

Hello, I am David Wallace, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Cal State Long Beach. I want to congratulate each of you on the achievement of completing your degrees. In addition to the specialized training you've received in one of the 39 different majors in the College of Liberal Arts, we have also trained you to think deeply, to write and speak well, and to understand your place in history and in our society.

Today I want to emphasize that as the graduating class of 2021, you bear a special distinction; you have achieved your degrees under extraordinary circumstances; you have persevered under challenges that no other graduating class has ever faced. And, thus, your achievement is all the more important and all the more impressive. Take pride in what you have accomplished.

One of the traditions of our College of Liberal Arts graduation celebrations that I miss the most this year is the opportunity to take a selfie from the platform with all of you in the background as you cheer wildly to celebrate your accomplishments. After taking that group picture, I always invite the graduates to take your own, more intimate selfies to mark the day and your achievements. Although we cannot be together for that wonderful group shot, I invite you to take your individual selfie today and then share it with someone who helped you get to this day.

Post it, tweet it, snap it, or print it out old school and send in a card to someone who has been an important part of your

journey to this moment. Share your achievement with someone who helped you get here, because it is very important that we all connect with those who matter to us in these challenging times.

On behalf of the gifted faculty with whom you have studied I want to say congratulations, that we are all very proud of you, and that we have every confidence that you will use both your talents and what you have learned with us to change our state, our county, and, indeed, our world. And, once again, from all of us at the Beach: our heart-felt congratulations to each of you!