ONLINE GRADUATION
CELEBRATION 2021
PROGRAM

IsaNoor Seale
Liberal Arts

I would like to thank my Family for always supporting me in whatever I do. This year has not been easy but with great struggle comes great reward. I can’t wait to see all the amazing things everyone accomplishes in their next steps in life.
Join the celebration!
Visit deanza.edu/graduation
or youtube.com/deanzacollegeofficial
7p.m. on Friday, June 25!

Online Grad Celebration video with
• President Lloyd A. Holmes and College Leaders
• Student Speakers and Graduation Poet
• Graduates’ names
• Special Grad Slideshow with photos and messages

#deanzagrad2021
You’ll find the searchable Grad Slideshow, student Grad Poem, digital Congrats Cards and more at deanza.edu/graduation

Program

Welcome
Lloyd A. Holmes, Ph.D.
President, De Anza College

Land Acknowledgment
Adán Pérez
De Anza Alum and Senior, University of California, Riverside

Celebratory Remarks
Katelyn Pan
President, De Anza Student Government

Christiana Kaleialii, B.S.
Senator and Commencement Representative, Classified Senate

Karen Chow, Ph.D.
President, Academic Senate

Student Remarks
Keanna Ruiz
A.S., Registered Nurse, 2021
Recipient, President’s Award

Graduation Poem
Sara Robertson
A.A., Liberal Arts and A.S.-Transfer, English, 2021

Special Guest
Roxane Gay, Ph.D.
Writer and Cultural Critic

President’s Remarks
Dr. Holmes

Student Commencement Address
Shanaz Shakur
A.A.-Transfer, Political Science, 2021
Recipient, President’s Award

Conferring of Degrees
Dr. Holmes

Celebration Video
Featuring the Class of 2021
Special Grad Slideshow
Photos and messages from graduates
For Keanna Ruiz, it’s been a long journey since she first enrolled at De Anza in 2014. She’s graduating this spring with an associate degree in Nursing and will transfer to San José State University this fall to complete her bachelor’s degree in that front-line health care field.

Keanna, 24, wants to work with underserved communities. She said she’s inspired by her mother, who earned her own nursing degree while Keanna was growing up.

“Of course my mother always taught me the value of education,” Keanna said. “I watched her go through nursing training. It took her several years, but seeing her pursue her goals has motivated me.”

Keanna enrolled at De Anza in 2014 and finished her lower-division requirements while working part-time as a medical assistant. But she had to leave school so she could work full-time to help her family for a time.

Things got back on track when Keanna was accepted into De Anza’s prestigious Nursing program in 2019. Then the coronavirus pandemic disrupted the world. For safety reasons, Keanna and other nursing students were initially required to put their clinical training on hold, until they were allowed back into hospitals last fall.

The pandemic hit De Anza’s Nursing program hard: many students, including Keanna.

For Keanna, it’s been a difficult at first, because there were so many.” But the pandemic reinforced her determination to become a nurse.

There are always risks in health care, she explained, “but this is what we’re trained to do. We’re trained to help people regardless of what they are experiencing. So this only encouraged me to continue on this path.”

Shanaz Shakur fell in love with the law as a teenager. But as she heads off to Berkeley this fall, she’s determined to make the legal system work better.

Shanaz, 19, is graduating with an associate degree for transfer in Political Science and received a prestigious Regents’ and Chancellor’s Scholarship from the University of California, Berkeley. A first-generation college student, Shanaz was active with the Honors program, EOF Scholars and the Global Issues Conference at De Anza. She plans to study law and sociology at Berkeley, and would like to become an attorney or an advocate for reforming courts and prisons.

Shanaz became interested in law as president of the mock trial team at Prospect High School. But she has seen other sides of the real-world justice system. In college, Shanaz worked part-time in the office of a criminal defense attorney.

She became even more interested in social activism while taking a Sociology class taught by instructor Steve Nava and helping to organize a workshop for the annual Global Issues Conference at De Anza.

