Dear 2020 graduates in Statistics, Data Science and Mathematical and Computational Science,

Congratulations for the degrees you have earned, bachelors, masters and doctoral. The University will be holding a commencement for you when that becomes possible. For now, this is a place holder to simply mark the occasion, let you know that we are thinking of you and that we wish you well.

You have all worked very hard for a long time and then just as you were approaching the finish-line it all got much harder. First came the coronavirus, lockdowns, possibly some hurried relocation and online instruction. Then came more senseless loss of Black life from policing.

What you have trained to do is important and more valuable than ever. I expect that a tipping point is coming where some social policies are going to change. It will not be easy to know how best to make those changes and many of the discussions, prospective and retrospective, will involve mathematics and data. This comes on top of the other needs for what you do in science, medicine and industry, as well as curiosity driven pure research.

We are proud of our graduates and the work they do in the world, and I know that your contributions will continue to make us proud.

Art Owen
Chair of Statistics