

2020/2021 Commencement Ceremonies
May 12-14, 2021
Main Campus, Memorial Field

1. NATIONAL ANTHEM: introduced by DEAN KROUSE.

DEAN KROUSE approaches the podium.

Please rise for the National Anthem.

After the National Anthem, DEAN KROUSE returns to seat.

2. WELCOME: President Julie E. WOLLMAN.

President WOLLMAN approaches the podium.

Good morning/afternoon and please be seated.

Despite the pandemic and the enormous challenges of the past year, it is wonderful to be together. This is a day that we have long been waiting for! I'm so very proud of all of our graduates.

Trustee Jim Hargadon, Provost Andrew Workman, Dean Anne Krouse, Vice Provost Kim O'Halloran, faculty, and family and friends of the graduates,

"Welcome."

It is my great pleasure to be with you here today.

Graduates, I congratulate you on your graduation and encourage you, in the midst of all the excitement and frenzy of this day, to find a few calm moments to reflect on all you've done to earn this special moment.

Do you remember the first time you set foot on campus or in your online classroom as a Widener student?

Try to remember.

My guess is that you were filled with equal parts eagerness and anxiety—actually, probably more anxiety on that first day— as you wondered what the years ahead held for you.

On that first day, and maybe a few tough days since then, you might have questioned whether or not you would ever see your graduation day.

A lot has happened between then and now. Let me repeat that – a lot has happened between then and now! We have just lived through a year and a half that none of us could have anticipated or envisioned.

But even before the pandemic, at times the road to this day was a bit bumpy and the trip undoubtedly took unexpected turns.

Many of you juggled a range of campus activities with work and family responsibilities, not to mention the relentless pressures of the pandemic.

But you persevered, you trusted in professors and staff who saw your great potential, you believed in yourself, and you made it happen.

You made it to this momentous day!

Of course, there were other people who believed in you, too.

Your family and close friends loved and supported you, and sometimes even pushed you to do your very best.

And do you know what? Even when they didn't say anything, they were always quietly cheering you on. This is their day, too.

I think they deserve a big round of applause. (APPLAUSE)

Among your ranks are some of the most talented students I have ever met.

You used your education and leadership skills to address some of the world's most challenging problems and to seek common ground across diverse perspectives.

You stepped up whenever there was a need, rolled up your sleeves, or jumped into challenging conversations, and made a difference.

As you start the next chapter of your life, here's my assignment for you. That's right. The assignments are not quite over!

Your final assignment for your degree: DO EVEN MORE.

Don't be afraid to challenge yourself.

Ask the hard questions and continue showing the same grit and determination you've already demonstrated.

Continue to seek common ground to improve our communities, our country and the world.

There's always more to do, more to learn, more to achieve.

And yes, there are always more problems to solve.

The world needs leaders with the knowledge, courage, and compassion you honed here at Widener.

Be ambitious, keep your aspirations alive, and keep working toward them.

Your Widener education gave you the tools to be a game changer not only in your profession, but in your community, across the country, and around the world.

I know you will put these tools to work in ways that will continue to make us all exceptionally proud!

Just as Widener is now part of your personal life story, you are now part of the rich fabric of Widener's 200 year history. A history based on leadership and social responsibility.

Your Widener experience and all you've achieved is now interwoven with the generations of PMC and Widener alumni who came before you.

As new alumni, you will be part of a fiercely proud heritage. And always know that we are fiercely proud of you!

PRESIDENT WOLLMAN returns to seat.

3. PRESENTATION OF GRADUATES. DEAN KROUSE approaches the podium. DEAN states:

President Wollman, shall we get to what everyone is waiting for!?

Will the candidates for all degrees from the School of Nursing please rise?

President Wollman, the students standing before you have successfully completed the courses of study prescribed for their degrees.

On recommendation of the faculty, I am pleased, therefore, to present them to you. [PAUSE]

Graduates, please come forward.

DEAN KROUSE approaches the table with the diploma tubes and prepares to place tubes on the table. The tubes should be placed on the table, and then the dean will take a step back as the student passes the table so that a minimum six-foot distance is maintained.

GRADUATES CROSS THE STAGE.

DEAN KROUSE returns to seat.

4. **PRESENTATION AND CONFERRAL OF DEGREES: President WOLLMAN, DEAN KROUSE.**

After all NURSING graduates are seated, President WOLLMAN approaches the podium.

WOLLMAN reads:

School of Nursing Graduates, will you please stand?

School of Nursing Faculty, will you please stand?

Under the authority vested in me by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the State of Delaware and the Trustees of Widener University, I confer upon you the degrees for which you have successfully completed the prescribed courses of study, and for which you have been recommended by the appropriate college or school faculty.

This is signified by your diploma and is conferred with all the rights, privileges and immunities appertaining thereto.

[PAUSE]

PRESIDENT WOLLMAN returns to seat.

5. PRESENTATION OF GRADUATES. DEAN O'HALLORAN approaches the podium.

DEAN states:

President Wollman, we are not quite finished!

Will the candidates for all degrees from the Center for
Graduate and Continuing Studies please rise?

President Wollman, the students standing before you have
successfully completed the courses of study prescribed for
their degrees.

