

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Top Awards for 3 Outstanding UCSB Graduating Seniors

Three remarkable graduating seniors at UC Santa Barbara have been named winners of the university's top awards for their scholastic achievements, their extraordinary service to the university and the community, and their personal courage and persistence.

- Cathy Tran of Westminster is the winner of the Thomas More Storke Award, the campus's highest student honor, for outstanding scholarship and extraordinary service to the university, its students, and the community.
- Keily Holliday Hosmon of San Jose is the winner of the Jeremy D. Friedman Memorial Award for outstanding leadership, superior scholarship, and contributions to undergraduate life on campus.
- Esmeralda Nuñez Nuñez of Santa Barbara is the winner of the Alyce Marita Whitted Memorial Award in recognition of endurance, persistence, and courage in the face of extraordinary challenges.

These and other student-award winners will be honored at a University Awards Ceremony and Reception on Friday, June 10, from 3 to 6 p.m. in Corwin Pavilion on campus.

Cathy Tran, the Storke Award winner, is an honors student in biopsychology with a minor in professional writing. She has a stellar academic record with a 3.99 grade

point average and is a productive researcher with a strong commitment to public service. As further context for her achievements, Tran is a self-supporting, first-generation college student whose parents immigrated to the United States from Vietnam.

At UCSB, Tran received an undergraduate research grant and several research scholarships and presented her work both on campus and at national scientific meetings.

She participated in the Summer Science Institute at Washington University in St. Louis, worked as a research intern in developmental psychology at Hong Kong University, and served as a research assistant at UCSB in the Social Psychology and Socio-Cultural Laboratories.

In addition, she collected data for a smoking-related study at UC San Francisco (UCSF) as part of the UC Summer Research Training Program.

A faculty nominator underscored Tran's involvement and accomplishment with these words: "You can gauge her level of contribution to the UCSF project from the fact that she is first author on the project write-up."

Through her volunteer service, she coordinated the chemistry outreach program for local fifth-grade students, setting up workshops at UCSB that provided hands-on activities for nearly 1,000 local children.

She was also a science teaching fellow at Goleta Valley Junior High School, among many other activities.

Recently, Tran received the Society for Behavioral Medicine's 2005 Distinguished Student Award for outstanding academic and professional potential in behavioral medicine. At graduation, she will also be honored with the Francis Colville and Terry Dearborn Memorial Award for outstanding academic achievement as an honors student majoring in the sciences.

Kiely Hosmon, winner of the Friedman Memorial Award, is a women's studies major with a minor in queer studies. Soon after Hosmon entered UCSB, she assumed leadership roles in numerous student organizations and became known as an advocate for the frequently marginalized lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and ally (LGBTQIA) community.

Her passionate commitment resulted in innovative programs that raised visibility and increased tolerance of LGBTQIA issues on campus and in the community.

Hosmon also presented workshops at UCSB to educate students about LGBTQIA issues.

In addition, she conducted research with a professor to assess the success of Rainbow House, a new residential community for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students and their allies.

She served as a member of the Womyn's Commission and the Womyn of Color Conference Coalition, and is currently an intern at the Pacific Pride Foundation.

Hosmon, who has a 3.6 grade point average, is the recipient of numerous professional and academic awards, including the Leslie Griffin Lawson Outstanding Leadership Award, the Billy De Frank Lesbian and Gay Community Service Award, the Queer Service Award, and the Queer Scholar Award.

Esmeralda Nuñez Nuñez, winner of the Whitted Memorial Award, has a double major in sociology and Chicano studies. Wrote one of her nominators: "She is the type of person who often goes unnoticed here at the university---quiet, humble, and discreet.

However, Esmeralda's story is inspirational."

Nuñez emigrated from Mexico to the United States in 1981.

She is the first member of her family to attend college.

Her lack of English-language skills in high school prevented her from enrolling in college preparatory classes. She was told that because she was Hispanic, she had little potential and would be lucky to graduate from high school. Despite these obstacles, she continued to pursue a college education.

After high school she attended Santa Barbara City College, but had to drop out for financial reasons.

She continued to work full time, took night classes, and several years later transferred to UCSB.

Nuñez's commitment to her family is also very strong.

She and her four siblings each give half of their income to their parents to support the household. In addition to helping care for her parents, she mentors her younger cousins, giving them direction and encouragement.

To finance her education, Nuñez worked on an assembly line and developed Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and other serious health problems.

In class, she said she often felt discouraged and humiliated because of her language difficulties and considered dropping out, but a professor provided the encouragement that she needed to complete her studies.

"I just want students to know that they should not give up because many times there are going to be obstacles, and you have to overcome them," said Nuñez, who earned a 3.17 grade point average at UCSB.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.