

## End of Year Student Award Remarks

Andrew A. Samwick

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Good morning graduates, parents, and friends. My name is Andrew Samwick, and I have had the honor of serving as the Chair of the Department of Economics for the past year. We gather this morning to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of graduating students in the Economics department who have excelled in their work, both in and out of the classroom. At the outset, I would like to thank our staff in the Economics Department – Karen Pelletier, Kristy Timlake, and James Graham – for all of their hard work to produce today's event and support faculty and students in the department.

Before we get started, I would like to acknowledge two things. The first is the harsh reality of COVID. The Class of 2022 spent more than half of its time in college disrupted by COVID. There is no way to sugar coat the bitter pill that the restrictions to protect the safety of the community were a terrible impediment to learning. It was not what you signed up for, but your being here – and specifically the quality of the work that you did that got you invited here – is a testament to your commitment to learning. Despite it all, you have risen to the challenge of college – you have added intellectual depth, you have produced original scholarship, and you have presented and defended your ideas. I applaud you.

The second acknowledgement is to your professors, who worked tirelessly on your behalf to ensure that whatever could be salvaged of the Dartmouth experience was available to you. This was not what they signed up for, either. For me, the saddest moments were during the early COVID terms, when a student would miss a class and reach out for office hours. I would pop open the Zoom, see that the background was The Lodge – another student in depressing quarantine housing – and my heart would break. But professors persevered, too. I advised a QSS thesis for a student in the Class of 2021 whom I never met in person until her thesis was submitted. My DERS student, who is here today, and I worked for 2 years during COVID terms to produce the first draft of our co-authored paper, and we have now begun submitting it for review. Before we launch into the part of the morning that is all about you, I would like for you to take a moment that is all about your professors. I applaud my colleagues in the Economics department.

For those of you who are not students in the department, I would like to briefly describe what the Economics major is. Beyond the math and statistics prerequisites, students take core theory classes in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics. They study a subfield of Economics – whether financial, monetary, labor, public, international, development, or industrial economics – in depth. They get breadth by selecting courses outside that subfield. And, critically, in their senior seminars, they produce original research. We strive to make this a rigorous major. All of the students being recognized today have gone above and beyond this required mastery, by engaging in deeper study of Economics, whether through additional, advanced coursework; supervised research; or original thesis projects. And, as you can read on the program, some have distinguished themselves even relative to that higher standard.