

A HISTORY OF

MIT Commencement Speakers

- 1880** First MIT Commencement speaker of record (Rev. George E. Ellis)
- 112** MIT Commencement speakers since 1880
- 38** 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	
2017	Tim Cook	CEO, Apple Inc.	
-	2016	Matt Damon	Actor, Filmmaker, and Social Activist
-	2015	Megan Smith '86, SM '88	United States Chief Technology Officer
-	2014	Ellen Kullman	CEO and Chair, DuPont
-	2013	Drew Houston '05	CEO and Founder, Dropbox
-	2012	Salman Khan '98	Founder, Khan Academy
-	2011	Ursula Burns	CEO, Xerox
2010	2010	Raymond S. Stata '57, SM '58	Chair and Founder, Analog Devices
-	2009	Deval Patrick	Massachusetts Governor
-	2008	Muhammad Yunus	2008 Nobel Peace Prize winner
-	2007	Charles Vest HM '94	Former MIT President
-	2006	Ben Bernanke PhD '79	Chair, Federal Reserve Board
-	2005	Irwin M. Jacobs '57, ScD '59	Co-Founder and Chair, Qualcomm
-	2004	Elias Zerhouni	Director, National Institutes of Health
-	2003	George Mitchell	Former United States Senator
-	2002	James Wolfensohn	President, World Bank Group
-	2001	Daniel Goldin	NASA Administrator
2000	2000	Carly Fiorina SM '89	President and CEO, Hewlett-Packard
-	1999	Ray Magliozzi '72	Host, "Car Talk"
-	1998	Tom Magliozzi '58	Host, "Car Talk"
-	1998	William Jefferson Clinton	United States President
-	1997	David Ho	CEO and Director, Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center
-	1996	Kofi Annan SM '72	United Nations Secretary-General
-	1995	Albert Gore	United States Vice President
-	1994	Hanna H. Gray	President Emeritus, University of Chicago
-	1993	Karim Aga Khan IV	Spiritual Leader, Shia Ismaili Muslims
-	1992	Carlos Salinas de Gortari	President, United Mexican States
-	1991	Leslie Aspin PhD '66	United States Representative from Wisconsin
1990	1990	Walter E. Massey	Director, National Science Foundation
-	1989	Virgilio Barco '43	President, Republic of Colombia
-	1988	Paul E. Tsongas	Former United States Senator from Massachusetts
-	1987	A. Bartlett Giamatti	President, National League of Professional Baseball Clubs
-	1986	Kenneth H. Olsen '50, SM '52	Founder and President, Digital Equipment Corp.
-	1985	William R. Hewlett SM '36	Vice Chair, Hewlett-Packard
-	1984	Lee A. Iacocca	Chair and CEO, Chrysler Corporation
-	1983	Shirley Chisholm	United States Representative from New York
-	1982	Helmut Schmidt	Former Chancellor, Federal Republic of Germany
-	1981	Katharine Graham	Chair and CEO, Washington Post Co.
-	1980	Paul E. Gray '54, SM '55, ScD '60	MIT President
1980	1980	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1979	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1978	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1977	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1976	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1975	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1974	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1973	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1972	Jerome Wiesner HM '71	MIT President
-	1971	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
1970	1970	Two minutes of silence to consider what can be done "to help resolve the conflicts which divide mankind."	
-	1969	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
-	1968	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
-	1967	Howard Wesley Johnson HM '66	MIT President
-	1966	Julius Stratton '23, SM '26	MIT President
-	1965	Julius Stratton '23, SM '26	MIT President
-	1964	Julius Stratton '23, SM '26	MIT President
-	1963	Eugene R. Black	Former President, World Bank
-	1962	Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh	President, University of Notre Dame
-	1961	Frank Stanton	President, Columbia Broadcasting System
1960	1960	Edwin H. Land	President, Polaroid Corporation
-	1959	John Cowles	President, Minneapolis Star and Tribune Co.
-	1958	John Jay McCloy	Chair, Chase Manhattan Bank
-	1957	John William Gardner	President, Carnegie Corporation of New York
-	1956	Neil Hosler McElroy	President, Procter and Gamble Co.
-	1955	Sir Roger Makins	1st Baron Sheffield, British Ambassador to the United States
-	1954	Clarence B. Randall	Chair, United States Commission of Foreign Economic Policy
-	1953	Lewis W. Douglas '17	Former United States Ambassador to Great Britain
-	1952	Edward A. Weeks, Jr.	Editor, Atlantic Monthly
-	1951	Harold R. Medina	Judge, United States District Court for Southern District of New York
1950	1950	Chester Irving Barnard	President, Rockefeller Foundation
-	1949	James Phinney Baxter III	President, Williams College
-	1948	Arthur Holly Compton	Chancellor, Washington University, and 1927 Nobel Prize winner
