

Dear Students of the great Class of 2020,

In light of the recent guidance from public health authorities and our own experts about the prolonged and unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, Johns Hopkins has made the difficult decision not to hold universitywide and divisional Commencements in-person this year and will instead host a virtual ceremony on May 21.

We know that you have looked forward to Commencement as the culmination of your Hopkins careers and to gathering together as a community to celebrate your achievements alongside loved ones and friends. Like you, we are incredibly disappointed that we will not be able to hold this traditional celebration in May, but we remain committed to marking this momentous occasion in your lives – and hope this will ultimately be a moment to rally around each other in the face of adversity. You have worked far too hard, and your families have dreamed far too long of the moment when you walk across the stage to receive your degree, to let this moment pass without taking our best shot at honoring you with as much pomp and circumstance as we can muster.

This week, your Senior Class leaders joined the first of many conversations with university leadership to help bring this virtual Commencement to life. We appreciate their strong support and understanding, and we look forward to working with them to do everything we can to keep alive our treasured academic traditions and create an event that is meaningful and festive for all of you.

We also are planning other opportunities for in-person celebrations in the future, including hosting the Class of 2020 for a Senior Week(end) when you are on campus next fall during Young Alumni Weekend and having a Spring 2021 Commencement “re-do” for the Class of 2020 when we hope to return to Royal Farms Arena.

We recognize that you and your families will have many additional questions about planning. More details about the virtual ceremony, including travel planning and regalia, will be shared with you and your families in the coming days on the [Commencement website](#). You will also hear more from us in the coming weeks about plans for future in-person events for the Class of 2020.

In the course of these past few weeks, you have collectively responded to the significant disruption that the pandemic has wrought to your senior spring with reserves of maturity, intelligence and grace. We know that you will continue to draw on these reserves as we navigate the next two months together and adapt to a world that calls upon each and all of us to play our role in safeguarding and sustaining our families, friends, and the communities of which we are part.

We ask that you and your families and friends continue to hold May 21st for our virtual celebrations and stay tuned for future plans. We cannot wait to celebrate with you – albeit in a new way – and we know we will find a path forward together.

Stay safe. Stay healthy.

Yours,
Ron

Ronald J. Daniels
President

