

Thank you, Kendall, for the warm introduction. And congratulations to each and every member of the graduating class of 2023!

I am thrilled to be here today to mark this significant milestone with you. I've enjoyed getting to know many of you over the years, and it's an honor to celebrate your graduation with you.

We launched MCIT Online just four years ago with the goal of expanding the reach of a transformative Penn Engineering degree to exceptional students around the globe. And we've been growing and building on the program ever since.

This year, for example, we expanded our lifelong learning options for Penn Engineering alumni offering you a wide spectrum of choices. Our Take a Course option enables you to keep up with new developments in the industry by taking just one course. As I speak, we are rolling out new and exciting courses in areas like Natural Language Processing, Deep Learning, Statistics for Data Science, and Cloud Practicum.

If you have time to take more than one course, we have two online certificates in Data Science and Software Systems that allow you to dive deeper into either area to gain a competitive edge in your career, by taking two additional courses per certificate.

Finally, as many of you know, we launched a second online master's program in data science that will allow MCIT Online graduates to do a deeper dive into the emerging field of data science and artificial intelligence. At next year's commencement, we will see our first cohort of online data science master's graduates.

As a student here at Penn Engineering Online, you've gained technical expertise, learned new computer languages, proved theorems, written a lot of code, and made a lot of friends from all over the world.

But you've also built skills in other important areas—like collaborating with a team, thinking critically and designing solutions to real-world problems. This unbeatable combination of strengths will prepare you to thrive, both personally and professionally.

As you embark on the next phase of your lives, I encourage you to keep learning and growing. Embrace challenges and opportunities with an open mind and a spirit of adventure.

And keep in touch with your Penn Engineering Online community. With alumni living and working in tech roles all around the world, our global network gives you a lifelong community of connections and support, both personal and professional. I encourage you to use our PeopleGrove platform to connect to other alums and if you have time, help to mentor the next generation of MCIT Online students. Connect to our faculty and staff via LinkedIn. It should not be hard to find us on the platform!

And most definitely come to our alumni events if we ever visit your city!

I would like to conclude on a personal note by saying how proud I am to see you all graduating today. I joined Penn 16 years ago in January 2007. Little did I expect to be standing here today in a graduating cohort of hundreds of mid-career professionals, many of you here with your spouses, significant others, children, and loved ones. Without any doubt, MCIT Online has been one of the highlights of my career at Penn. I pursued a career in academia because I wanted to change lives through teaching, research, and mentoring. I know many of our faculty and staff feel the same way. I thank all of you for giving us this opportunity.

Once again, congratulations on a remarkable achievement.