

Congratulations Graduating Class 2020

Dear Graduate,

Warmest congratulations on your graduation.

Graduating at this uncertain time is daunting. However, historically, a crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic has always presented opportunities for innovation and creation that are not available in normal times. I hope you are able to leverage this crisis to launch your life after graduation with vigor and optimism. I wish you all the best in all your endeavors.

Best,

Naser Partovi, BEng'80, MEng'81

Congratulations to all graduating. Especially under these trying circumstances, congratulations for finishing and graduating!!

Peter Tekker, BEng'60

Congratulations McGill Engineering Class of 2020!

Dear McGill engineers,

CONGRATULATIONS on your achievement making it through one of the world's toughest engineering programs! I have clear recollections of the perseverance and sacrifices required to get through, and look back on it fondly as I hope you will too one day.

Today the price of oil has crashed below \$10 and is about \$3 as I write this. The last time it was that low was (you guessed it) when I graduated in 1998. To make matters worse, the massive dot-com crash of 1999-2001 was just around the corner.

Jobs were scarce and I was late in my search, focusing dutifully on my final year design project probably like many of you. It took me a miserable *six months* of full-time searching to find my first job. When interviewers asked what I had been doing with my time, I replied with 'job hunting' in a low voice.

It turned out to be the right answer, and I finally started a global engineering career at an innovative packaging company followed by an Ivy League MBA and executive roles. The best part? A ChemE classmate connected me to a friend for an informational interview at the company. Never hesitate to ask McGill classmates, professors and graduates for help!

In spite of the headwinds you now face, never forget that YOU are the best and can succeed under any conditions and facing any obstacles. The average grade is A-minus at Harvard, where no one is allowed to fail at anything. Not at McGill, where you are trained deliberately to overcome real-world setbacks! (By the way, Google recently eliminated using grades for recruitment, as their data showed no correlation to job performance.)

So, hold your head high and bask in your achievement! Organizations desperately need your talent and innovative thinking to adapt to new market conditions. The current turmoil will pass and unleash plenty of opportunity for you.

As difficult as it may be right now, remember to think positive and persevere. Your star is rising!

Chris Allen BEng (Chemical) '98

To the graduating class of 2020,

I wish you much success as you enter the next phase of your lives. Graduation is a magnificent milestone, so be proud of yourselves for what you've accomplished and look forward to more in the future. This is an exciting time in your lives and it's okay to feel excited about it, even in the challenging macro-environment we find ourselves in globally today. We won't be in it forever. Best of luck to you all, heartfelt congratulations,

Sue MacKenzie, BEng'83