Now her goal is to help improve the legal system by working to eliminate inequities that put low-income defendants at a disadvantage, while favoring those with more resources.

Shanaz said she enrolled at De Anza after seeing her older sister thrive here. They couldn’t afford to attend universities right after high school – and Shanaz said De Anza proved to be the right choice for her.

“I learned how to study and manage my time,” said Shanaz. “The fact that I was able to navigate the system, as a low-income, first-generation minority student, really gave me so much confidence … I can proudly carry that with me.”

Community” with “some of the most unique, smart and capable individuals you will ever meet in your life.”

Shanaz Shakur

Graduation Poet

Sara Robertson

The last two years have been a time of disruption, upset and even exhaustion for many. But Sara Robertson, De Anza’s first-ever student Graduation Poet, is optimistic about the future.

“After all that we have been through, I think that it’s important to hold onto hope,” said Sara, 20, who is graduating this year with degrees in Liberal Arts and English. “I truly believe in my generation so much,” she added. “I think that we are going to create some real change for the good.”

Sara’s entry was selected from a number of pieces submitted by De Anza students. It will be published on the college website after the online graduation event.

Sara said she has enjoyed writing since she was a teen, although there was a time when she “kind of grew out of it.” Her interest returned when she came to De Anza in fall 2019. She took a creative writing class from English instructor Ken Weisner and began helping with Red Wheelbarrow, De Anza’s literary magazine.

Before the pandemic, Sara enjoyed attending spoken word performances and open mic nights. She draws inspiration from Amanda Gorman, the young poet who read an original work for President Biden’s inauguration. When she isn’t studying or working part-time at a local garden center, Sara said she meets every few weeks on Zoom with her friend and fellow graduating student, Kim Johnson, to read their work and give each other feedback.

This fall, Sara will be attending the University of California, Berkeley, where she plans to major in English. After that, she may pursue a master’s in creative writing, a teaching credential, or both.

“1m going to be really sad to leave De Anza,” she said. “It was such a good experience. I’m tremendously grateful for all that I’ve learned here.”

Sara Robertson

President’s Awards

The $3,500 President’s Award is presented annually to graduating students who have overcome adversity and shown perseverance in seeking an education at De Anza.

Keanna Ruiz

Graduation Poet

Sara Robertson

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Enrique Samaguey

As a first-generation college student, Enrique Samaguey understands the challenges of navigating on unfamiliar ground. This year’s winner of the DeHart Scholarship plans to study education and psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, so he can eventually help other young people find their own way.

Enrique, 20, is graduating from De Anza with an associate degree in Liberal Arts and an associate degree for transfer in Psychology.

The older of two sons, Enrique often served as interpreter and guide for his parents, who are both immigrants, in dealings with school and other institutions. He said he’s motivated by their determination to make a better life for their sons, and by the support he received from teachers and counselors in high school and college.

He found additional support at De Anza from his peers in the Puente Project learning community. After working with a Puente student mentor, Enrique has helped mentor other students in the program.

Enrique credits Puente instructor Lydia Hearn and Puente counselor Liliana Rivera with helping him transition from high school to college.

Enrique also worked part-time off campus – most recently with a firm that provides COVID-19 testing for students at Stanford University. As the pandemic forced De Anza to move almost all classes online, Enrique said the experience felt isolating at times. But he was determined to finish his studies and said De Anza has been a welcoming place.

"Coming here was the best decision I could have made," he said. "The support I’ve had from teachers and classmates has been incredible."

Yajaira Orozco

When Yajaira Orozco first came to De Anza, she thought community college was just a place where “you get in and you get out.” Her outlook changed when she began taking classes in Intercultural Studies and Political Science.

"I realized there is so much more I could be involved in," she said. "All these different things started connecting for me."

Yajaira, 21, is transferring this fall to the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she will major in Community Studies and Environmental Studies. Eventually, she wants to work on environmental policies affecting low-income and immigrant communities.

