Record breaker in the 'Shoe. Spring commencement marked the largest graduating class in Ohio State history, with a record 11,907 degrees and certificates awarded. Approximately 1,700 Buckeyes were the first in their families to finish college, up from 1,500 one year ago. Graduates included residents of all 88 Ohio counties, 49 states and 58 countries. Dr. Sue Desmond-Hellmann, CEO of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, delivered the commencement address.

Unprecedented affordability commitment. As part of the Buckeye Opportunity Program, the university will increase support for low- and moderate-income Ohio students on its five regional campuses. Starting in spring 2019, Ohio State will commit additional financial aid to cover the cost of tuition and mandatory fees for regional campus students who are from Ohio, qualify for federal Pell Grants, have earned 12 credit hours and have initiated or completed a student-success course. The program is expected to benefit 3,000 students in Columbus this fall. The expansion to regional campuses will support an additional 1,200.

Excellence in health care. The Wexner Medical Center and University Hospital East earned the highest possible score of "A" for patient safety from The Leapfrog Group's Hospital Safety Grade. Less than one-third of hospitals nationally received an "A" rating. It marks the eighth time the medical center has been awarded the top grade — and the seventh time for University Hospital East. The medical center also was named one of the "100 great hospitals in America" by Becker’s Hospital Review.

Car wars: episode IV - The Buckeyes strike back. Ohio State took home the top spot in the four-year EcoCAR 3 competition, beating out 15 other universities. The competition, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, tasks student teams with redesigning a 2016 Chevrolet Camaro to reduce its environmental impact while maintaining performance and safety. The Buckeyes’ vehicle featured an electrically heated catalyst that reduced startup emissions by 85 percent.

We have liftoff! Ohio State has launched its first satellite into space with the goal of improving how scientists collect data from Earth. The Ohio State team, led by Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering Joel Johnson, named the shoebox-sized satellite CubeRRT — a play on "Q*bert," one of the most popular video arcade games of the 1980s. In other space-related news, Professor Emeritus of Astronomy Bradley Peterson was awarded the NASA Exceptional Service Medal. He joins a number of notable awardees, including astronaut Buzz Aldrin, in receiving the honor.