



# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Class of 2020,

I am reaching out today to introduce myself and let you know that planning for your commencement celebration is still top of mind. I came to Bennington last July—and I was cheering you on from afar for your virtual graduation—but planning an in-person gathering for this class remains a priority for me.

It was our sincerest hope that by early 2021 we would be on track for an in-person celebration this May, one befitting of your accomplishments and your patience under these extraordinary circumstances. When the pandemic arrived last winter and we were forced to shift to a virtual celebration, the idea of a Spring 2021 Commencement celebration for the classes of both 2020 and 2021 seemed plausible.

Sadly, the public health risks of such an event have proven too great. It appears unlikely today that new COVID-19 infections will be significantly curtailed by spring, nor will we have a critical mass of Americans vaccinated by then. Further, State of Vermont COVID-19 rules prohibit large gatherings at this time, and we cannot know if or when those rules might change. We also want to be cautious about moving forward while inequity exacerbated by this pandemic is so large—be it economic, physical ability, or health care inequality; access for every member of this community is a priority.

As such, we cannot host an in-person commencement this spring for the class of 2020. I was looking forward to meeting you and hearing about your experience at Bennington and in the past year since your graduation, but that will have to wait.

Nevertheless, we are committed to celebrating together in the future, whenever it's safe again to do so. We are weighing our options today with consideration for the public health, logistical, and budgetary constraints. You can expect more from us in late spring as we seek your input on what matters most to you. We expect that planning will be under way this summer.

Class of 2020, we are thinking of you and planning for your day. I wish I had something more decisive to share, but please know that we're on it.

Laura Walker  
*President*

---

**Bennington College | The President's Office**  
One College Drive | Bennington, Vermont 05201-6003  
802-440-4300 | [Email](#) | [Website](#)



emma

[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

1 College Drive  
Bennington, VT | 05201 United States

This email was sent to .

*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.