

June 23, 2015 | By Laura Margoni

Preuss Seniors Celebrate Success, Scholarships

The Preuss School UCSD Class of 2015 garners \$1.6 million in award money



Nearly the entire Preuss Class of 2015, 102 out of 103 seniors, has been admitted to a four-year college or university. Preuss graduates are consistently accepted to four-year colleges and universities at a rate of more than 90 percent. Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

When The Preuss School UCSD Class of 2015 graduates this week, senior Diego Espinoza will have a lot to celebrate. Not only is Espinoza the class valedictorian, he is also going to Tufts University on a full-ride scholarship. His classmate and salutatorian Belen Hernandez will be celebrating as well—she is one of 21 Preuss students who will attend UC San Diego on a full ride through the Chancellor’s Associates Scholars Program.

“It’s my family’s dream come true, it’s my community’s dream come true,” said Hernandez of her plans to go to college. “I think there are many students who have the potential to attend a four-year university but they were never given the support or resources to do so.”

As a charter middle and high school for low-income students who strive to become the first in their families to graduate from college, Preuss provides those resources. The school, located on the UC San Diego campus, offers a longer school day and school year as well as a rigorous academic curriculum and the support students need to succeed. As a result, Preuss graduates are consistently accepted to four-year colleges and universities at a rate of more than 90 percent, and almost 100 percent go on to some form of higher education.

The Class of 2015 is carrying on this Preuss tradition. Nearly the entire class, 102 out of 103 seniors, has been admitted to a four-year college or university.

“This is a remarkable feat for nearly any high school, but this is especially significant for our students,” said Scott Barton, Preuss principal. “We are extremely proud of everything they have accomplished and grateful for all the hard work and dedication of the faculty, staff, parents and friends who have helped our students get where they are today.”

Of the Preuss graduates heading off to four-year institutions, a few, like Espinoza, will attend private colleges including Stanford University, Yale University, Wesleyan University, Claremont McKenna College and Pitzer College. The majority will attend public universities with 44 planning to attend a University of California campus and 36 headed to a California State University campus. Nine students will attend community colleges with plans to transfer to a four-year university.

This year’s graduating class has also garnered \$1.6 million in award money. Four seniors received Gates Millennium Scholarships, which cover all college costs for undergraduate and graduate education. Only 1,000 of these scholarships are awarded nationwide each year, and Preuss is home to 35 Gates Millennium Scholars in the past 12 years. As UC San Diego Chancellor’s Associates Scholars, Hernandez and 20 other Preuss seniors will each receive \$10,000 a year for four years at the university. When combined with the University of California’s Blue + Gold Opportunity plan—which covers fees for California residents whose families earn less than \$80,000 a year and qualify for financial aid—the scholarships effectively provide a full-ride to UC San Diego.

In addition to the Chancellor’s Associates Scholarships and Gates Millennium Scholarships, students have received the 2015 Horatio Alger National Scholarship, the new Union Bank Scholarship for Preuss Graduating Seniors, San Diego Women’s Inc. scholarships, and

scholarships from Kiwanis of La Jolla, the Patricia and Christopher Weil Family Foundation and the Grillo-Marxuach family, to name just a few.

Established 16 years ago, The Preuss School has become known as one of the best high schools in the nation. *Newsweek* named Preuss the top transformative school in the nation for three consecutive years, citing the school's ability to lead the way in getting low-income and first-generation students ready for college and beyond. The school also has been consistently ranked as one of America's best high schools by *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post* and *U.S. News & World Report*, among others.

The Preuss graduation will take place at 4 p.m. on Thursday, June 25 at the school's Manchester Field. For more information on The Preuss School UCSD, visit preuss.ucsd.edu.

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