

Letter from the President

Members of the Class of 2020:

Congratulations on your graduation from Southern Connecticut State University!

There is no greater high point of the academic year than commencement day... a time when all of us—students, family members, faculty and staff—can come together to celebrate a job well done.

And while we did so this year in a virtual setting, your accomplishments are certainly not diminished.

In fact, I believe that the Class of 2020 will truly go down in history for its resilience, sacrifice, and determination under the most difficult of circumstances.

To your great credit, despite the challenges that you faced, you persevered with your studies—and you succeeded!

You worked just as hard—perhaps even harder—to complete your academic requirements, to respond to quickly evolving situations, and to uphold the health and safety of our community.

And for all of that, you are to be commended. You have achieved something remarkable in the midst of enduring uncertainty.

And now, I believe that you have a chance to move forward with a deeper, more refined strength of purpose than others before you.

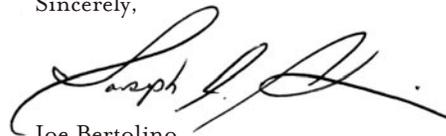
As a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, you have had a rare opportunity to step back and reexamine the value of ordinary human experience, and, I hope, to further reflect on and appreciate your own power to contribute to the common good. For your talents, your insights, your courage and your compassion will never be more valuable than in the post COVID-19 world.

In that spirit, I ask all of you to draw on the commitment to social justice that defines us at Southern, and help to build a better society... one that confronts racism wherever and whenever it is encountered; one that strives relentlessly for equality and justice for all.

Because decades from now, I hope that you will recall 2020 as more than the year when your lives were disrupted, but rather as the year when everything began to change, and you started out on your journey to make sure that it did—for the better.

My continued best wishes for your personal and professional success. Stay well and stay Southern Strong.

Sincerely,



Joe Bertolino

President

