

Hello everyone,

Congratulations - you have officially made history. No, not the type of history such as the ending of a World War, the election of the first African-American President, or the passage of gay marriage. The one that I am talking about is different. Most of you have not made history for others, not yet. Instead, you have created something never to forget within yourselves.

You are not graduated yet, but soon will be. Of course, you will awe at the wonderfully pristine commencement speeches, the snapping those lifelong Instagram moments, and so much more in the weeks ahead. Thus, I will leave the platitude comments about life for those events. However, what I will do here today is be a peer, and challenge you.

The late great BU alum, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" And so, I ask you, how are you now going to make history again, but this time for others?

You all are seniors who have chosen a path of deep meaning and joy throughout your time at BU. Sure; I would like to think BU Hillel has played a major role in that. What you have chosen through your actions and presence here today is to be there for yourselves and for others. We get the you part – you have spent four years developing your mind, body, and spirit. You have been engulfed in the investment of your neshama, or soul. That is noteworthy, it is special, and it is holy. Now what will you do with this investment and holiness?

The Talmud, or oral Torah says, "A person has three friends on whose company they rely. First, wealth, which goes with them only while good fortune lasts. Second, their relatives they go only as far as the grave leave them there. The third friend, their good deeds, go with them beyond the grave."

What even constitutes good? Such a question is worth a lifetime of pondering. All I can offer is my short-lived 30 years on this earth. I can say, when I graduated college at UMass Amherst, I never imagined doing what I do today. I did not dream of being a Hillel professional, but now I cannot imagine being anything different. After graduating from BU's COM graduate school, I was most focused on impacting the lives of students – just like my life was changed in college. The rest just kind of happened...and each day I am shocked into coherence with the gift of being there for hundreds of students during arguably life's most precious and privileged four years..college.

And so as you go forward, from these tight knit BU and Hillel communities, remember and hold dear the memories, the truths, the values, the moments, the tears, and so much more that you've created. Now, ask yourself what type of history are you authoring for the next 2,5,10, or 20 years? You have the gift of age now, experience, of having been on your own for four years. You have the gift by evidence of being admitted to BU, of your great intelligence and valiant hard work. Plan, plan ahead, not for everything, but for your big dreams and sights.

Given the world we are living in, and the times, there is ample room for and certainly no dearth of good deeds. Of good history, valued history, holy history. Go out there, and be great. And with that I send you with love, admiration, and hope.