

## Graduating Seniors Looking Forward to Bright Future



*Nicole Metildi, Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications*

As UC San Diego's class of 2012 reflects on their accomplishments approaching graduation, many also are looking forward to bright futures as they pursue careers, graduate school and community service.

"I got the job of my dreams," said UC San Diego graduating senior, Nicole Metildi. In September, Metildi will start her new job working as a technology consultant at Deloitte in San Francisco.

"Since I was in middle school, I pictured that I would be a professional who would help companies solve problems," Metildi said. "I found out that is exactly what consulting is."

At Deloitte, Metildi will be consulting companies on how they can make their businesses more efficient through the use of technology.

Metildi is just one of many UC San Diego seniors who are gearing up to join the workforce upon graduation. Craig Schmidt, associate director of the UC San Diego Career Services Center, said that the job market for new graduates appears to be on the upswing compared to previous years.

One indicator he points to is that this year, full-time job listings on the UC San Diego Career Services Center website went up 9 percent compared to last year.

“There are good jobs out there for the well-prepared graduates,” Schmidt said. “Job seekers need to get started early and use a variety of methods, both traditional (such as using their career center), attending job fairs and networking, but also utilize today’s technology tools such as social media to expand their network and connect with opportunities.”

Annual surveys conducted by the UC San Diego Career Services Center have reported that about two-thirds of UC San Diego’s undergraduates join the workforce directly after graduating and about one-third go into graduate schools.

Recently, graduates of UC San Diego were ranked 8th for salary earning potential in the 2011-2012 PayScale study measuring top state schools across the nation.

A survey conducted by the Career Services Center that was released in June 2011 provides a snapshot of what industries alumni go into, actual job titles they land, their salaries and which professional and graduate school programs they enter. It also highlights what job search methods they used.

“Results showed that UC San Diego graduates go into a wide range of jobs in a variety of industries such as business, technology, life and health sciences, human services and arts/communications,” Schmidt said.

The survey also showed that starting salaries for UC San Diego recent grads increased by 3 percent from the previous year.

Metildi and Schmidt both believe that students should get a head start on the job search as early as their junior year and that students benefit from working or interning while they are undergraduates.

### Building Bridges



Kevin Smith, Marshall '93, is the structural engineer responsible for draping the 137-mile-long, pre-fabricated parallel wire strands over bridge towers of the new East Span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

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“When looking for jobs, I suggest to always be persistent and put yourself out there,” Metildi said. “It is part of the recipe you need to achieve dreams. It isn’t always easy, but it is worth it in the end.”

Many of this year’s graduating class have gained impressive experience outside the classroom while they were students at UC San Diego, and they have a lot to look forward to as commencement nears. These students include:

- **Alyssa Wing** served as Associated Students president for the 2011/2012 academic year. The Warren College senior served in student government all four year of her undergraduate experience at UC San Diego. She also performed community service through UC San Diego Alternative Breaks program, which sponsors service trips to Costa Rica, Peru, Tanzania, Russia, Appalachia, the Gulf Region and other areas where student aid is needed. Wing will continue to do community service after she graduates, through Teach for America—the program recruits diverse leaders with a record of achievement to teach for two years in a low-income community. Access for all to higher education is an issue close to Wing’s heart. “My brothers and I are the first in our family to attend college, so graduating is a huge milestone in my life,” Wing said. “I realize that my ability to be here at UC San Diego was a special opportunity and a huge blessing. My time on this campus has been nothing short of incredible and I owe a special gratitude to my parents who have worked all their lives to give my siblings and me the opportunity to go to college.”
- Graduating senior **Elizabeth Seckel** has gone on many journeys while she was a student at UC San Diego, including a journey taken from an injury of her own to the inner-workings of the human brain and how people deal with pain. The physiology and neuroscience major spent 10 years training as a gymnast, but, at age 18, she could no longer compete because she began experiencing chronic pain—pain that the 23-year-old continues to manage every day. Her own experience with pain led Seckel to UC San Diego, where she has spent three years as a research assistant in the lab of V.S. Ramachandran, director of the Center for Brain and Cognition. Her work in the lab inspired her to bring mirror-box therapy that was developed by Ramachandran to amputees in Haiti in summer of 2011. The mirror-box therapy allows patients with phantom limb pain to see a reflection of their intact limb superimposed to look like the missing one. The simple visual trick makes it look to the patient as though they are able to move the phantom and unclench it from a painful position. This summer, Seckel will return to Haiti and the Dominican Republic to further spread mirror-box therapy throughout the region. This fall, she plans to pursue graduate school at UC San Diego’s department of biology under the direction of Ramachandran.
- This spring, **Daniel Quirós** earned his Ph.D. from UC San Diego’s literature department. Originally from Costa Rica, Quirós came to UC San Diego for graduate school, where he earned the UC President’s Graduate Student Fellowship in the humanities. “The fellowship was a true blessing,” Quirós said. “The best work I produced was while I was supported by the fellowship.” Quirós has already written two books in fiction that were published in Costa Rica. This fall, he will be taking a faculty position at Lafayette College teaching Latin American literature. The arts and humanities are critical programs needed in higher education, Quirós said. “The humanities help produce well-

rounded, well-educated individuals who think critically about the world we live in,” he said. Quirós added that he is thrilled to continue his career in literature at Lafayette College. “To be able to get up and work everyday on what you want to do is a true blessing.”

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