



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

**Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.**

Dear Students,

Today, on your first day of the Fall 2020 semester, I write to wish you a semester of growth and of learning. We are in a moment in history not like any other, and yet despite all challenges you chose education, understanding that it is the only way to move forward and to make meaning of life.

As you begin again daring to dream, remember to do the following:

- To say thank you, to your caring families and significant others and to the wonderful faculty and staff, and to yourselves, for your perseverance and drive and for your willingness to engage in a process of envisioning a better future, which finds you undeterred and moving forward;
- Take time to reflect on the beauty of this day-the joy of a journey of learning.

In her address to a group of students, the author Alice Walker reflected:

### *REASSURANCE*

I must love the questions  
themselves  
as Rilke said  
like locked rooms  
full of treasure  
to which my blind  
and groping key  
does not yet fit.

and await the answers  
as unsealed  
letters  
mailed with dubious intent  
and written in a very foreign  
tongue.

and in the hourly making  
of myself  
no thought of Time  
to force, to squeeze  
the space  
I grow into.

*In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens, pp 40-41*

Education is about entering new rooms by finding our own keys, opening ourselves to new opportunities and creating in ourselves the capacity to envision ourselves in different roles, understanding that the essence of life is change and change for the better through education. Make this the best semester ever! Show naysayers that love, generosity and perseverance win the day.

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