UC SANTA BARBARA

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Welcome, Gauchos!

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“Coming to college is a daunting and simultaneously exciting time in your life,” Tessa Veksler, Associated Students president told hundreds of new students at UC Santa Barbara’s annual convocation. Scores of new Gauchos showed up to the ceremony for the official welcome and start of the academic year. Carillonist Wesley Arai gave an early concert and a cappella group Naked Voices performed while guests streamed in.

Several notable speakers offered their affection and advice. Among them were Chancellor Henry T. Yang; Executive Vice Chancellor David Marshall; Executive Dean of the College of Letters and Science Pierre Wiltzius; and Michael Douglas Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts Daina Ramey Berry.

Miller reminded students and faculty that the word “convocation” means “literally, a calling together. It is a chance for our academic community to gather together to welcome you, our newest members, and to introduce ourselves.”

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Matt Perko
UC Santa Barbara Convocation welcomes new students for the 2023/2024 academic year.
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- Wiltzius urged students to join “causes, clubs and groups that interest you —” especially things they’ve never tried before. “The small steps you take now to connect with other students and find your own personal community will pay off immensely in the years to come,” he said. He also warned students not to enter the bike path without looking both ways.

Veksler, now in her fourth year and majoring in communication and political science, had poignant words for her new peers: “For some of you, this may be your first time away from home for a longer period of time. For others, this may be your first time away from those you’ve known your entire life, and you may feel surrounded by strangers.

“Just remember this — those who seem like strangers to you now may become some of your closest friends and classmates. The buildings which are unfamiliar to you

now may become the destinations of your favorite professors and study spots. This university which is overwhelming to you now may become your home away from home.”

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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.