



Phillips Academy
ANDOVER

January 30, 2026

To the Andover community:

I am writing to announce that my tenure as the Head of School will conclude on June 30, 2027. My journey to and through Andover was improbable, including my arrival with my family during the pandemic. I would never have guessed when I finished medical school that I would later become a college president or the head of a secondary boarding school. I knew only that I would not follow a typical medical career pathway, and that I would allow myself to explore intellectually and professionally and see where that led me. In retrospect, that was a somewhat risky plan, but one that has served me well overall.

I could not have sustained that journey without the love, support, and inspiration of my spouse, Dr. Peter Daniolos, and our two sons, who have demonstrated grace and generosity under sometimes difficult circumstances being the children of the Head.

I am especially grateful to my late parents, Dr. and Mrs. Garfield Kington, Peter's parents, the late Dr. Demetrios and Mrs. Daniolos, and my extended family, across the generations, who were deeply committed to the idea that education was the only path to a better society and a better life. Their lives and their message led me to Andover.

I began my 2019 introduction at Andover at a December [All-School Meeting](#) by speaking about an old family photo of one of my great, great grandmothers who was born enslaved but managed to survive that institution with her heart and mind intact (as I noted in my introduction, the symbolic book and flowers). She was one among many people who, with their love, hard work, and values, created the conditions that led to my career and my coming here as Head and to so many others in my family having better lives.

I am announcing the end of my time here with two other photographs. It seemed appropriate to use the first photo, which dates to about 1911, of a family gathering in rural east Texas in front of the school where both of my maternal grandparents taught (far left), and which was founded after the Civil War to educate formerly enslaved people. To the far right are two of my great-grandparents and to their left two of their siblings, all four of

whom were born enslaved. Through hard work and sacrifice, and the power of education, they moved the family from slavery into the middle class in one generation. Their narrative has sustained me in those inevitable difficult moments in any leadership position. Of note, both of my grandparents in the photo attended one of the Black college-affiliated boarding schools in the South because that was the only way in segregated rural areas at that time for black students to secure a college-preparatory education.



The second photo is more unusual. It is a photo I discovered by chance of the ship that brought my 9-month-old father and his family to Ellis Island from Jamaica in 1924. He entered the country with his mother following my grandfather's prior illegal entry as a banana boat stowaway that resulted in his deportation and his second entry leading to several years as an undocumented person in the dangerous work of building the Lincoln Tunnel in New York and then a final legal entry into the country. My father's arrival in the US occurred just before our country's last period of restrictive immigration policies. The story of his family's success in contributing to this country and building better lives for future generations is also improbable and remarkable, including his long career as a physician in one of Baltimore's neediest communities.



I chose to announce my introduction to Andover—and now my departure—through photos to place centrally, as a matter of pride, the ways I have been unlike any prior Head in the nearly 250-year history of Andover. I saw my differences then and now as illustrative of great and complex strengths for me, for the school, for our country. Those strengths include our varied and complicated family stories; our ability to choose to see the truth of our histories, especially those parts that are not always positive or visible, and to be made better because of it; our deep and diverse contributions in helping to create and improve the great American experiment in democracy; our evolution toward a better, more fair society in spite of periods of darkness and decline; and the irrefutable and sustaining transformative power of education, of the potent combination of knowledge and goodness.

I grew up with those same lessons embedded in me by my family. The values, aspirations, and loving directives transmitted to me from my earliest days by my parents were grounded in our family histories. Those ideas have informed my work in every job I have held—as a proud Black American, as the grateful son of an immigrant, and as an openly gay person who has often borne both the added burdens and the enriching gifts of being ‘the first.’

My family taught me and so many other family members to: work hard, never allow yourself to be defined or reduced by the expectations of narrow and often biased visions of other

people or policies and practices of institutions, never pretend to be something that you are not — you are more than enough as you are, live by your principles but know that you might pay a price for those principles, do not be afraid to do hard things because nothing changes in society without people deciding to take on hard things, do work that has value and contributes to society, and always open opportunities for others who follow. Over my career and through my work at Andover, I hope that I have in some way passed on those tenets to others.

I don't know what the next phase of life will hold for me, but as I finish my time here, I plan to continue learning and growing as a person, complete some of the work I have begun here, and hand off the leadership of Andover, with its amazing students, gifted faculty, devoted staff, and dedicated trustees and alumni, to the next Head of School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Raynard S. Kington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Raynard S. Kington, MD, PhD, P'24,'27
Head of School