

Two Commencement Ceremonies at UCSD Health Sciences to Celebrate a New Generation of Physicians and Pharmacists

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On Saturday, May 21, 57 graduates will receive Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degrees at the sixth commencement ceremony of the University of California, San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The event will begin at 10 a.m. at the Price Center Ballroom located on the main UCSD campus in La Jolla. Keynote speaker will be James McKerrow, MD, PhD, professor in the Departments of Pathology, Cell and Molecular Pharmacology, and Pharmaceutical Chemistry at UC San Francisco.

The UC San Diego School of Medicine will hold its commencement ceremony on Sunday, June 5 for 143 new graduates. The event will take place on the Concert Lawn near the Biomedical Library and will begin at 10 a.m. Keynote speakers are William F. Jessee, MD, President and CEO of the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) – the nation’s leading voice for group medical practice – and student speaker Michael Rochon-Duck, who is completing his residency training in internal medicine at UC Irvine Medical Center.

Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

As the only public university school of pharmacy in Southern California, the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences matriculated the first class of PharmD students in the fall of 2002. Since then the Skaggs School of Pharmacy, in conjunction with UCSD School of Medicine, has offered a unique and innovative program emphasizing the critical role of pharmacists as key partners in 21st-century patient care. During the course of their training, pharmacy students share many classes with medical students, as well as participate in clinical rotations.

Of the 57 students graduating this year, 42 percent will be completing post-graduate clinical practice residences in institutions across California, New York, Texas, Colorado, and Utah. One graduate will be doing fellowship training in New Jersey. The rest will pursue their careers in professional practice.

The keynote commencement speaker, James McKerrow, has had a distinguished career in parasitology and is especially known for his work in protease biochemistry and developing drugs for neglected tropical diseases.

McKerrow is the director of the UCSF Tropical Disease Research Unit and the director of the Sandler Center for Drug Discovery. He earned a PhD degree in biology from UC San Diego, and his MD at the University of New York at Stony Brook. He has received numerous teaching and research awards, including the Gregor Mendel Honorary Medal of 2009.

UC San Diego School of Medicine

The U.S. News and World Report Media Group ranks UCSD School of Medicine as 15 in the nation among research-intensive schools of medicine. Among the students graduating this year, six will receive both MD and Master's of Advanced Studies in Clinical Research, and ten are graduating with joint MD/PhD degrees.

The Class of 2011 is gearing up for the next exciting phase in their lives and careers. Eighty-five of the graduates will embark on their residency trainings in California. Others will pursue their residencies in Arizona, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Washington DC, and Wisconsin. Here are a few of their stories:

Michael “Fuj” Fujinaka will pursue an internship in internal medicine at the University of Hawaii, and an anesthesiology residency program at the UC San Diego Health System. At UC San Diego, Michael is known as the creator of the nation’s #2 best-selling medical app, “iMurmur,” that teaches medical students how to recognize abnormal heart sounds. He has also helped run a volunteer nightclub promotion company that donated more than \$240,000 to local non-profits in the past four years. He completed a trauma surgery rotation in Johannesburg, South Africa and a cardiology rotation in Hawaii. Michael was also a co-manager of the UCSD Free Clinic and published a scientific paper in the *Journal of Emergency Medicine*. In his spare time he enjoys tennis, surfing and Brazilian jiu-jitsu, and has competed on the UCSD Ultimate Frisbee team. Completing the list of Fuji's interests, let's just add that he is also an amateur magician.

Benjamin Johnson is heading to Stanford where he will begin his residency in radiology. Ben, originally from West Virginia, grew up in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and after graduating from college he devoted his time to Teach for America in Los Angeles. Recently Benjamin traveled to Uganda with Rad-Aid and Imaging the World (ITW) – two organizations focused on radiology outreach. Together they implemented a project utilizing portable ultrasound equipment and teleradiology to provide Uganda’s women with proper diagnosis and care. His personal and professional goal is to make radiology accessible to all.

Tsinsue Chen is looking forward to her next seven years as a neurosurgery resident at the Barrow Neurological Institute at St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix, Arizona. Neurosurgery training is one of the longest and most demanding, but Tsinsue is determined to push hard. Her inspiration came early on from one of the neurosurgeons who treated her father when he became ill. She knows that with her specialty she will be helping people with the most serious medical conditions.

Before joining MGMA in 1999, keynote speaker William F. Jessee, served as vice president for quality and managed care standards at the American Medical Association (AMA), where he led the organization's activities in clinical guidelines, quality improvement, and accreditation. Jessee currently also holds an academic appointment as clinical professor of health systems, policy and management at the Colorado School of Public Health, University of Colorado, in Denver. He received his undergraduate degree at Stanford University and his medical degree at the UCSD School of Medicine. He then did his residency training in pediatrics at Indiana University Hospitals, Indianapolis, and completed his training in preventive medicine at the University of Maryland Hospital, Baltimore. Jessee is an internationally known speaker on health care issues and primarily focuses on hospital-physician relations, health policy and quality of care. He is also the author of over 90 scientific articles, books, and book chapters.

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Media Contacts: Maja Gawronska, 619-543-6163; Debra Kain, 619-543-6163, ddkain@ucsd.edu

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