After graduating from Sequoia High School in Redwood City, Yajaira enrolled at the University of California, Merced, but then decided to finish her lower-division requirements closer to home. That brought her to De Anza, where Yajaira said she learned new things about her own identity, as a Latina and daughter of immigrants, through Chicana Studies courses. More doors opened when she took a Grassroots Democracy course taught by Cynthia Kaufman, faculty director of De Anza’s Vasconcellos Institute for Democracy in Action.

Classmates encouraged Yajaira to join Students for Environmental Equity at De Anza (SEED). She found herself attending public meetings and advocating for public transit and other services for students and low-income communities.

Yajaira also held several jobs to help support herself and her family, after her mother was laid off from a janitorial job. She has worked in restaurants, as a personal aide for senior citizens, and as a tutor and mentor for younger children at the Boys and Girls Clubs in Redwood City.

Despite many demands on her time, she said she’s grateful for her experiences at De Anza. "It helped me to mature," she said, "and to really discover what I want to do next."
Student Leadership Awards

The Student Leadership Award is a project of the De Anza Student Government and the Vasconcellos Institute for Democracy in Action (VIDA). These graduating or transferring students have demonstrated extraordinary leadership in the last year.

Ananya Bapat
Vanessa Bermudez
Huy Bui
Stephanie Chávez
Esha Dadbhawala
Kyla Dizon
Wangqianhong Fan
Saron Gebremedhin
Yousef Helal
Ashley Hin
Matthew Holt
Teju Jaikumar

Jeffrey Kaspror
Maria Khan
Iris (Do Yeon) Kim
Maria Kowalczuk
Kimberly Lam
Grace Lim
Brandi Madison
Justice Merriman
Anthony Nguyen
Katelyn Pan
Nandhini Pandurangan
Ariadna Pavon

Peter Pham
Daniela Placencia
Yvette Reyes
Enrique Samaguey
Mehul Sharma
Caithleen Stiadihi
Karina Thiagarajan
Britney Tran
Brittney Tran
Lianna Vaughan
Zoe Volpe
Yuetong Zhang
Those students earning an honors designation are entitled to wear the De Anza gold sash. Students wearing the Phi Theta Kappa gold sash are members of the international scholastic society. Honors designation is based upon the cumulative De Anza grade point average (GPA) as of the most recent quarter available.
Thank You!

Thank you to Associate Vice President of Instruction Lorrie Ranck for your commitment and service to our students. We wish you all the best in your new role as Vice President of Instruction at Mission College.

Thank you to all faculty members, classified professionals and administrators for your unwavering dedication to the students of De Anza College, and for your invaluable contributions to their education and success.

College Deans
Laureen Baldacci, M.S., Counseling and Disability Support Programs and Services
Sam Bliss, M.A., Community Education
Randy Bryant, M.Ed., Career Technical Education and Workforce Development
Alicia Cortez, M.A., Equity and Engagement
Moaty Fayek, Ed.D., Business, Computer Science and Applied Technologies
Nary Galoyan, M.A, Enrollment Services
Michele LeBlanc-Burns, Ed.D., Student Development and EOPS/CARE
Eric Mendoza, M.A., Physical Education and Athletics
Anita Muthyala-Kandula, MBBS, Biological, Health and Environmental Sciences
Edmundo Norte, Ed.M., Intercultural/International Studies
Elvin T. Ramos, D.A., Social Sciences and Humanities
Thomas Ray, Ph.D., Language Arts
Jerry Rosenberg, M.S., Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering
Daniel Smith, M.F.A., Creative Arts

College Directors
Yvette Campbell, Ph.D., STEM Success Program
Patrick Gannon, B.S., Campus Center
Naoko Harada, M.A., Child Development Center
Jennifer Mahato, B.A., College Operations
Lisa Mandy, B.S., Financial Aid and Scholarships
Rosafel Nogra, DNP, Student Health Services
Jorge Rodriguez, A.S., Operations
Martin Varela, B.A., College Fiscal Services

