Good evening, ladies and gentleman.

I take great pleasure in welcoming you all to Arangetram, my daughter Roshni’s graduation dance performance. It can be said that dance is a universal language and this gathering proves that. Many of you are from the Boston area, but today we also are pleased to have with us friends and family visiting from around the country. My sister and her family are visiting from India, as well. A family friend and well wisher is also visiting from India, and my brother - in-law is visiting from Dubai,. Our U.S. visitors hail from Atlanta, Indianapolis, New Jersey, and Texas. I welcome you all and thank you for being here to celebrate with us. We really hope you enjoy this cultural experience.

Jacques D’Amboise said, “Dance is your pulse, your heartbeat, your breathing, the rhythm of your life.” For the past decade, I have seen that in Roshni, and in a few minutes you will see it too. Roshni is a disciple of Srimati Jothi Raghavan and an ardent student of Nrityanjali School of Dance. For the past ten years, Roshni has devotedly pursued her passion for dance, combining her innate talent with rigorous training, perseverance, and practice. Her work comes to fruition today, a gift for all of us who are here to watch her dance. She has earned her place on this stage!

In addition to dance, Roshni pursues many other extracurricular activities: she plays soccer, volunteers at the library, and participates in the BMH School Building Committee. She has also served as President of her sophomore Class of 2020. She is a busy and talented young woman who invests deeply in all she does. We are proud of Roshni for being involved with, and interested in, so many diverse and meaningful activities, and as each project teaches about different aspects of life, self-expression, commitment, and leadership, her foundation for maturing into a strong, compelling young woman strengthens more and more. Her mother and I are very gratified to witness and be part of her commitment to various activities.

Bharatnatyam is an artistic discipline of a high order. It embodies human love for the divine and the opening of the heart to beauty and joy - and it expresses these things through precisely stylized, extraordinarily graceful gestures and motions. The practice of Bharatnatyam bears within itself all the elements necessary to live life to its full glory: an awakened mind, the focused union of soul and body, and discipline.

Do people need art in their lives? I say “Yes.” I believe that introducing their children to the arts is among one of the most precious gifts parents can give. Artistic endeavors demand and develop discipline, creativity, emotion, compassion, courage, generosity, and commitment. In short, the arts help young people become humane citizens of the world.

So, Roshni’s achievement of Arangetram - her ascent to a high level of dance performance - signifies more than that she has acquired certain skills in the performing arts. Arangetram represents a long immersion in the art and science of living, as expressed through the disciplined language of dance.

That is why today’s occasion is very significant-we are celebrating something far deeper than a dance-training graduation. We are celebrating Roshni’s approach to a milestone - the ability to continue dancing and honoring her respect for a tradition passed down to her by her Guru. I thank you all for sharing this program with us, and I hope you will be as inspired as we have been - Roshni has taken the opportunities her Guru has offered her and invested her heart and soul in them.

With her Guru’s blessing, Roshni is ready today to offer a delightful performance. We pray that she will touch your hearts and we seek your encouragement and blessings on her behalf. Once again I welcome you all.

As a customary practice, we will start the event by rendering our respects and prayers to the supreme God of dance, Lord Nataraja, and seeking his blessings.

I will now yield the stage to Smt. Jothi Raghavan. Thank you all.