

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER  
DEVAL PATRICK:

## Make Human, Not Just Internet, Connections

*Massachusetts governor warns BU grads against being “not present” for others*

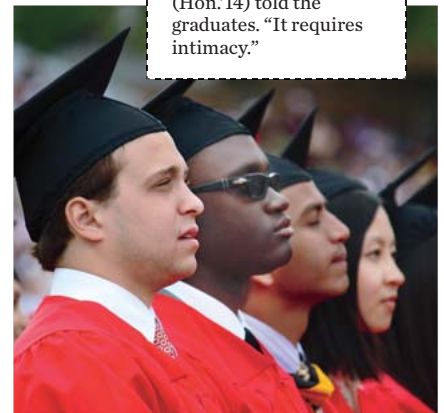
SPEAKING TO NEARLY 7,000 BU graduates, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick delivered a provocative message: social media isn't all you crack it up to be.

“Modern society is awash in information and grappling with how to make the most of social media,” the possible presidential candidate said at the University’s 141st Commencement on Sunday, May 18, at Nickerson Field. “It is a force in casual communication, in business marketing, in celebrity. It transformed politics in my first campaign, in Barack Obama’s, and in many campaigns since. But does it help us to connect as human beings? Does it enable us to be present?”

Patrick (Hon.’14) ran through a list of people who routinely use social media, and who are therefore often “not present”: his always-texting younger daughter, whose right thumb “seems to have a life of its own,” a young acquaintance constantly absorbed in his computer and iPad “while you are standing in the same



“Real human connection, the nuance of empathy and understanding, is often more gradual and elongated than Twitter,” Massachusetts Governor **DEVAL PATRICK** (Hon.’14) told the graduates. “It requires intimacy.”



room talking with him,” and even his own staff during meetings.

“Sometimes, the open-ended question is not about getting to the answer, but rather about the journey, and Google has little to do with that,” the governor said. “Real human connection, the

nuance of empathy and understanding, is often more gradual and elongated than Twitter. It requires intimacy.

And I worry that the demands of constant communication and infinite information through social media are crowding out intimacy.” His remarks earned a standing ovation from the graduates and guests.

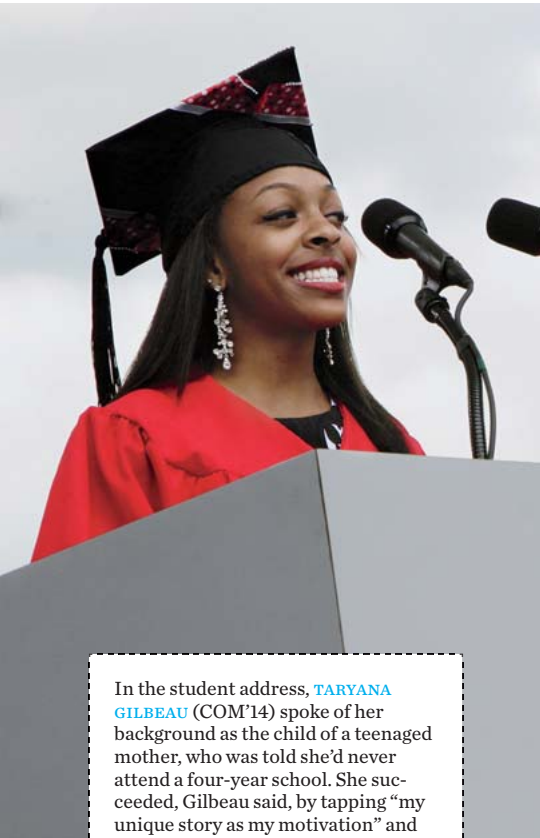
Patrick, who leaves office in January after two terms, received an honorary Doctor of Laws. Emmy-winning actor and education advocate Bill Cosby, recipient of a Doctor of Humane Letters, responded to graduates’ chanting

**WEB EXTRA**  
Complete Commencement coverage, including videos and slide-shows, can be found at [bu.edu/bostonia](http://bu.edu/bostonia).

Emmy-winning actor and education advocate **BILL COSBY** (Hon.’14), here with trustee Robert J. Hildreth, got cheers from several generations when he received a Doctor of Humane Letters.







In the student address, **TARYANA GILBEAU** (COM'14) spoke of her background as the child of a teenaged mother, who was told she'd never attend a four-year school. She succeeded, Gilbeau said, by tapping "my unique story as my motivation" and with the University's support.

for a speech with three baritone-voiced words from one of his most famous TV characters, Fat Albert: "Hey, hey, hey!"

Also receiving honorary degrees: BU trustee Rajen Kilachand (GSM'74), Doctor of Humane Letters; City Year CEO and cofounder Michael Brown, Doctor of Humane Letters; Emmy-nominated actress and writer Mayim Hoya Bialik, Doctor of Humane Letters; and MIT molecular biologist and this year's Baccalaureate speaker Nancy Hopkins, Doctor of Science.

President Robert A. Brown presented the University's highest teaching honors to three BU professors. The Metcalf Cup and Prize for Teaching Excellence went to Stormy Attaway (GRS'84,'88), a College of Engineering assistant professor of mechanical engineering, and Metcalf Awards for Teaching Excellence to Terry Everson, a College of Fine Arts associate professor of music, and Alan Marscher, a College of Arts & Sciences professor of astronomy. **RICH BARLOW**



Nearly 7,000 seniors and graduate students were celebrated at the 141st Commencement exercises.



Molecular biologist **NANCY HOPKINS** (Hon.'14), the Amgen, Inc., Professor of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recalled personal trials as a female scientist, and challenged graduates to overcome invisible barriers. Hopkins gave the Baccalaureate Address to the Class of 2014 at Marsh Chapel.



Emmy-nominated actress **MAYIM HOYA BIALIK** (Hon.'14) (center), with trustee Ryan Roth Gallo (LAW'99) and President Robert A. Brown, received a Doctor of Humane Letters. Bialik, best known for her role in the 1990s comedy *Blossom*, stars in the current comedy *The Big Bang Theory*.

