

UC San Diego

# UC San Diego News Center

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By Christine Clark

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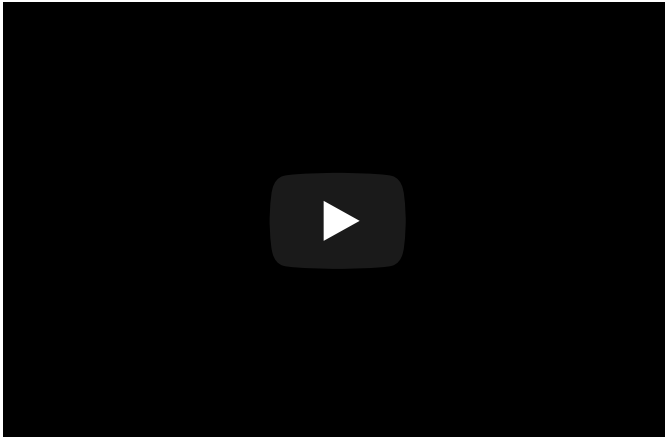
## The Dalai Lama to UC San Diego Students: Young People are the Future of Humanity



*Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications*

“You have the opportunity to create a better world, a happier world,” said His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, who delivered the keynote address to 25,000 University of California San Diego graduates and their families June 17 at the university’s [All Campus Commencement](#). His message to graduates centered on the power of compassion, the importance of emotional knowledge and the responsibility that younger generations have to make the world a better place.

UC San Diego was the first stop on His Holiness' 2017 U.S. tour. He offered a public address on June 16, then the keynote address on June 17. The Dalai Lama has dedicated his life to sharing messages of global compassion, with an emphasis on education, scientific inquiry and global responsibility—all values that deeply align with UC San Diego's academic mission.



At Commencement, Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla spoke of his first meeting with His Holiness, who describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk. “Peace and positivity radiate from him,” Khosla said. “His wisdom inspires us to be better caretakers of the world and better caretakers of each other.”

### **Sharing words of wisdom and a vision for world peace**

When His Holiness took to the podium, he was all smiles as he congratulated the graduates on their success. He also called upon them to use their education as a source for creating more peace.

“You have the responsibility to create a better world, no longer violence, no longer this huge gap between rich and poor,” he said. “You can do that; we elder people may not see that kind of world, but you can see and you can enjoy.”

He spoke about the threat of climate change and how it can be an opportunity for all of humanity to work together.

“It is not a problem for a particular nation or a particular continent, but for the world,” the Dalai Lama said. “This phenomenon teaches us that as human beings, we must work unitedly, towards a common goal...that’s a happy world. This century should be a peaceful century...now you have the responsibly to create [it].”

He urged the graduates to be mindful of their emotional intelligence as they navigate through the challenges of life outside the university.



*Students rejoice as they celebrate joining the UC San Diego alumni family.*

“Now you have completed your study period, now you begin another lifestyle—work: not easy ...life will not be easy,” he said. “Determination, willpower, optimism are very essential.”

His Holiness encouraged students to be both educated *and* warmhearted in order to overcome obstacles and connect with others.

“Combine warm-heartedness and this brilliant brain and then the individual will be happier, calmer, more relaxed and to others too...that kind of attitude automatically brings more friends.”



*About 25,000 students and their guests were among the crowd at the June 17 All Campus Commencement.*

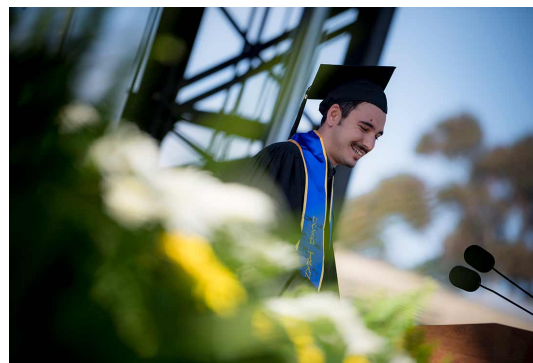
He spoke personally about how finding inner peace and having more concern for others helped him develop more confidence and how these traits are essential for all humanity to achieve a more peaceful and just society.