On recommendation of the faculty, I am pleased, therefore,
to present them to you. [PAUSE]

Graduates, please come forward.

DEAN O'HALLORAN approaches the table with the diploma tubes and prepares to place tubes on the table. The tubes should be placed on the table, and then the dean will take a step back as the student passes the table so that a minimum six-foot distance is maintained.

GRADUATES CROSS THE STAGE.

DEAN O'HALLORAN returns to seat.

6. **PRESENTATION AND CONFERRAL OF DEGREES: President WOLLMAN, DEAN O'HALLORAN.**

After all CGCS graduates are seated, President WOLLMAN approaches the podium.

WOLLMAN reads:

Center for Graduate and Continuing Studies Graduates, will you please stand?

Center for Graduate and Continuing Studies Faculty, will you please stand?

Under the authority vested in me by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the State of Delaware and the Trustees of Widener University, I confer upon you the degrees for which you have successfully completed the prescribed courses of study, and for which you have been recommended by the appropriate college or school faculty.

This is signified by your diploma and is conferred with all the rights, privileges and immunities appertaining thereto.

[PAUSE]

WIDENER UNIVERSITY GRADUATES – I SALUTE YOU!”

And now, in recognition of your graduation, all associate’s and baccalaureate degree recipients, please move your tassel from the right to the left!

[APPLAUSE!]

PRESIDENT WOLLMAN returns to seat.

7. DEAN REMARKS (Krouse then O'Halloran).

DEAN KROUSE APPROACHES THE PODIUM.

On behalf of the faculty and the staff of the School of Nursing, I congratulate the classes of 2020 and 2021 on the attainment of your advanced degree in Nursing. As you take time to celebrate your accomplishments, I want you to remember to take time to care for yourselves. Many of you have worked full-time caring for patients and families affected by COVID all while trying to finish your educational requirements. I am sure that the last person you thought about caring for was you. It is now time to care for yourself so as you enter into your new area of practice you have a renewed energy and spirit. The world needs your leadership more than ever as we continue the fight against COVID,

health disparities, and access to healthcare. You are uniquely prepared to lead this fight as a Widener graduate. Use the skills and knowledge that you have acquired to make a difference for those that cannot advocate for themselves. Be a role model and mentor to others that follow in your footsteps. We need more nurse leaders working together to improve the health of our country and the world. I congratulate you and wish you much success in your future.

DEAN KROUSE RETURNS TO SEAT.

DEAN O'HALLORAN APPROACHES THE PODIUM.

DEAN O'HALLORAN:

Good Afternoon. I am Kim O'Halloran, Dean of the Center for Graduate and Continuing Studies. It is my pleasure to welcome you to Widener University on this wonderful occasion. It is exciting to see our graduates and their families here today. I know how hard each of you has worked to make this day a reality. This is a celebration not just for our graduates, but for all of the family members who have sacrificed as well. I salute all of our family members who join us today in person, as well as those who are watching online at home!

When you, our graduate and continuing studies students, joined us to complete your educational journey, you united

with a community. A group of faculty, staff and fellow students, committed to expanding the depth of your knowledge in your field.

As a student, you have balanced school with work, with family, and with countless volunteer and community responsibilities. Many of you have returned to school to complete your studies later in life, and have done so during a most challenging time in our country and in our communities.

In these circumstances, the journey of your educational experience is indeed an impressive one. Some might say that their intellectual journey is at an end, but you know differently. You have acquired the current knowledge base of

each of your fields and now you will, through practice and study, continue that journey in your own way. You will represent your field and Widener University in future years and I have no doubt that you will do both with distinction.

Today we take some time to honor you for a major achievement in your life. We recognize all your learning, dedication and self-motivation. We can recognize success when we see it, and today I can tell you with certainty that I see that success in you.

That success has come through a partnership. You and your faculty and academic advisors have worked together over the

past several years to reach this point. We are proud of all you have done together, and recognize those accomplishments.

Tonight may feel like the end of this partnership, and an end to this journey. But it is not. It is in many ways, only the beginning. The beginning of a *new* journey. You pursued this degree for a purpose, and I hope with all my heart that you realize that purpose, that dream, that goal.

We also hope that you will include Widener in the next part of your journey, as it has been our privilege as faculty and staff to work with you over the past few years. Keep in touch with your advisor, and let us know *how* you are realizing your goals. And when you are ready for the *next* goal – a

bachelor's degree, a master's degree or even a doctorate – Widener will be here for you. We hope to continue to be a partner in your ongoing journey.

For now, I will simply wish you congratulations, and thank you for being a part of what makes Widener so special.

DEAN O'HALLORAN RETURNS TO SEAT.

8. PRESIDENT'S CLOSING REMARKS: President WOLLMAN

Again, it is my great pleasure to congratulate our graduates and wish you the very best in your future endeavors. I hope to see many of you back here as students and also at alumni events, Homecoming, and other campus activities. We'll be waiting for you!

This concludes our commencement ceremony. Please remain seated until the graduates have recessed. The audience should follow the graduates starting with the front rows of the audience. Families, friends, and graduates should reunite at their vehicles.

9. THE RECESSIONAL

Order of Procession: Faculty, Students, Guests. Platform Party should remain on the stage until the graduates have recessed. The Platform Party will not recess.