



# NJIT Welcomes New Class of Alumni at 102<sup>nd</sup> Commencement Ceremonies



Due to the largest graduating class in university history, New Jersey Institute of Technology held, for the first time ever, three commencement ceremonies at the conclusion of its spring semester, during which nearly 3,000 bachelor's, master's and doctoral students were recognized and celebrated their achievements with family, friends, loved ones and classmates. Of the degree recipients, more than 300 graduated with honors — 144 cum laude, 98 magna cum laude and 77 summa cum laude.

On May 15, Dr. Leah Hope Jamieson, Ransburg Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Professor of Engineering Education, and John A. Edwardson Dean Emerita of Engineering at Purdue University, received an honorary Doctor of Science and delivered the commencement address in which she shared her perspective as a first-generation college student from Trenton, N.J. who attended graduate school at Princeton University at a time when there were only a small number of women students.



TOP: From left: NJIT President Joel S. Bloom; Leah Hope Jamieson, Ransburg Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Professor of Engineering Education, and John A. Edwardson Dean Emerita of Engineering at Purdue University; Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka; Richard P. Sweeney '81, vice president at Keurig, and NJIT Provost Fadi P. Deek '85, '86, '97 BOTTOM: NJIT President Joel S. Bloom and the Golden Highlanders, those who received their NCE degrees 50 or more years ago and who represent the university's most senior and distinguished alumni.





Jamieson distinctly recalled the first time when she heard someone in an academic setting use the expression “he or she” and asked herself the question, “Do I belong here?”

“Most of us are in some dimension a minority in our communities,” she said. “Ultimately, the answer was yes.”

Quoting Nelson Mandela, who famously said that “Education is the most powerful weapon to change the world,” Jamieson said that it should challenge us to take on the most pressing issues including sustainability, natural disasters and threats in cyberspace.

“We have something important in common — we’re all the NJIT class of 2018, but each of us is unique...You are the NJIT Class of 2018 and you will do great things,” she said.

During the main ceremony, the university also awarded honorary degrees to Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka and Richard P. Sweeney ’81, a vice president at Keurig and a co-founder of the K-Cup single coffee brewing system, who received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters and an honorary Doctor of Science, respectively.

Mayor Baraka, whose strong relationships with Newark’s clergy and higher education leaders have allowed him to foster new collaborations on downtown and neighborhood redevelopment, education initiatives and fighting crime, urged the Class of 2018 to remain in the city to lend their talents and expertise.

“We need your brilliance, creativity and problem-solving to make this city the best in this country,” he said.

## GRADUATES ENCOURAGED TO SUSTAIN HARD WORK, PASSION AND KINDNESS

Presiding over the ceremony was NJIT President Joel S. Bloom, who told the

LEFT: Chosen to represent their respective schools, Sumit Rawat ’18, Dylan Renaud ’18, Ester Calderon ’18, Julia Garcia ’18, Rehman Asghar ’18 and Brianna Bohn ’18 (from left to right) with NJIT President Joel S. Bloom (middle) RIGHT: Mike Chiappa ’18, Nicoia G.A. Maxwell ’18, David Samuel ’18, and Palash Bhatia ’18 carried the gonfalons at the May 17th ceremony.

graduates that our global knowledge base is expanding exponentially and technology is changing every industry in the world in ways that could not have been imagined as recently as a few years ago.

“You are the ones prepared to drive these changes in the years ahead,” he said. “You will do it with hard work and passion.”

In his address, Bloom discussed the three qualities that many graduates have developed: hard work, passion for one’s developing profession, and kindness toward one’s fellow students, NJIT community members and others with whom they have come in contact.

“We have great confidence that you will continue to develop these qualities and succeed, because you already have demonstrated the hard work it takes to become extraordinary in any walk of life,” he said.

Student speaker Mark Neubauer, who received a B.S. in biomedical engineering and served as NJIT Student Senate President this past year, advised the Class of 2018 to be resilient.

“Being passionate about what you do is amazing,” he said. “Being excited to change the world is fantastic. But passion alone will only get you so far. You can’t be passionate about all the dull, exhausting, and unpleasant things life will throw your way. But you can be resilient and keep on moving forward despite them. With enough grit, with enough determination, you can overcome these obstacles and achieve the success you’ve always wanted.”

## COMMENCEMENT AT THE WEC

On May 17 and May 18, NJIT continued the festivities at its new Wellness and Events Center. There, the university conferred degrees to approximately 1,100 master’s students from all five academic schools. The occasions marked not only an educational milestone for the graduates, but also the first time commencement was held at the WEC.

Agrim Sachdeva, who earned a master’s in information systems, and Jacob Weiss, a master’s in architecture graduate, served as student speaker and class crier, respectively, for the May 17th ceremony acknowledging students from the College of Science and Liberal Arts, the College of Architecture and Design, Martin Tuchman School of Management and Ying Wu College of Computing. For the May 18th ceremony focusing on the graduates of Newark College of Engineering, Majd Awad, M.S. in electrical engineering, was the student speaker, and Corben Fuentespina, M.S. in transportation, the class crier. The prevailing message to the graduates was to apply their academic success toward rising above challenges and contributing to their communities and the world.



Alexis Alba ’18 carried the NCE gonfalon at the May 18th ceremony.