

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

June 13, 2014

Julie Cohen

A Milestone for the Bren School

UC Santa Barbara's [Bren School of Environmental Science & Management](#) graduated its 1,000th student during its Class of 2014 commencement on Friday, June 13. In the middle of the procession, Louisa Smythe was sprinkled with rose petals and then stood on stage in the Michael J. Connell Memorial Courtyard while Bren Dean Steven Gaines said a few words about the school's 20-year history.

In the second of eight commencement ceremonies, Bren graduated 80 students: five receiving Ph.D.s and 75 earning master's degrees in environmental science and management (MESM). Chancellor Henry T. Yang said that Bren School's class represented 1.4 percent of this year's graduating class. "This ceremony is small but very special," he said.

The Chancellor also acknowledged the six classmates who died three weeks ago in Isla Vista and asked for a moment of silence. Six scholarships have been established in their memory and each will be posthumously awarded a bachelor's degree. Gaines also acknowledged the tragic events in Isla Vista. "It has affected us all," he said. "It has changed us."

Bren alumna Ashley Conrad-Saydah, deputy secretary for climate policy in the California Environmental Protection Agency, was the commencement speaker. She urged the members of Bren's Class of 2014 to "take a harder path. As Frost tells us take the road less traveled; diverge. Cultivate alliances where you might otherwise be a lone ranger."

Students and faculty alike received awards for their outstanding achievements. Taylor Debevec received the MESM Service Award, and two students — Casey O’Hara and Maxwell Ludington — were awarded the MESM Academic Achievement Award. Graduating student Jason Huffine presented Bren Professor Roland Geyer with the Distinguished Faculty Teaching Award.

In six ceremonies taking place Saturday, June 14, and Sunday, June 15, graduating honors will be conferred on more than 5,600 additional students in the College of Letters and Science, the College of Engineering and the Graduate Division.

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.