

UC San Diego Alumni Host Annual Summer Send-Off Picnics

Over 1,600 students, families and alumni registered to attend one of eight picnics across California

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The UCSD Alumni Association welcomed incoming students and their families at the annual Summer Send-Off Picnics which took place the weekend of Sept. 12-13. In its 20th year, the picnics bring together alumni and students to welcome the newest members of the university community and provide insights on life and studies at UC San Diego. The family-style, pot-luck picnics are organized by alumni chapter volunteers.

"I saw feelings of both excitement and nervousness in the faces of the new students," said alumni volunteer Jordon Cross, '04. "I had fun reminiscing about my own UCSD experience and wished them the best as they embarked on this important chapter in their lives."

The annual Summer Send-Off Picnics help ease the transition from home to college and allow freshmen and transfer students to meet others from their region before heading off to college. Alumni volunteers organize breakout groups for each of UC San Diego's six colleges, as well as one for parents and families. Students have the opportunity to ask alumni questions and learn about surf, sun and studies in La Jolla.

"You could tell that everyone learned something meaningful and began thinking about UC San Diego in a new light - as the new 'home' for students and a new 'community' for parents and family members," said Cara Appel-Silbaugh, director, Parent and Family Programs.

The Summer Send-Off Picnic tradition began in the late 1980s by the Bay Area alumni chapter and has grown today to include Sacramento, San Francisco, Silicon Valley, Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, Irvine and San Diego. Earlier this summer, incoming UCSD students from the Central Valley participated in an All-UC Send-Off Picnic at UC Merced.

"From Sacramento to San Diego, alumni volunteers counseled students and encouraged them to find their passion at UCSD," said Armin Afsahi, '90, executive director, UCSD Alumni Association. "We hope that this event is the first of many where the students can connect directly with members of our impressive, 130,000 strong alumni community."

This fall, UCSD is expected to welcome 3,740 freshmen, 1,860 transfers and 1,175 new graduate students, for an estimated total student enrollment of 28,500 on campus when classes began on Sept. 24. The official count will be announced three weeks after the quarter begins.

The regional Summer Send-Off Picnics serve as the official kick-off for the UCSD Alumni Association's suite of fall programs for incoming and returning students including the launch of Society 60, the new Student Alumni Association, which will serve as students' gateway to the alumni network and provide opportunities for students to pave the way to life after graduation. Additional information about Society 60 and the Alumni Association's student programs is available at alumni.ucsd.edu/students.

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