

Class of 2020, 'you don't have to accept the world as it is'

Congratulations to the Class of 2020! Some of you have graduated already; some of you still have finals; all of you should be very proud.

Graduation is a big achievement under any circumstances. Yours comes as the world is turned upside down by a pandemic, and by a country that has been swept up by protest. I can barely imagine how head-spinning these last few months have been for you.

The thing is, Class of 2020, what these past few weeks have shown us is that the challenges we face go well beyond a virus, and that the old normal wasn't good enough — it wasn't working.

In a lot of ways, the pandemic just brought into focus problems that have been growing for a very long time, whether it's widening economic inequality, the lack of basic health care for millions of people, the continuing **scourge of bigotry** and sexism, or the divisions and dysfunction that plague our political system.

scourge 折磨; 鞭打

bigotry 偏执; 顽固

These shocks to the system that we are seeing right now — just as you prepare to go out into the world — they remind us that we can't take things for granted, that we have to work to make things better.

Democracy isn't about relying on some charismatic leader to make changes from on high. It's about finding hope in ourselves, and creating it in others. Especially in a time like this.

As someone once said: Hope is not a lottery ticket; it's a hammer for us to use in a national emergency — to break the glass, sound the alarm and **sprint** into action.

sprint 冲刺; 全速跑

Congratulations, Class of 2020. Make it mean something. And keep making us proud.