

**Hebrew Union College NY 2026 Graduation**  
*Remarks by David Edelson*

On behalf of the Board of Governors, I am overjoyed to welcome everyone to this uplifting ceremony, whether here in person or joining via livestream.

I am honored to stand before this year's graduates, who are poised to become the inspiring and impactful Jewish leaders the world so desperately needs.

Additionally, it's an absolute pleasure to welcome the mighty Class of 2001, whose work over the past 25 years has inspired others and brought honor to themselves, to the Jewish people, and to Hebrew Union College.

Today, we celebrate graduates from our Rabbinical and Cantorial programs, our School of Education, and our Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management, demonstrating the depth and breadth of HUC.

You will go on to serve in congregations, in schools, in social service agencies, in advocacy and direct service, and more. The sky is the limit for the positive impact you can make.

We are proud to have walked alongside you on this journey to become leaders across the Jewish world and beyond.

The Board of Governors extends its hearty congratulations to the Class of 2026 / 5786. And we also honor your families and loved ones, who stood beside you along the way, through thick and thin.



The world has not been an easy place during your time here. You have been growing as leaders while the Jewish world has been shaken to its core. The weight of that reality did not stop you. If anything, it clarified your purpose.

That clarity can be your greatest asset.

The communities, organizations, and institutions you will enter need more than competence – they need people with purpose and passion. You are those people. You can make a difference.

You join a network of HUC alumni who have spent decades shaping Jewish life in every corner of the world. You belong to that lineage now. By adding your energy and intellect, you can enhance even further the impact HUC alumni make on the world.

Some of those alumni are here with us today, as we honor and celebrate their 25 years of service post-HUC. Congratulations to the Class of 2001 – it's wonderful to be among friends! You fill us with pride as you continue to change lives, change communities, and change the world.

To this year's graduates: Lead with courage, serve with integrity, maintain your senses of humor, and embody the values of justice, compassion, and dignity. The arc of the moral universe does not bend on its own. It bends because people like you choose to bend it.

Finally, our thanks to your families, friends, teachers, and the generations of alumni who came before you. All of them played a part in shaping who you are today. We couldn't be happier that their guidance, legacies, and values helped lead you to and through HUC.



Graduates – On behalf of the Board of Governors, I'm thrilled to officially confirm your degrees. We could not be prouder of you, or more hopeful because of you. Thank you.