



Office of the President

April 6, 2020

Dear Graduating Students,

Sadly, the University must delay the Commencement ceremony and all related activities that you, your families, friends, and faculty have long looked forward to attending next month to celebrate your academic success. Whether you will have earned associate's, bachelor's or graduate degrees, we are crestfallen that we are forced to postpone formally and publicly recognizing your victory in reaching such important milestones. This truly difficult decision was made in response to the evolving status of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and at the recommendation of public health agencies. Our highest priority is to maintain the health and wellness of students, their families, and faculty and staff.

As you launch new chapters in your lives with newly minted degrees, we must do everything we can to ensure you and yours are not threatened by exposure to the COVID-19 virus. Also, as you know, because the virus is spread by physical proximity to others who may unknowingly have contracted the disease, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser has prohibited large gatherings.

You have worked hard, and deeply deserve donning caps and gowns to receive your diplomas. Given the uncertainty of when it might again be safe to bring such large groups together, and the rapidly changing scale of the pandemic, we know that this change is the only responsible action we can take.

We believe, however, that success is as sweet as it is admirable, and must be commemorated. For that reason, we have rescheduled Commencement to December 2020. We hope you will join us at an equally prestigious and joyful ceremony to celebrate your graduation with your classmates.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to conclude the semester in a safe and positive way. Together we will make it work. It is one of the countless reasons we are so proud of everyone in the Firebird family.

In the meantime, please know that we honor your achievements, and are proud to call you Firebirds forever!

With warmth, regret, and respect,

Ronald Mason, Jr.

President

Lawrence T. Potter, Jr.

Chief Academic Officer