

Apple CEO Publicly Acknowledges That Apple Is Supporting Anti-Gun Movement

By [Alistair Barr](#)

Fearlessness a major theme of Cook address to Duke graduates

Cook went to Duke's business school three decades ago

Tim Cook Photographer: Giulia Marchi/Bloomberg

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Apple Inc. Chief Executive Officer Tim Cook waded into divisive political topics such as gun control and immigration during a commencement speech while continuing his criticisms of internet companies over a lack of user privacy.

Speaking at Duke University, where he graduated from business school 30 years ago, Cook urged the students to reject the status quo and be fearless.

"Fearless like the students of Parkland, Florida, who refuse to be silent about the epidemic of gun violence and have rallied millions to their cause," Cook said to rousing applause. "Fearless like the women who say 'metoo' and 'Time's Up.' Women who cast light into dark places and move us to a more just and equal future. Fearless like those who fight for the rights of immigrants, who understand that our only hope for the future is one that embraces all who want to contribute."

Cook has overseen the development of key new Apple products, like the iPhone X and Apple Watch, new services like Apple Music, and research on potential new categories like self-driving cars and augmented-reality glasses. With a market value approaching \$1 trillion, Apple is the world's largest technology company.

Since taking the reins from the late Steve Jobs in 2011, Cook has also catapulted Apple into politics, tech policy

and environmental responsibility. He has pushed suppliers to improve labor practices, with mixed results, and battled with U.S. authorities over user-privacy tools like encryption.

On Sunday, Cook highlighted Apple's focus on privacy and indirectly criticized Alphabet Inc.'s Google and Facebook Inc., which collect mountains of personal data to target ads. Facebook sparked outrage earlier this year by disclosing that a political consulting firm obtained data on millions of users of the social network.

"We reject the excuse that getting the most out of technology means trading away your right to privacy," Cook said. "So we choose a different path, collecting as little of your data as possible, being thoughtful and respectful when it's in our care because we know it belongs to you."