UC SANTA BARBARA
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‘A Glorious Day for a Celebration’

The atmosphere at Bren School of Environmental Science & Management was casual and convivial. Professor emeritus Marc McGinnes wore stilts with his robes. Alexandra Uribe’s yellow lab was on hand to watch her mistress deliver the student address. And big plans for the future were everywhere.

Vanessa De Anda is heading to Los Angeles for her new job as a water resources planner for RMC, a water and environment company. Erik Martinez is waiting to hear about a job in Seattle working for the Nature Conservancy. Ilan MacAdam-Somer isn’t going anywhere. He’ll be working for UC Santa Barbara industrial ecologist Roland Geyer and putting his musical talents to work.

They joined the procession of this year’s 77 graduates, who entered the Michael J. Connell Memorial Courtyard accompanied by live pop music played by Brengrass, the ever-changing band made up of Bren students.

Chancellor Henry T. Yang called the class of 2017 “tomorrow’s leaders” and Bren alumna Jill Gravender Matteson echoed that sentiment in her keynote address. Matteson, the director of innovative partnerships for the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, told the students the multidisciplinary education they received at the Bren School would be a huge asset to their careers. Their “secret super power,” she said, came from their ability to evaluate complex environmental problems from multiple perspectives. Matteson concluded her address with an apt sentiment: “Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you’ll end up among the stars.”

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.