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Messages & Writings : September 2011

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A World of Opportunity

On behalf of our entire community, welcome to the start of another exciting year at Northeastern University.

To the members of the 114th undergraduate class: many congratulations. The 2,800 of you who have joined us this year have been selected from 43,254 applicants – the most of any private university in the United States. Seventeen percent of you are international students, hailing from 82 countries around the world. Nearly three-fifths of you graduated in the top 10 percent of your high school class, and 105 of you are National Merit and National Achievement finalists.

You impress us all with your achievements – and you are only getting started.

To our returning students: welcome back to our vibrant intellectual community. Last year, you were among the 2,054 students who completed co-ops or studied abroad in 168 cities and 82 countries around the world – from Singapore to South Africa. Hundreds of you are engaged in path-breaking research that is addressing our world's most pressing problems. Thousands of you have devoted countless hours to community service, both in Boston and beyond.

Your accomplishments are outstanding – and I know you will surpass them this year.

Whether you are a new or a returning student, each of you is on a unique journey to discover your passion, find your path, and follow your dreams. With that in mind, I encourage you to take advantage of the limitless opportunities that await you here.

So this year, be bold. Explore the world by completing a global co-op. Expand your horizons by studying subjects that are new to you. Engage your curiosity by pursuing research with a faculty member. Develop your talents by becoming active in one or more of our 280 student organizations.

In short: embrace the world of opportunity here at Northeastern.

By doing so, you will discover the world – and yourself. Within each of you lies someone new – an innovator, an entrepreneur, a leader, a scholar, and so much more. Think deeply about who you are, and who you want to be – and then make it happen.

To paraphrase the French philosopher Henri Bergson: think like a person of action, and act like a person of thought. And know that all of us are here to support you, every step of the way.

I wish you the very best for a successful and enjoyable year.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Aoun
President