turn to and treasure for a lifetime. The future of technological innovation belongs to you and you will lead us into it.

If yourself of a few years ago were to come face to face with who you are now, your old self would look at what you can do now as, well, superpowers in the MCU or the DC Extended Universe. If you said that you went to engineering school with Wonder Woman, Black Panther and Spider-Man, that would actually be slightly less amazing than the fact.

How is it that your knowledge and ability have increased by two orders of magnitude and you're still you? Well, we're glad you're (still) you, we have enjoyed getting to know you and benefitted from the perspective that you bring.

Before finishing, we would like to thank all of the staff in SEAS, and especially Ms. Ann Lankford and Mr. Hung Ha for their leadership in organizing and putting together today's honors event and program.

For the awardees and graduates, we're proud of your achievements, we look forward to hearing back about the amazing new things you are doing. Days like this exemplify the hallowed mission of the University of the District of Columbia.

Here's what I wish for you: that you will

Turn the perspiration of effort into the inspiration of achievement.

Turn the prose of engineering methodology and calculations into the poetry of innovation and creation.

Continue to prove that hardest of times can also be your finest hour.

Congratulations and Godspeed.