On May 8, Commonwealth Honors College recognized more than 700 students in the class of 2015. During this “Celebration of Excellence,” university administrators, deans, faculty, and staff along with proud family members and friends acknowledged the accomplishments of Honors students. In addition to extended cheers, each graduate received a gold stole—the color intended to signify the value of an Honors education and the stole itself to denote the student’s academic achievements.
Interim Dean Daniel Gordon offered remarks, telling the graduates: “You can go forward with pride that you have met high academic standards and can compete against the best students from any university. I am sure you will bring intelligence and integrity to your professions, just as you have brought these qualities to your work here at UMass.”

UMass Amherst Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy and Provost Katherine Newman also addressed the students. Provost Newman noted that “in Honors, there are no answers, just questions.” She explained that Honors students, through their academic discovery, learn how to ask meaningful questions.

Selected as the student speaker, public health major D’Andre Quinerly addressed fellow graduates. Reflecting on his time at UMass Amherst, he said “there are years that ask questions and years that answer.” (Read his speech here.)

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