

The UCLA logo consists of the letters "UCLA" in white, bold, sans-serif font, set against a blue rectangular background. This logo is positioned at the top left of the page, to the left of a thick yellow vertical bar that runs down the center.

UCLA

College | Physical Sciences

Physics & Astronomy

UCLA
The Department of Physics &
Astronomy

2026 Commencement Celebration

Sunday, June 14th, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Ackerman Grand Ballroom

Welcome to the Commencement Celebration for UCLA's Department of Physics and Astronomy. Physics is a foundational science aimed at discovering the laws of nature and provides an understanding of our physical world. All phenomena, ranging from the study of the nature of the universe, to subatomic interactions, to complex molecules on which life is based, are of interest to physicists.

Because it is so encompassing, physics is the foundation of all other disciplines of science. Astronomy more particularly, is the application of physics, which answers questions concerning the nature, workings, origin and evolution of the universe.

The students assembled here today have risen to the challenge of this exciting field. We congratulate our students, and their loved ones who support them.

PROGRAM

Welcome

Stuart Brown, Ph.D., Professor and Chair
Andrea Ghez, Ph.D., Professor
Richard Ross, Ph.D., MQST Program Director

Procession of Students

Recognition of Awards

Student Address

Amey Gaikwad, Ph.D., '26
Miguel Silva Rodriguez, MQST, '26
Ava Pearl Huddleston, B.S., '26

Hooding of Graduate Students in Astronomy & Astrophysics

Andrea Ghez

Hooding of Graduate Students in Physics

Stuart Brown

Keynote Speaker

Tim McDonald

Senior Consulting Advisor to the CoolGaN Program, Infineon Technologies

Presentation of Master of Science Degree Recipients

Presentation of Master of Quantum Science and Technology Degree Recipients

Presentation of Bachelor Degree Recipients

Closing

Recessional & Reception

AWARDS

Rudnick-Abelmann Endowed Scholarship

Celeste Guerrero
Jeremy Ting-Yang Lin

Kaplan Award for Biological Physics

Ethan Haroutune Poladian

E. Lee Kinsey Award

Nova Leigh Royle

Charles Geoffrey Hilton Award

Gurmeher Kathuria

Michael A. Jura Fellowship

Sahil Hegde

Rudnick-Abelmann Endowed Fellowship

Jack Jordan Isen
Xiatong Wu
Yhoshua D Wug

Doctor of Philosophy Astronomy and Astrophysics

Yoojung Kim
Denyz Andrea Melchor

Doctor of Philosophy Physics

Kristian Dominek Barajas
James Tyler Carbin
Raymond Woonan Chang
Yueyun Chen
Chau Dao
Christopher de Firmian
Amey Gaikwad
Tushar Gopalka
Clayton Ze Chi Ho
Elizabeth Claire Holzknecht
Seolhwa Kim
Maximilian Patrick Lenz
Yanyan Li
Ya-Feng Lo
Thomas Ross Marshall
Patrick Joseph McMillin
Grant David Mitts
Jacob Pierce
Antonett Prado
Thomas Martin Sutter
Tim Wilson
Henry Hingyin Wong
Xiatong Wu
Yhoshua D Wug
Zeyuan Xuan

Master of Science Physics

Benjamin Agnew
Henry Michael Asam
Aidan Micah Bachmann
Albert Yuxuan Bao
Samantha Contreras
Albert Ketler Countryman
Steven Aaron Diaz
Montu Ganesh
Jake Stone Gerenraich
Saba Goodarzi
Boran Yigit Gorur
Kate J Holwick
Jesús Jimenez Zepeda
Nick Lackmann
Matt Litton
Noah John Luch
Gareth Mansfield
Jinyan Miao
Elijah Keene Mossman
Travis James Nichols
Diego Fernando Padilla Monroy
Anastasia Pipi
Joshua Aaron Rabinowitz
Mychal Joseph Valle
Ilya Yurchenko

Master of Science

Astronomy and Astrophysics

Benjamin Henry Gediman
Morgan Taylor Himes
Shreya Karthikeyan
Jacob Rohan Levine
Samantha Grace Morrison
Tunhui Xie

Master of Quantum Science and Technology

Rabeya Chowdhury Alina
Abdulelah Salem Alkhamis
Emma Lynn Bacarra
Tanay Bali
Giovanni Castorina
Peter Davies
Rishi Desai
Adrian Isaac Hanson
Teddy Jones
Drew Joshua Nance
Evan O'Grady
Atal Narayan Sahu
David Thomas Saxum
Neel Ninad Shahakar
Miguel Silva Rodriguez
Gregory Joshua Sinaga

Bachelor of Science Astrophysics

Adhila Akbar
Kayla Ji Soo Choi
Elizabeth Maria Diordiev
Joselen Jimena Flores
Ryan Charles Frank
Kirt Singh Grewal
Kelsey Patricia Hobbs
Ava Pearl Huddleston
Gurmeher Kathuria
Dyson Patrick Lewis
Jeremy Ting-Yang Lin
Ian Liu Faversani
Isaiah Mills-Terry
Varsha Mudaliar
Jazmin Ramirez-Solorio
Isaiah Reign Ryan
Zhaoyan Sun
Neil A. Tauriainen
Bethany Welch

Bachelor of Science Physics

Shiho Althea Amster
Antoine Aoude
Grace Natalie Audrey
Gregory Alan Baker
Aidan Balestra
Charles Herbert Beck
Travis Lee Caplan
Jasper Carafa-De Ricci
Jennifer Castillo
Vinit Samir Chauhan
Erick Fabian Chevez
Karen Margaret Clark
Jose Stanley Cuellar Carranza
Alan Isaac Dominguez
Eden Jeannette Bella Dreisbach
Joseph Cole Dubin
Nafiz Faiaz
Jaskaran Singh Gakhal
Jesus Ignacio Gonzalez
Celeste Guerrero
Nathan Abraham Joshua
Mimi Kodera
Dilip Reddy Kusuma
Raquel Sunshine Ladabaum
Christopher Hoang Le
Cameron Riley Leary
Kyla Helena Letko
Richard Li
Tianna Y. Liwang
Daniel Ricardo Lutz
Norah Jane Lynch

Hok Pui (Jaden) Mak
Jocelyn Maldonado-Bolanos
Catherin Regina Merida
Aryan Mosavian-Pour
Parthiv Anand Nair
Cara Anne Nelson
Huy Duc Nguyen
Laura Ni
Daniel Sebastian Ohana
JD Pacheco-Sierra
Iago Pereira Da Silva
Andy Huy Pham
Sophia Noelle Phelps
Andrew Jack Phillips
Juan Manuel Plascencia
Jack Andrew Ploegstra
Nova Leigh Royle
Rodolfo Andres Ruiz
Edward Petru Serafimescu
David Shao
Dhruv Shetty
Milosz Sokolowski
Kendall Claire Stearns
Andrew Tian Xin Su
Sophie Minju Suh
Lea Tanaskovic
Sophia Rhada Tsoukalas
Tianyang Wang
Zheyang Wang
Kristopher Wright
Yifeng Zeng
Clarissa Zuo

Bachelor of Arts Physics

Siddharth Bid
Brian Chang
Jason Ge
Yoon Namgoong
Brandon Hoang-Viet Nguyen
Dominic Peter Storella
Matthew Toutounjian

Bachelor of Science Biophysics

Gracie Bitting
Brandon Thanh Ho
Ethan Haroutune Poladian