

Commencement Remarks to the Class of 2022 by Harvard President Larry Bacow (Excerpts)

With your degree in hand, you may often find yourself invited to sit and stay awhile, invited to share your thoughts and ideas, invited to participate, to contribute, to lead. You may end up sitting on a board or occupying a seat of power. Who knows? And what are you to make of that—of the fact that people will make room for you, find a seat for you? You could take it for granted. You could assume that you deserved it all along.

But what a waste that would be! Today, I want to challenge you—members of the Harvard Class of 2022—to save a seat for others, to make room for others, to ensure that the opportunities afforded by your education do not enrich your life alone. You will have more chances than most to make a difference in the world, more opportunities to give others a chance at a better life. Take advantage of these opportunities when they arise. Whatever you do with your Harvard education, please be known at least as much for your humility, kindness, and concern for others as for your professional accomplishments. Recognize the role that good fortune and circumstance have played in your life, and please work to extend opportunity to others just as it has been extended to you.