“Happy families and happy societies ultimately depend very much on inner peace,” he said. “World peace must be achieved by inner peace, not with weapons.”

His Holiness’ talk was followed by an address from Richard “Ricky” Flahive, who was among the record 9,000 students who graduated from UC San Diego over the weekend. As the undergraduate student speaker at the All Campus Commencement, Flahive shared his story as a first-generation, low-income student who wasn’t sure he would even graduate high school. With a childhood that included living in a motel for seven years, he largely missed out on an elementary school education. At San Diego City College, he made up for lost time before transferring to UC San Diego.



“It is beyond my wildest dreams and expectations to share the stage with the Dalai Lama,” said Flahive, a double major in political science and sociology. “I am very humbled, considering I didn’t always see myself going to college...In the address we just heard, we learned about the themes and ethics of the Dalai Lama: compassion, embracing diversity, the acceptance of others... I found that in the compassion of educators who believed in me.”



*Richard “Ricky” Flahive, the undergraduate students speaker.*

The Dalai Lama, who spoke to graduates on the topic of “The Value of Education, Ethics and Compassion for the Well-Being of Self and Others,” also presented a public address at the university on June 16.

“He has a very powerful message, not just for the UC San Diego community, but for the world,” said Mandy Bratton, executive director of the Jacobs School of Engineering’s Global TIES program, who was in the audience June 16. “[He says] the path to true happiness leads through compassion and generosity for others—and I think we need that today more than ever.”

## **All Campus Commencement uniting Tritons**

The All Campus Commencement, where Chancellor Khosla officially conferred degrees by academic division upon graduates gathered as one student body, was the kick-off event to UC San Diego’s graduation weekend. Following the ceremony, the campus’s six undergraduate colleges, two professional schools and various graduate programs hosted personalized graduation events where more than 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students walked across the stage as their names were read.

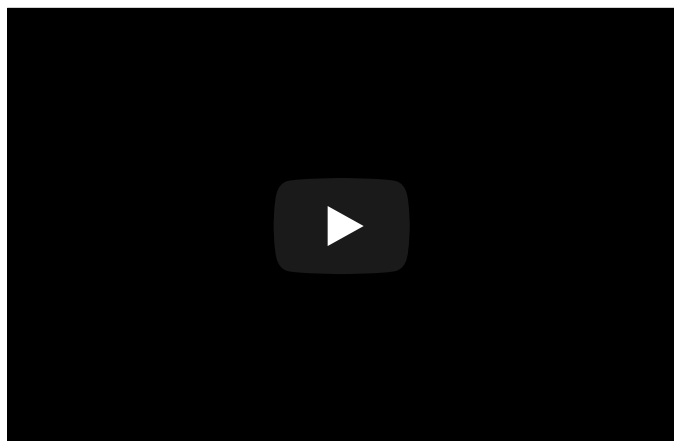


*His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was invited to speak on campus because his message of compassion aligns with UC San Diego’s mission.*

In 1989, His Holiness was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He also became the first Nobel laureate to be recognized for his concern for global environmental problems. He has traveled to more than 62 countries spanning six continents, receiving over 84 awards, honorary doctorates, prizes and other recognition of his message of peace, nonviolence, interreligious

understanding, universal responsibility and compassion. He has also authored more than 80 books.

The visit by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was organized in partnership with [The Friends of the Dalai Lama Foundation](#), founded by Ven. Lama Tenzin Dhonden, the Personal Emissary for Peace to His Holiness. His Holiness was invited to speak because his message of compassion aligns with UC San Diego's mission. Ranked first in the nation by Washington Monthly for contributions to the public good, the university seeks solutions to societal challenges.



For those who were not in attendance and are interested in viewing the Dalai Lama's public address and commencement keynote, access to the videos is available on the [UC San Diego YouTube channel](#).