



Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House

May 22, 2010

Dear President Botstein, Vice President Dominy, Dean Shein, Dean Cannon, distinguished faculty and staff, graduates, family and friends:

Congratulations to the Bard College Class of 2010!

It is my distinct honor to bring you greetings on this milestone occasion, marking the 150th anniversary and Commencement Ceremony of Bard College. Today, I salute you and all the people who helped make your success possible: your parents, spouses, children, friends, and the outstanding faculty and staff of Bard College.

The achievements we celebrate today honor the beliefs upon which this great institution was founded a century and half ago. Born out of the vision of John Bard at a time when our brightest minds were being recruited for war to address our young country's civil unrest, Bard College preserved and protected the important value of education for generations of students and scholars to come. Your graduation from Bard College is a testament of your commitment to higher learning, a commitment that embodies and strengthens the American dream's ideals of freedom and opportunity.

As graduates of Bard College, you have developed an entrepreneurial spirit that stems from the College's tradition of constant innovation. From its evolution as a respected school of religious training to a prestigious liberal arts college emphasizing independently-directed study and multi-disciplinary enrichment, Bard College's curriculum has always reflected the needs of the time. Bard College was highly instrumental in shaping the emerging field of performing and fine arts, and challenged the traditionally defined roles of educational institutions when it offered safe haven for intellectual refugees fleeing Europe in the 1940's. Bard College's willingness to make changes and take risks have had a great impact on graduates like you, who will enrich our country with your ability to think and explore beyond the conventional.

The strength of our values and innovative spirit is what best exemplifies the character of the American people, and Bard College's graduates are to be commended for their strong embodiment of both. With your graduation today from one of this fine institution, you will make America stronger and ensure a brighter, more vibrant future for us all.

Congratulations again. Best wishes for continued success in all that you do in the future.

best regards,


NANCY PELOSI
Speaker of the House