June 25, 2015

Dear Members of the Class of 2019 and Entering Transfer Students,

Congratulations again on joining the Tufts community. I look forward to welcoming all of you and your families to campus at Matriculation this September.

Your academic and personal journeys at Tufts will all be unique. But as you begin them, we invite you to participate in an important collective experience—the Common Reading Program. Common Reading is sponsored by Tufts’ Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service and by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Students. The program seeks to introduce you to Tufts as an intellectual community, giving you a chance to explore together a timely topic connected to Tufts’ mission and to build skills that support engagement in dialogue on challenging issues.

This year’s Common Reading book is a compelling memoir by Eboo Patel, Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation. Born in India and raised in the United States, Eboo Patel is the founder of the Chicago-based nonprofit Interfaith Youth Core, which works to promote deeper understanding and respect among people of all faiths and none, encouraging young people to engage in community service in order to heal divisions and conflicts in society and the world. His personal story explores important questions of community, compassion, and commitment and resonates strongly with our core values of active citizenship and global engagement.

Since Acts of Faith deals with religious and philosophical diversity and interfaith cooperation, the University Chaplaincy will be partnering with a number of other departments to offer programming related to the Common Reading Program. Some of these opportunities, including an essay contest, a photo project, and a personal story campaign, will begin over the summer. Dr. Patel himself will join us on campus on Monday, September 21 for a public lecture to engage our community in more depth about the issues raised in his book. We invite you to learn more and to get involved by visiting http://go.tufts.edu/CommonRead2015.

Please accept the enclosed copy of Acts of Faith as our gift to you as you begin your journey at Tufts. I hope that you will read it over the summer and come to campus ready for dialogue about it with faculty, staff, and fellow students starting at Orientation. In the meantime, I hope you are having a refreshing summer and looking forward to your arrival at Tufts.

Best wishes,

Tony

Anthony P. Monaco
President