-	1947	Warren Robinson Austin	United States Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly
-	1946	Lt. Gen. James Doolittle SM '24, ScD '25	Former Commanding General, United States Eighth Air Force
-	1945	Captain Dashiell Livingston Madeira	Director of Training, Bureau of United States Naval Personnel
-	1944	Claude Moore Fuess	Headmaster, Phillips Academy
Undergraduate	-	Bradley Dewey ScD '40	President, Dewey & Almy Chemical Co.
Advanced	-	Clarence Decatur Howe	Minister of Munitions and Supply Dominion of Canada
Undergraduate	-	John W. M. Bunker HM '50	MIT Dean for Graduate School
Advanced	-	Karl Taylor Compton HM '31	MIT President
Advanced	-	Samuel Cate Prescott 1894	MIT Dean of Science
Undergraduate	-	Robert Erastus Wilson	President, Pan-American Petroleum and Transport Co.
1940	1940	Henning Webb Prentis, Jr.	President, National Association of Manufacturers
-	1939	Sir Harold Hartley	Vice President, London, Midland, and Scottish Railways
-	1938	Charles Donagh Maginnis	President, American Institute of Architects
-	1937	Gano Dunn	President, J.G. White Engineering Corp.
-	1936	Newton Diehl Baker	Former United States Secretary of War
Reserve Officers Corps	-	Major General William Harvey Tschappat	United States Army
-	1935	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
-	1934	Rear Admiral Henry Hughes Hough	United States Navy
General	-	Howard Walter Blakeslee	Science Editor, Associated Press
Reserve Officers Corps	-	Major General Fox Conner	United States Army
-	1933	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
-	1932	Commander Henry Eastin Russell	United States Navy
Reserve Officers Corps	-	Major General Fox Conner	United States Army
-	1931	Rear Admiral Louis McCoy	United States Navy
General	-	Ray Lyman Wilbur	United States Secretary of the Interior
1930	1930	Sir William Henry Bragg	Scientist, London University, and 1915 Nobel Prize winner
-	1929	Hiram Bingham III	United States Senator from Connecticut
Reserve Officers Corps	-	John Hays Hammond	Mining Engineer
General	-	Brig. Gen. Preston Brown	United States Army
Reserve Officers Corps	-	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 Christian	Head, MIT Department of Military Science
General	-	Elihu Thomson HM '28	MIT Acting President
-	1921	Elihu Thomson HM '28	MIT Acting President
1920	1920	Elihu Thomson HM '28	MIT Acting President
-	1919	No Commencement exercises	World War I
-	1918	No Commencement exercises	World War I
-	1917	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	1916	J. Smith	Professor, University of West Virginia
-	1916	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	1915	No Commencement address	
-	1914	No Commencement address	
-	1913	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	1912	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	1911	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
1910	1910	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	1909	Richard C. Maclaurin HM '08	MIT President
-	1908	Arthur A. Noyes	MIT Acting President
-	1907	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	1906	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	1905	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	1904	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	1903	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	1902	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
-	1901	Henry S. Pritchett HM '00	MIT President
1900	1900	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	1899	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	1898	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	1897	James Mason Crafts HM '00	MIT President
-	1896	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1895	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1894	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1893	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1892	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1891	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
1890	1890	Augustus Lowell	Member, MIT Corporation
-	1889	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1888	Rev. Phillips Brooks	Rector, Trinity Church, Boston
-	1887	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1886	Rev. Phillips Brooks	Rector, Trinity Church, Boston
-	1885	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1884	John D. Runkle HM '00	MIT Professor of Mathematics
-	1883	No Commencement address	
-	1882	Francis A. Walker	MIT President
-	1881	William Barton Rogers	Former MIT President
-	1880	Rev. James Freeman Clarke	American Theologian
1880	1880	William Barton Rogers	MIT President
-	1880	Rev. George E. Ellis	Unitarian Clergyman