



## **2026 COMMENCEMENT SPEECH**

**Dr. Harry K. Moon • President, Nova Southeastern University**

**9:30 a.m., Monday, May 4, 2026 • Rick Case Arena, Taft University Center**

Good morning Class of 2026.

Welcome to commencement. The opening of a door into your future. A future filled with possibilities, opportunity, and achievement.

We are sharing in a tradition that goes back a thousand years; one that has long marked the impact graduates of higher education will have on our world.

You have accomplished so much here, but you leave with the promise of what you will do to shape and influence your families, your profession, our country, and the world.

You will not forget this day. I promise you that. It is a day of celebration and a recognition of your achievements. It is also an opportunity to recognize those who have contributed so much to your lives, those who have supported you along the way.

I invite all of those here who have helped these graduates reach this moment to stand

Let's give them a hand.

Thank you for the sacrifices you have made and the support you have given these graduates. Thank you for being the heart of our Shark family.

As a university, we share our credentials and accomplishments. But here is something I have come to learn over the years. You cannot simply declare yourself a success. Your success must be conferred upon you by others.

This past year, many leading organizations have conferred upon us the following accolades.

Florida TaxWatch conducted an independent analysis of our impact across the state. That analysis shows our total annual economic impact has reached close to 7 billion dollars.

Here is another indicator that demonstrates that our momentum is clear and measurable. Last fall, nearly half of our entering undergraduate students and about 40 percent of our incoming graduate and professional students came from outside Florida.

We are proud to serve the state of Florida. But it is clear, we are now a national university with a reputation that extends far beyond our state. And that is important to growing the value of your degree.

We were recognized as one of the nation's top-tier research universities.

We were also named an Opportunity University, one that provides access and produces graduates who go on to earn above the national average.

And we were designated a Community Engagement university in recognition of our broad and sustained partnerships.

This places us in exclusive company because we are one of only two universities in Florida ... and just 11 nationwide ... to hold all three of these distinctions.

Furthermore, NSU is now the largest educator of physicians in Florida and the largest educator of healthcare professionals in the nation.

These are all compelling measures of success. But the ultimate reflection of success is you.

Mentorship has played a defining role in that success. None of us arrives at a moment like this alone. Along the way, there are people who invest in us, challenge us, guide us, and help us see what we may not yet see in ourselves.

I have been fortunate throughout my own journey to learn from mentors who shaped my path and pushed me to think more broadly about what was possible.

And with that comes responsibility. As you move forward in your careers, I encourage you not only to seek out mentors, but to become one.

Lift others as you rise. Share what you have learned. Give back to your communities and support those who will follow in your footsteps. That is how impact grows and how it endures.

Today is about your success. It is about everything you have achieved and everything that lies ahead. It is about the ambitions and dreams you will realize and the lives you will influence.

You are the future.

You will shape our world and drive the progress we make. It starts today, because you leave here equipped with the capability and the passion to make a difference.

And just as mentorship has shaped your journey, so, too, does the belief others place in you.

Everyone needs someone to believe in them. Take a moment and look around you. Look up into the stands at your family and friends. Look at the professors and faculty members who have guided you along the way. These are the people who have supported you, challenged you, and stood beside you throughout this journey. They believe in you. They have always believed in you. And they will continue to believe in you.

I, too, believe in you. And I have the utmost confidence in you.

Today, you join more than 220 thousand NSU alumni who are making their mark on the world. As you begin this next chapter, know that you carry NSU with you, and that we will always stand behind you.

You will forever be part of the Shark family, united by a shared commitment to excellence and to making a lasting impact on the world.

Graduates, please stand.

This is what excellence looks like.

Onward you go.

Congratulations, Class of 2026.

And always...FINS UP!