

# A HISTORY OF

# MIT Commencement Speakers

- 1880** First MIT Commencement speaker of record (Rev. George E. Ellis)
- 115** MIT Commencement speakers since 1880
- 40** CEOs, chairs, directors, and organization presidents
- 22** MIT alumni
- 11** MIT presidents
- 6** World leaders (Annan, Barco, Clinton, Gore, Salinas, Schmidt)
- 5** Clergy, spiritual leaders, and theologians
- 2** Minutes of silence in lieu of a speaker in 1970
- 0** Commencement exercises in 1918–1919 due to World War I



Year	Speaker	Role / Title
2020	Admiral William McRaven	United States Navy four-star admiral
-	Michael Bloomberg	Entrepreneur, Philanthropist, and former New York City mayor
-	Sheryl Sandberg	COO, Facebook
-	Tim Cook	CEO, Apple Inc.
-	Matt Damon	Actor, Filmmaker, and Social Activist
-	Megan Smith '86, SM '88	United States Chief Technology Officer
-	Ellen Kullman	CEO and Chair, DuPont
-	Drew Houston '05	CEO and Founder, Dropbox
-	Salman Khan '98	Founder, Khan Academy
-	Ursula Burns	CEO, Xerox
2010	Raymond S. Stata '57, SM '58	Chair and Founder, Analog Devices
-	Deval Patrick	Massachusetts Governor
-	Muhammad Yunus	2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner
-	Charles Vest HM '94	Former MIT President
-	Ben Bernanke PhD '79	Chair, Federal Reserve Board
-	Irwin M. Jacobs '57, ScD '59	Co-Founder and Chair, Qualcomm
-	Elias Zerhouni	Director, National Institutes of Health
-	George Mitchell	Former United States Senator
-	James Wolfensohn	President, World Bank Group
-	Daniel Goldin	NASA Administrator
2000	Carly Fiorina SM '89	President and CEO, Hewlett-Packard
-	Ray Magliozzi '72	Host, "Car Talk"
-	Tom Magliozzi '58	Host, "Car Talk"
-	William Jefferson Clinton	United States President
-	David Ho	CEO and Director, Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center
-	Kofi Annan SM '72	United Nations Secretary-General
-	Albert Gore	United States Vice President
-	Hanna H. Gray	President Emeritus, University of Chicago
-	Karim Aga Khan IV	Spiritual Leader, Shia Ismaili Muslims
-	Carlos Salinas de Gortari	President, United Mexican States
-	Leslie Aspin PhD '66	United States Representative from Wisconsin
-	Walter E. Massey	Director, National Science Foundation
1990	Virgilio Barco '43	President, Republic of Colombia
-	Paul E. Tsongas	Former United States Senator from Massachusetts
-	A. Bartlett Giamatti	President, National League of Professional Baseball Clubs
-	Kenneth H. Olsen '50, SM '52	Founder and President, Digital Equipment Corp.
-	William R. Hewlett SM '36	Vice Chair, Hewlett-Packard
-	Lee A. Iacocca	Chair and CEO, Chrysler Corporation
-	Shirley Chisholm	United States Representative from New York
-	Helmut Schmidt	Former Chancellor, Federal Republic of Germany
-	Katharine Graham	Chair and CEO, Washington Post Co.
-	Paul E. Gray '54, SM '55, ScD '60	MIT President
1980	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
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-	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
1970	Two minutes of silence to consider what can be done to help resolve the conflicts which divide mankind	
-	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
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-	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
-	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
-	Julius Stratton '23, SM '26	MIT President
-	Julius Stratton '23, SM '26	MIT President
-	Julius Stratton '23, SM '26	MIT President
-	Eugene R. Black	Former President, World Bank
-	Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh	President, University of Notre Dame
-	Frank Stanton	President, Columbia Broadcasting System
1960	Edwin H. Land	President, Polaroid Corporation
-	John Cowles	President, Minneapolis Star and Tribune Co.
-	John Jay McCloy	Chair, Chase Manhattan Bank
-	John William Gardner	President, Carnegie Corporation of New York
-	Neil Hosler McElroy	President, Procter and Gamble Co.
-	Sir Roger Makins	1st Baron Sherfield, British Ambassador to the United States
-	Clarence B. Randall	Chair, United States Commission of Foreign Economic Policy
-	Lewis W. Douglas '17	Former United States Ambassador to Great Britain
-	Edward A. Weeks, Jr.	Editor, Atlantic Monthly
-	Harold R. Medina	Judge, United States District Court for Southern District of New York
1950	Chester Irving Barnard	President, Rockefeller Foundation
-	James Phinney Baxter III	President, Williams College
-	Arthur Holly Compton	Chancellor, Washington University, and 1927 Nobel Prize winner
-	Warren Robinson Austin	United States Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly
-	Lt. Gen. James Doolittle SM '24, ScD '25	Former Commanding General, United States Eighth Air Force
-	Captain Dashiell Livingston Madeira	Director of Training, Bureau of United States Naval Personnel
-	Claude Moore Fuess	Headmaster, Phillips Academy
-	Bradley Dewey ScD '40	President, Dewey & Almy Chemical Co.
-	Clarence Decatur Howe	Minister of Munitions and Supply Dominion of Canada
-	John W. M. Bunker HM '50	MIT Dean for Graduate School
-	Karl Taylor Compton HM '31	MIT President
-	Samuel Cate Prescott 1894	MIT Dean of Science
-	Robert Erastus Wilson	President, Pan-American Petroleum and Transport Co.
1940	Henning Webb Prentiss, Jr.	President, National Association of Manufacturers
-	Sir Harold Hartley	Vice President, London, Midland, and Scottish Railways
-	Charles Donagh Maginnis	President, American Institute of Architects
-	Gano Dunn	President, J.G. White Engineering Corp.
-	Newton Diehl Baker	Former United States Secretary of War
-	Major General William Harvey Tschappat	United States Army
Reserve Officers Corps	Rear Admiral Charles Phillips Snyder	United States Navy
General	Isaiah Bowman	President-Elect, Johns Hopkins University
Reserve Officers Corps	Brigadier General Alston Hamilton	United States Army
General	Rear Admiral Henry Hughes Hough	United States Navy
Reserve Officers Corps	Howard Walter Blakeslee	Science Editor, Associated Press
General	Major General Fox Conner	United States Army
Reserve Officers Corps	Rear Admiral George Henry Rock	United States Navy
General	Abbott Lawrence Lowell HM '28	Retiring President, Harvard University
General	Sir Henry W. Thornton	President, Canadian National Railways
Reserve Officers Corps	Brigadier General Alston Hamilton	United States Army
Reserve Officers Corps	Commander Henry Eastin Rossell	United States Navy
Reserve Officers Corps	Major General Fox Conner	United States Army
General	Rear Admiral Louis McCoy	United States Navy
General	Ray Lyman Wilbur	United States Secretary of the Interior
1930	Sir William Henry Bragg	Scientist, London University, and 1915 Nobel Prize winner
-	Hiram Bingham III	United States Senator from Connecticut
-	John Hays Hammond	Mining Engineer
Reserve Officers Corps	Brig. Gen. Preston Brown	United States Army
General	John E. Aldred	Banker and Life Member, MIT Corporation
Reserve Officers Corps	Brig. Gen. Malvern-Hill Barnum	United States Army
General	Michael I. Pupin	Professor, Columbia University
Reserve Officers Corps	Major General Andre W. Brewster	United States Army
General	Dr. Charles A. Coffin 1886	Former President, General Electric Company
Reserve Officers Corps	Major General C.C. Williams	United States Army
General	Frank Edward Shepard 1887	Director, United States Mint
Reserve Officer Corps	Major General Andre W. Brewster	United States Army
General	Elisha Lee	Vice President, Pennsylvania Railroad
Reserve Officer Corps	Col. John Buffalo Railroad	Head, MIT Department of Military Science
General	Elihu Thomson HM '28	MIT Acting President
General	Elihu Thomson HM '28	MIT Acting President
1920	Elihu Thomson HM '28	MIT Acting President
-	No Commencement exercises	World War I
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-	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	J. Smith	Professor, University of West Virginia
-	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	No Commencement address	
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-	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
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1910	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	Arthur A. Noyes	MIT Acting President
-	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
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-	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
1900	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
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-	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
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1890	Augustus Lowell	Member, MIT Corporation
-	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	Rev. Phillips Brooks	Rector, Trinity Church, Boston
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-	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	John D. Runkle HM '00	MIT Professor of Mathematics
-	No Commencement address	
-	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	William Barton Rogers	Former MIT President
-	Rev. James Freeman Clarke	American Theologian
-	William Barton Rogers	MIT President
1880	Rev. George E. Ellis	Unitarian Clergyman

