



All Campus Commencement Speaker Muhammad Yunus to Inspire Grads to be Job Creators, Not Job Seekers

Nobel Laureate and founder of global microfinance movement to revive time-honored tradition to celebrate and unify all UC San Diego graduates

Commencement weekend will kick off on June 11 with the [All Campus Commencement](#) featuring keynote speaker Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient and founder of the global microfinance movement. The event, at 10 a.m. on Saturday, will mark the first time in 16 years that UC San Diego will convene all of its graduating undergraduate and graduate students for a campuswide commencement ceremony.

The All Campus Commencement is designed to strengthen a sense of community among UC San Diego graduates by providing an opportunity for all graduating students to come together one final time as the Class of 2016.

Yunus was selected to address the campus's graduating students because he embodies UC San Diego's ideals of public service, social mobility and global citizenship. The social entrepreneur and economist was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for founding the nonprofit Grameen Bank and pioneering the concepts of microcredit and microfinance. These loans are given to entrepreneurs who don't qualify for traditional bank loans. The Grameen Bank, established in Bangladesh, has lent billions of dollars to impoverished people—mostly women—to start their own businesses.

Yunus's message to students: we are all entrepreneurs

Yunus will encourage UC San Diego students to use their creativity to be a job creator, not a job seeker, as he believes everyone is an entrepreneur, whether they realize it or not.

"I would say it's in human DNA to be go-getters and problem solvers which we call entrepreneurship," he recently told Biz News.com. "I believe human beings are born with unlimited creative capacity."

He echoed similar sentiments in an interview with the Huffington Post. "Today, our education system produces job seekers, ending up with a job application, when it should prepare job creators armed with a business plan," Yunus said. "This is a very different mindset and it leads to a happier life and more stable economy."

Yunus and the Grameen Bank were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to help poor people escape from poverty by providing loans on terms suitable to them and by teaching them sound financial principles so they could help themselves. The Norwegian Nobel Committee noted that "lasting peace cannot be achieved unless large population groups find ways in which to break out of poverty" and that "across cultures and civilizations, Yunus and Grameen Bank have shown that even the poorest of the poor can work to bring about their own development."

Yunus has received other prestigious awards including the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal, two of the highest civilian honors in the United States.

Yunus's vision: redesign economics to redesign the world

At the June 11 commencement, Yunus is expected to discuss how education and banking systems need to evolve to eradicate poverty and address other pressing global problems.

"We all know that the world's wealth is controlled by a handful of people...This is totally disastrous, so we need to work quickly to undo the harmful things that are reflected in our economic framework and move toward a new, more selfless civilization," he told the Huffington Post. "So I am spending time sharing how to achieve this and what role new frameworks in social business and education can play."

Yunus established the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh in 1983, fueled by the belief that credit is a fundamental human right. His objective was to create economic and social development from below. Today, replicas of the Grameen Bank model operate in more than 100 countries worldwide.

Through his development of microfinance via the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, Yunus created a novel, social business model characterized by a non-dividend, non-loss structure with a goal of resolving a social problem.

Though this emerging field is composed of many different entities throughout the world, all social businesses stress the importance of sustainability, self-sufficiency and the impact businesses have on both people and the environment.

Graduate and undergraduate student speakers to also revive the campus tradition

The All Campus Commencement program will feature two student speakers who were selected to share their personal stories and encourage the Class of 2016 to be of service to the community and the world. The undergraduate student speaker, Karina Mohajerani, said Yunus has had a big influence on her, as she plans on working with social businesses to address poverty after graduation.

“Having a Nobel Peace Prize recipient as this year’s guest speaker is already a noteworthy experience; furthermore, his work with social businesses is exactly what influenced me to take the career path that I have chosen,” she said.

Mohajerani will be joined by Alberto “Beto” Vasquez, the graduate student speaker of the event. Vasquez is a father of four who returned to school at age 29. He is earning a master’s degree in biology and plans on pursuing a doctoral degree in education and leadership, to further identify practices to optimize the enrollment and retention of students from underserved communities.

All Campus Commencement to allow family and friends to fully experience joy and pride that marks one of most memorable times in a student’s life

The All Campus Commencement will include the official conferring of degrees for 8,058 undergraduate and graduate students. Following the ceremony, the campus’s six undergraduate colleges, two professional schools and various graduate programs will host personalized graduation events where students will walk across stage as their names are read.

This year’s commencement experience will feature a hospitality village located on RIMAC field with a number of food vendors and UC San Diego Bookstore and Alumni booths, as well as a flower vendor. The village will provide spaces for families, friends and graduates to get refreshments and relax between ceremonies.

In addition, the event will allow families and friends to get close-up photos of graduates on stage, as the hospitality village will feature a mini commencement stage with an official backdrop. The mini-stage is designed to create the ideal photo opportunity for graduates as they celebrate the momentous achievement of earning a UC San Diego degree.

For more information on UC San Diego's commencement ceremonies, including events hosted by the undergraduate colleges, professional schools and graduate programs, click [here](#).

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