Dear Class of 2020,
Our hearts are with you. You entered into our hearts four years ago in the midst of difficult times and you graduate during a time unprecedented. You are the Class of 2020 and we will forever envision your place in our hearts.

It is hard to imagine a more challenging moment for graduation. From being scattered and closed in by the pandemic to police murders and streets filled with anger and protest in response to the ongoing history of anti-Black racial violence. Still, it is a moment to pause, to reflect, to acknowledge all that you have accomplished. After all, it is amazing and inspiring and you did it! Your graduation is an accomplishment that cannot be taken from you, and it is one that is shared with your loved ones, your communities, and all of our futures.

This edition of the DC Newsletter and the DC web page for the Class of 2020 are just the beginnings of our recognition of your accomplishments. We will continue to gather and share tributes, and we look forward to when we can be together and celebrate together, alongside college-wide preparations for a commencement deferred. We celebrate you, we lift up your accomplishments, and we are grateful to be able to honor you today and eager to connect with you on a joyful occasion.

With our heartfelt congratulations to you,
Aseel Abulhab, Bilal Ansari, Drea Finley, Natalie Montoya-Barnes, and Carmen Whalen
The Davis Center Team

Davis Center Awards
The Davis Center is honored to announce this year's
recipients of the Davis Center awards. These awards were first announced during the Davis Center’s year end celebration, the DC Block Party. Thank you for inspiring your peers and us and we look forward to seeing you as leaders and global citizens!

- **Senior Social Justice Advocate Award:**
  - Tania Calle
- **Senior Cultivating Community Award:**
  - Shane Beard
- **Unsung Hero of the Year Award:**
  - Yaznairy Cabrera
- **Outstanding Student Mentor of the Year Award:**
  - Theophyl Kwapong
- **Outstanding Mentor of the Year Award:**
  - Eli Nelson
- **Outstanding Student Program of the Year Award:**
  - Krudas Cubensi Latinx Heritage Month
- **Outstanding Student Initiative of the Year Award:**
  - Ad Hoc COVID-19 Support group

---

**From Aseel Abulhab, Class of 2015 to the Class of 2020**

To the Class of 2020 -- my utmost and heartfelt congratulations to you! It has been an absolute pleasure to meet you, serve you, and most importantly, grow with you in these past few months. As staff, I can promise you that the Williams community will remain a support to you in this next chapter of your life and beyond. But as an alum (& your forever reunion buddy), I share this with you: your Williams experience - and it truly is an aggregate package of difficult moments and struggles, new experiences, lifelong friendships, and a rigorous education - has prepared you for the world in ways you may not know at this particular moment.

If there is anything we have been reminded of this spring, it is that we can never be sure what life has in store for us all individually & collectively, and that the fight for a just world will require each of us to engage wholeheartedly. I urge you to hold fast to your principles, but to allow flexibility on your path to achieving your goals, always reflecting on how your time at Williams has given you tools that can help you along the way. I wish you all the best as you move on to your next steps, and I will always be here for you as a current staff member at the DC, an alum who relied on it, and a friend. You made it. Congratulations again!
Thank you, MinCo Groups!

This year your MinCo groups sponsored informal activities and formal events, honored heritage months, built bridges with communities throughout and beyond Williams College, attended conferences, supported each other and all students, and so much more. Krudas Cubensi Latinx Heritage Month Performance, recipient of the DC’s Outstanding Student Program of the Year Award, is an example of programming that built connections across campus communities to bring visibility to those too often marginalized—in this instance Afro-Latinx and queer artists. As MinCo groups continued preparing heritage month celebrations and other programming, the pandemic struck, campus closed for most, and we went to remote learning. Students organized the Ad-hoc COVID-19 Support Group to support students, especially international students, who needed help figuring out living arrangements for the remainder of the semester. This example of spontaneous organizing to meet immediate human needs with compassion was awarded the DC’s Outstanding Initiative of the Year Award. While some students strove to continue programming efforts remotely, others turned to supporting the students who continued residing on campus, and all continued to support each other as first pandemic and then racial violence created ever more challenges. To the leadership and membership of each MinCo group, your resilience during this time has been an inspiration to us. We are honored to serve you, work with you, and learn from you. Thank you for supporting one another, and for building programming that kept the Williams community connected in unprecedented times. We appreciate you. We congratulate all graduating student activists, we thank you, and we will miss you tremendously!

Muslim Students Union

BEST WISHES FOR ALL

We would also like to take this opportunity to send our prayers and wishes to our beloved seniors who are graduating and leaving to change the world. With you we've laughed, we've cried, we've leaped and we've fallen down, all while creating beautiful memories that we hope will stay with you wherever you go. Thank you for all that you've done for us and this campus. You will be dearly missed.
Koreans of Williams

To the best chair, Julia!

