

Good afternoon everyone, and congratulations to all of our Sigma Theta Tau inductees.

Today you will become part of a global honors society, recognized for your excellence in scholarship and your demonstrated talents and commitment to the field of nursing.

I note that back in 1922, the founders of Sigma Theta Tau chose the name of the honors society from three Greek words meaning love, courage, and honor.

And their goal was to develop, connected, empowered nurse leaders who would help transform healthcare.

In that spirit, today's ceremony recognizes you as leaders in who are ready to go out into the world and care for humanity, at a time that has urgent need of your talent and dedication.

Indeed, your accomplishments are all the more impressive in that they occurred during a year of unprecedented stress and challenges.

I'm sure that, for many of you, working, studying and learning remotely has not been an easy adjustment.

It certainly hasn't been for me...because one of the great joys I have in my work is being present, on campus, with all of you!

Southern's students keep our community alive and being socially distanced for the better part of a year and a half has been a challenge for many of us.

But to your great credit, you have persevered with your studies and your training – and you have succeeded!

The education that you have received from our nursing faculty is exemplary, and it's no coincidence that – year after year – our national exam pass rate leads the way in Connecticut.

Never have your achievements held more weight than now – when nurses and healthcare workers are on the front lines— leading the fight against COVID-19.

You will join the ranks of thousands of Southern alumni working tirelessly in hospitals and medical facilities across the state and the nation.

And they provide care and save lives every day with a unique mix of skill and compassion for others, that can only be learned at Southern, with our commitment to social justice and compassion for the individual.

Congratulations again!

Stay safe and well, take care of yourselves and those you love...

And remember that we are - SouthernStrong!