

UC SANTA BARBARA

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[Keith Hamm](#)

Surfrider Battalion graduates commissioned at Goleta Beach ceremony

Family, friends, mentors and fellow Gauchos gathered at Goleta Beach on June 12 as 14 graduating cadets became entry-level officers at the UC Santa Barbara U.S. Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Surfrider Battalion commissioning ceremony.

As the sun broke through the breezy morning gray, guest speaker Bill Miller, a retired Navy captain and father to commissioning graduate Molly Miller, thanked the students for their sworn commitment to uphold the principles of the “incredible and elite team that protects our nation.”

Miller emphasized the lifelong importance of reading, continued learning and “staying teachable,” he said. “Very carefully listen to and learn from your leaders. Take your profession and command very seriously, with good judgment and maturity.”

“Future lieutenants,” he added, “your time is now.”

With that, cadets stood before the crowd one by one to take the oath of office and receive their gold bars and first salutes as newly ranked second lieutenants. Many of the insignia were pinned by family members. Each graduating soldier was also

presented with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition by the California 24th District office of Salud Carbajal, a veteran of the Marine Corp Reserve.

UCSB's commissioned second lieutenants of 2026 are: Ella Barber (biological sciences), Yevgeny Beams (mathematics), Connor Buckelew (sociology), Natalie Byrnes (physiological and brain sciences), Kaya Cuellar (zoology), Nicolas Gandolfo (environmental studies), Lauren Graves (physiological and brain sciences), Timothy Joo (political science and a minor in applied psychology), Lia Kubitschek (biology), Katherine Miller (political science and economics), Rylie-Ann Murphy (political science), William Nutcher (history), Jonathan Saenz (communication) and Megan Schreck (global studies and a minor in German).

Tags

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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.