

Suffolk University Law School Commencement

Sunday, May 22, 2022

Leader Bank Pavilion

Dean Andrew Perlman

Congratulations to all of the graduates of the Class of 2022. Now graduates, I'm going to ask you to stand up and show your support and appreciation for the people who are responsible for teaching you: the faculty of Suffolk University Law School and the staff and administrators who worked so hard over these years to get you to this point.

And now I want you to turn around, face the crowd, and show your appreciation for them—your family, your friends, and your loved ones who supported you on your journey, getting you to this important milestone.

Graduates, as we near the end of these Commencement ceremonies, it would be very easy for all of us to want to forget the last couple of years. We have faced so many challenges. We have suffered so much loss, both of loved ones and time and experiences with each other in the world. But I'm going to encourage you to remember these two years. Remember your resilience and courage in the face of the deadliest pandemic in over a century. Remember how you completed law school under these extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

And hold on to that perseverance, that grit, that determination. Those are defining traits of Suffolk Law graduates, and you have already proven that you have them. Those traits will prove invaluable in a world that is increasingly defined by constant and rapid change.

You won't be alone in that journey. In addition to your friends and loved ones, you can now count on the help and support of 24,000 proud Suffolk Law alumni around the country and the world. They will be there for you, and Suffolk Law will be as well.

Draw on what we have taught you. And I don't just mean the knowledge of the law itself. Someday you may, in fact need the rule against Perpetuities, but thankfully for you all, probably not. Rather, I hope you will draw on how we've taught you to think. How to solve problems. How to analyze. How to help your clients and society address fundamental questions about who we are as a nation, and what rights we all have as citizens.

We will need you to do this work now more than ever. Those who don't have your training and resilience might look at the world today and despair. Indeed, the thin veneer of civilization appears to be growing ever thinner. But you now have the tools and the opportunity to address the problems that we face.

Lawyers with training in international law, for example, and human rights will be needed to restore social order and international norms in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Those

with training in environmental law can help us to address the challenges of climate change. As professionals, you can also set a model for behavior as we see tempers flaring at the slightest offense.

Your skills in analysis and fact-finding can be an antidote to the rise in conspiracy theories and distrust in facts and science. And you've been trained to see and respect opposing viewpoints, as Ambassador Cronin mentioned, which can help to address the growing coarseness of our politics and the intolerance too many of us have for people who have views and beliefs that differ from our own.

I also hope that your legal education has successfully fostered in you a deep respect for the rule of law and opened your eyes to the critical role that lawyers play in protecting our democracy. You will go about all of this work in big ways and small, but make no mistake that you will be doing this important work and helping to ensure that the world we leave behind is better than the one we have inherited and that the thin veneer of civilization is just a bit thicker.

Thank you all very much, and congratulations again to you all.