It’s so unfortunate that the year was cut short and that many things we had looked forward to, including the rest of KoW’s events and your graduation, have been set aside. We can only imagine how hard it was for you to see your spotlight at graduation stolen by the pandemic :( As your board members, we want to say that your hard work and amazing leadership has not been for nothing; you’ve shown us exactly what it means to be a great chair: empathetic, compassionate, and competent! We’ve had an amazingly productive year, from monthly dinners to karaoke to Ramen Night. We put on successful parties and built a community. We’re left with great memories, and your efforts and ambitions made all this possible.

Sisterhood

Congratulations on graduating Yaznairy!

Thank you so much for your hard work with Sisterhood and for all that you've done to uplift and advance this organization. Thank you for your leadership, kindness, direction, and vision. You are a rockstar and a shining beacon for black women in our community and in the world. I cannot wait to see what you will do in this world, but I know that it will be amazing! Love you and we have been honored to know you!

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.—Arthur Ashe

To all of our amazing graduates,

We celebrate you and your
accomplishments! While we are sad that we could not hold our annual Rainbow Graduation brunch this year and celebrate you in person, we hope that you can feel that we are holding you in our thoughts and sending you best wishes and all of our support on your journeys. We look forward to planning and celebrating with you on a joyous occasion soon!

Queers of the Class of 2020 -

Congratulations on your graduation.

The fact that Pride and graduation seasons align has always made a certain kind of sense to me. Some of my proudest, fiercest moments have existed at the intersection of my queerness and my own academic achievement - something that I suspect may prove true for many of you as well. Right now it can be difficult to celebrate, to feel proud alongside feelings of anger, confusion, grief, guilt, pain. But, at least to me, bringing queerness to this moment means to challenge the binary assumption that negative and positive emotions are opposite forces that can’t, don’t co-exist. It isn’t either we feel guilt or we feel pride, rather our emotions are multitudinous, overlapping, and constantly shifting. This is the queer reality of existence: our anger and our pride are siblings, each feeds the other. And so I am writing to let you know how proud I am of your queer excellence, and how much simultaneous anger, pride, and hope I feel at the reality of your class entering a new chapter when the tome of humanity is upside down and on fire. I genuinely believe that each one of you is magic, and the world could really use an influx of queer magic right now.

If we were together, this moment would be Dively’s gift to you - a chance to feel yourself enveloped in the queer community you built at Williams. Instead, we are all separated, and by some estimation alone. So I offer to you a collection of queer zines from the new circulating zine collection in Sawyer - you can find these zines at https://bit.ly/2UdPOqF by signing in with your williams.edu login information. I hope that these queer stories fill your heart and mind with community. And though times are strange, you don’t have to be a stranger - I’d love to hear about your adventures beyond Williams. In fact, I can’t wait.

Take care of yourselves, take care of eachother.

Hale Polebaum-Freeman (hop1)
First-Year Outreach & Reference Librarian

Human Rights
Congratulations on making it to this day, and on all the hard work, grit, creativity and drive that got you here. I know many of you had to overcome extraordinary obstacles to achieve this moment. We are deeply proud of each and every one of you, and I know that the strength and skill that brought you here will serve you well in the future. I also know that in this moment that future must feel painfully unclear. Some of you may not yet know what your next step is. Some of you may have had to return to unwelcoming or unaffirming families. Some of you are struggling to find a safe place to call home. Some of you have lost loved ones, and all of you have lost a semester of experiences with friends, educators and fellow students. This is a time of loss and of deep uncertainty......read further in the beautifully compiled and produced program for this event!

Access the PDF of the program

Opportunities to Reflect and Share

Please share your stories and insights with the incoming Class of 2024!

The DC will continue to gather and share words from the Class of 2020, as well as tributes to the Class of 2020. This form is merely a list of possibilities, please also share via email to the daviscenter@williams.edu in any style or format you prefer.

In this time of racial violence, the DC welcomes your contributions to our webpage on Responding to Racial Violence. We welcome spoken word, writings, art in many forms, suggested resources, etc. Please email to the daviscenter@williams.edu. This webpage is intended as an on-going discussion.
The DC Staff is Available Now and Throughout the Summer

Please email us anytime and know that we are holding the following virtual drop in hours via Google Hangout:

Click here to access the office hour booking calendar.

- **Aseel Abulhab**: Wednesdays 11:00 to 1:00, Fridays 3:00 to 5:00, and by appointment
- **Bilal Ansari**: Mondays 2:00 to 3:00, Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 to 6:00, Fridays 4:00 to 6:00, and by appointment
- **Carmen Whalen**: see calendar for specific hours and by appointment
- **Drea Finley**: by appointment
- **Natalie Montoya-Barnes**: Mondays 11:30 to 1:00, Tuesdays 10:00 to 12:00, and by appointment

DC Staff & CEF Office Hours

Visit our website

The Davis Center at Williams College