



US Rep. John Lewis to 2018 Grads: Be Bold and Be Courageous

Civil rights leader says the world needs them to stand up for what's right

US Rep. John Lewis, delivering the 145th All-University Commencement address on May 20, told BU's Class of 2018 to enjoy their big day—then get to work. “Take a long, deep breath, take it all in—and roll up your sleeves, because the world is waiting for you, waiting for talented men and women to

lead it to a better place,” the civil rights leader said.

“My philosophy is simple. When you see something that is not fair, not right, not just, then you have a moral obligation to say something, to

Congressman John Lewis (Hon.'18) (D-Ga.) urged graduates to “get out there and vote like you’ve never voted before.”

do something, stand up, speak out,” said Lewis (Hon.'18) (D-Ga.), the US representative from Georgia's fifth congressional district since 1987, to the 7,072 graduates and 20,000 guests who gathered at Nickerson Field. His impassioned oratory drew repeated standing ovations.

President Robert A. Brown presented Lewis with a Doctor of Laws. This year's other honorary degree recipients were Baccalaureate speaker Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto (CAS'84, Hon.'18), the mayor of San Juan, P.R., who has become a national figure fighting for relief for the island after Hurricane Maria, Doctor of Laws; Indian filmmaker, journalist, and social activist Vibha Bakshi (COM'93,'96, Hon.'18),



“You may not accomplish everything you set out to do, but I guarantee you... you will never fail,” Carmen Yulin Cruz Soto

(CAS’84, Hon.’18) told those at BU’s Baccalaureate Service at Marsh Chapel May 20. The mayor of San Juan, P.R., talked about

the desperation Puerto Rico faced in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Legend has it that if students walk on the BU seal before Commencement, they won’t graduate. David Murauskas (CAS’18) celebrated the big day.



ONLINE: Complete coverage, including videos of US Rep. John Lewis (Hon.’18) delivering the All-University Commencement address and San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz Soto (CAS’84, Hon.’18) delivering the Baccalaureate address, is at bu.edu/bostonia.

Umoja, BU’s black student union, sponsored its first-ever Rite of Passage ceremony for black graduating seniors on May 18. Former University trustee Richard L. Taylor (COM’71), a Suffolk University administrator and chair of the Taylor Smith Group, a commercial real estate company in Boston, addressed more than 300 people—70 seniors

plus family and guests. Sernah Essien (CAS’18) (right), Umoja president, said the ceremony honors black students who face obstacles in completing their college education.



Doctor of Humane Letters; Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou (Hon.’18), Doctor of Humane Letters; and AIDS researcher and director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci (Hon.’18), Doctor of Science.

Brown also awarded the University’s highest teaching honor, the 2018 Metcalf Cup and Prize for Excellence in Teaching, to Brooke Blower, a College of Arts & Sciences associate professor of history. He presented the Metcalf Awards for Excellence in Teaching to James A. Wolff, a School of Public Health associate professor of global health, and Elizabeth Co, a CAS senior lecturer in biology. **JOEL BROWN**



Student speaker Yasmin Younis (COM’18) told graduates that BU was the right place for her to tackle her most difficult challenge: accepting herself and her Iraqi heritage.