

Suffolk University
Sawyer Business School
Commencement 2026

Undergraduate Speaker
Michael Olivieri, BSBA '26

Good morning graduates, families, faculty, and distinguished guests. Before we get started, I would like to just express my gratitude towards Dean Zeng, President Kelly, and the Board of Trustees. It is an honor to stand before you all today and share what Suffolk University means to me, as well as reflect on the experiences that have shaped me over these past four years.

And to be honest, you know, considering my track record with 8 a.m. classes, it was a miracle I was able to get here on time. But we made it.

But today is not about early mornings. It is about the tremendous accomplishment that we have all earned as we look back at the memories that brought us to this moment.

My name is Michael Olivieri. And as Dean Zeng mentioned, I'll be graduating with a degree in finance. I have served the Finance and Investing Club for the past two years as president and represented the university as a trustee ambassador. I have had the opportunity to intern just down the street at Fidelity Investments for the past two summers, and I'll be starting my career there full time in just a month. [APPLAUSE]

But in all honesty, it truly is incredible that I am speaking in front of you all today. When I was born, I was diagnosed with a rare genetic mutation called cystic fibrosis that affects your respiratory system, digestion, and nutritional health, amongst other things. Typically through childhood, cystic fibrosis patients are admitted into the hospital for treatment of lung infections, lung transplants, and other medical procedures. And due to this, cystic fibrosis patients end up missing out on everyday activities that we take for granted, as well as once-in-a-lifetime accomplishments like this graduation.

But I have refused to let this diagnosis limit me, and I believe that in a way I am privileged because of it, for it has exposed me to a community that has taught me nothing life is guaranteed, nor should be taken for granted.

I have adopted this mindset and applied it to these last four years here at Suffolk. During my tenure as president of the Finance and Investing Club for the last two years—alongside board members of the club, who I now consider some of my best friends I've ever made—we've been able to grow an expanding community of hungry students, and I'm not just talking about the pizza that we cater for our meetings.

We've grown the analyst program to the largest cohort in program history, where we get to discuss investment ideas for our student-led investment fund called the Tremont Fund. I've personally been able to pitch a handful of stocks, some winners, some losers. But ultimately, we've helped the Tremont Fund grow to the largest that it has ever been.

And through these experiences, I've built an endless inventory of talking points and skills that I've used in coffee chats, interviews, and applied during my internships. But more importantly, I have also grown personally. I have learned what it is like to lead, to be there for others, and to be a part of something more than just yourself. Not just in education and professional skills were obtained, but development in oneself was pursued.

Suffolk University and the Finance and Investing Club have shaped me into someone that you can rely on—not because of what I have achieved, but because of who I've become through the people around me. I have learned that you must be a part of your community before being able to make an impact upon it.

I joined this club eager and curious to learn more about investments, and then through encouragement in other's investment in me, I've built up the confidence to take on leadership roles and eventually became president. And as leader of this club, and I made a bad call. I invested the Tremont Fund in Nike, which was certainly not my best. But despite this, the people

that I thought I had failed were the very first people to uplift me and to fuel me with the same encouragement that ushered me into the role. For failure should be celebrated as it is one step closer to success. [APPLAUSE]

And through my experiences and through the teachings of investments from my peers, Professor Thomas, and Professor Eisentein, I look back at my last four years with fulfillment and pride. And I can say with conviction, what investment is the best one to make. (But please keep in mind, this is not financial advice. I still need to pass my licensing exam. So you know, take it with a grain of salt.) But it's not a stock or a bond or a mutual fund. With confidence I say that the best investment that you can make is in the people around you.

I look into the crowd, and I see people that I have invested in, whether it be my fellow graduates, faculty, administration, and then, of course, my family—Mom, Dad, Joey, Grandpa, Grammy, Uncle Bill, Auntie Jen, Auntie Emory, and Auntie Betsy, just to name a few. All of those investments have yielded an invaluable return, which is a place in life I never thought I would be at.

So thank you all. Thank you to my family. Thank you to the Finance and Investing Club. And thank you to the cystic fibrosis community. And thank you to Suffolk University. [APPLAUSE]

And so my fellow graduates, I ask you all to continue investing in the people around you. And as we leave this day, let us measure our future success in the contributions made to one another, to our families, and to our communities like this one. And let the investments that we have already made in each other and in Suffolk University fuel our future accomplishments. Thank you again, and congratulations to the graduating Class of 2026. [APPLAUSE]