

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Christine Clark and Fred Grier

Feb 14, 2019

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to Serve as UC San Diego Commencement Speaker

The icon of American diplomacy will address thousands of graduating students June 15



Photo credit: Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

The University of California San Diego announced today that author, businesswoman, professor and former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright will deliver the keynote address at the UC San Diego All Campus Commencement June 15, 2019. An icon of American

diplomacy, Albright shattered the glass ceiling when she was named the nation's first female secretary of state. Albright just concluded a 10-city tour across the U.S. to promote her latest book, "Fascism: A Warning," which debuted last April at No. 1 on the New York Times bestseller list. She is the author of five other New York Times bestselling books.

UC San Diego, recognized as one of the top ten public universities in the U.S., is committed to supporting cutting-edge research and the global promotion of human rights—core values that align with the work of Albright. She was appointed secretary of state by President Bill Clinton in 1997 after she served as ambassador to the United Nations for four years. Serving as secretary of state until 2001, she reinforced America's alliances, advocated for democracy and human rights, and promoted American trade, business, labor and environmental standards abroad.

As the 64th secretary of state, she is among the highest-ranking women in the history of the U.S. government.

"We are pleased to have Secretary Albright, a distinguished leader in international diplomacy, serve as this year's All Campus Commencement Speaker," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "UC San Diego's teaching and research prepares students as scholars, global citizens and changemakers. We look forward to having Secretary Albright reinforce these values and share her insight as a strong female leader and dedicated public servant who inspires making a positive impact on the globe."

Among the world's top experts on global affairs

Now a professor in the practice of diplomacy at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, Albright was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor, by President Barack Obama in 2012.

Albright emigrated to the U.S. from Czechoslovakia at age 11, and is the granddaughter of Holocaust victims. A senior scholar, Albright has served as a dedicated public servant for decades. From 1989 to 1992, she served as the president of the Center for National Policy. Previously, she was a member of President Jimmy Carter's White House Staff and National Security Council, working alongside Zbigniew Brzezinski. She also served as chief legislative assistant to U.S. Sen. Edmund S. Muskie.

In 2009, she was asked by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to chair a group of experts focused on developing NATO's New Strategic Concept. This work helped lead the alliance's campaign to combat terror and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, reduce the spread of

nuclear weapons, pursue peace in the Middle East and Africa, as well as champion of human rights and democracy worldwide.

From classrooms to the world's stage, a beacon of wisdom to generations of students

In addition to the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Albright has received countless honors for her contributions to diplomacy, democracy and world affairs.

Throughout her career, she has imparted wisdom on college students through her leadership, teaching and talks. In her address at UC San Diego's commencement, Albright hopes to inspire the audience as she shares what it takes to be a leader and role model, and the importance of public service. She often tells graduates, "You are a remarkable generation that needs to be involved more than ever. There are serious issues in this country. Tuning out is a mistake. When people of your generation decide they cannot do anything, we're really in very deep trouble."

All Campus Commencement, open to graduates and their guests, kicks off graduation weekend at UC San Diego. At the event, Chancellor Khosla will officially confer degrees by the academic division and professional schools upon graduates gathered as one student body. Following the ceremony, the campus's six undergraduate colleges, two professional schools and various graduate programs host personalized graduation events where more than 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students will walk across the stage as their names are read. All graduates, families and friends are invited to attend both ceremonies to fully experience the pomp and circumstance, and joy and pride, which mark one of the most memorable times in a student's life.

Below is the 2019 UC San Diego commencement schedule. To learn more, visit the [All Campus Commencement website](#).

Saturday, May 18

10 a.m. Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Commencement
(Price Center West Ballroom)

Sunday, June 2

10 a.m. UC San Diego School of Medicine (Commencement Lawn of the Medical
Education and Telemedicine Building)

Saturday, June 15

- 9 a.m. All Campus Commencement (RIMAC Field)
- 12:30 p.m. Graduate Division (RIMAC Arena) – Masters
- 1:30 p.m. College Ceremony (RIMAC Field) – Earl Warren College
- 4 p.m. Graduate Division (RIMAC Arena) – Doctoral and Master of Fine Arts
- 5 p.m. College Ceremony (RIMAC Field) – John Muir College

Sunday, June 16

- 8 a.m. College Ceremony (RIMAC Field) – Sixth College
- 9 a.m. Rady School of Management (RIMAC Arena)
- 11:30 a.m. College Ceremony (RIMAC Field) – Revelle College
- 1:30 p.m. School of Global Policy and Strategy (RIMAC Arena)
- 3 p.m. College Ceremony (RIMAC Field) – Thurgood Marshall College
- 6:30 p.m. College Ceremony (RIMAC Field) – Eleanor Roosevelt College

Note to Media: All reporters and photographers must register with UC San Diego to cover commencement. Contact Christine Clark at 858-534-7618 or ceclark@ucsd.edu.