

Dr. Tracy Bradley Maples
Interim Dean, CSULB College of Engineering
Commencement Remarks 2021

Congratulations, graduates. As Interim Dean of the College of Engineering, I would like to welcome you as the newest alumni of California State University, Long Beach.

Graduating from college is a milestone worthy of celebration—and graduating with a degree in engineering or computer science is an important distinction.

The Class of 2021 will stand out in history for having persevered in the face of unparalleled adversity: isolation, quarantines, lockdowns, and more Zoom classes than you probably care to remember. But you made it through the difficulties: being away from face-to-face instruction, adapting your senior design projects, and pivoting to study groups online. Decades from now, you can tell your friends, or your children or grandchildren, that you were among those who completed a degree in the middle of a global pandemic.

They say adversity makes us stronger. Earning a degree during a trying time like this takes extreme dedication, commitment, and patience. I hope the internal strength and discipline you have drawn on to complete your degree serves you well as you establish yourselves in the working world.

In a world where progress is closely linked with technology, there remains a strong need for engineers and computer scientists—to develop generations of new products, enable economic development, and solve global problems. And, there is some good news. While hiring in many disciplines has declined, 2021 hiring remains stable for engineering and has actually increased 8 percent for computer science graduates, according to Michigan State University’s annual recruitment report.

With an engineering or computer science degree, opportunities are limitless. You may decide to take a job in industry, pursue research or teaching, or even start your own company. Wherever your career path takes you, I wish you luck.

I hope you will stay in touch as a College of Engineering alumni. We are very proud of you and we will continue to be among your biggest fans. Go Beach!