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Retirements
Administrator
Emanuel DaSilva, College Operations

Emeriti Faculty
Lena Chang, Library
Sherri Cozzens, Nursing
Mayra Cruz, Child Development and Education
Stephen Howland, English
Catherine Hrycyk, Nursing
Judith Hubbard, English
Clara Lam, English as a Second Language
Christine Magnin, DSPS Hope Program
Brian McCauley, Biology
David Newton, Physics
Mary Sullivan, Health Services
Patricia Williams, Nursing

Classified Professionals
Concepcion Alderete, Custodial Operations
Fay O’Keefe, Child Development Center
Samasathy Ouk, Food Services

De Anza College
Senior Administration
Lloyd A. Holmes, Ph.D.
President
Christina G. Espinosa-Pieb, M.A.
Vice President, Instruction
Pam Grey, M.B.A.
Vice President, Administrative Services
Rob Mieso, Ed.D.
Vice President, Student Services
Lorraine Ranck, M.A.
Associate Vice President, Instruction
Marisa Spatafore, M.A.
Associate Vice President, Communications and External Relations

Foothill-De Anza
Community College District
Judy C. Miner, Ed.D.
Chancellor

Board of Trustees
Patrick Ahrens, Vice President
Pearl Cheng
Laura Casas
Peter Landsberger, President
Gilbert Wong
Michelle Fernandez, De Anza College Student Trustee
Rachel Homayonfar, Foothill College Student Trustee

Special Thanks
Office of Communications – multimedia production, program and publicity
Gino De Grandis – program photos
Photos submitted by the Class of 2021
De Anza College Overview

De Anza College offers a broad range of academic and career programs, cultural activities, sports and social events to about 18,000 students each quarter. Students can choose from 77 associate degrees, 103 certificate programs and more than 1,800 courses. More than 50,000 friends and neighbors participate in De Anza’s Community Education programs each year, including the Euphrat Museum of Art, De Anza College Planetarium, noncredit Short Courses and the De Anza College Academy for youth.

Students attending De Anza enjoy the full college experience. They can join a club or start a new one; walk through time at the California History Center; visit the stars at the Planetarium; explore the diversified ecosystems of the Cheeseman Environmental Study Area; or participate on or root for a sports team – there are 16 to choose from. An education at De Anza isn’t just about books and tests, students also discover a diversity of people representing cultures from around the world and learn how to become fully engaged, politically aware citizens. The college’s Vasconcellos Institute for Democracy in Action helps to advance this goal.

De Anza consistently ranks at or near the top among California community colleges in the number of transfers to CSU and UC. De Anza’s top transfer institutions include UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, UC Davis and UC San Diego as well as San José State University and San Francisco State University.

Mission Statement

De Anza College provides an academically rich, multicultural learning environment that challenges students of every background to develop their intellect, character and abilities; to realize their goals; and to be socially responsible leaders in their communities, the nation and the world.

De Anza College fulfills its mission by engaging students in creative work that demonstrates the knowledge, skills and attitudes contained within the college’s Institutional Core Competencies:

- Communication and expression
- Information literacy
- Physical/mental wellness and personal responsibility
- Civic capacity for global, cultural, social and environmental justice
- Critical thinking

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Transfer Universities for the Class of 2021

Bowling Green State University • Boston University • California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo • California State Polytechnic University, Pomona • California State University, Bakersfield • California State University, Chico • California State University, Dominguez Hills • California State University, East Bay • California State University, Fresno • California State University, Fullerton • California State University, Long Beach • California State University, Los Angeles • California State University, Monterey Bay • California State University, Northridge • California State University,Sacramento • California State University, San Bernardino • California State University San Marcos • California State University, Stanislaus • Columbia University • Davenport University • DePaul University • Dixie State University • Emerson College • Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University • Greenville University • Houston Baptist University • Humboldt State University • Kansas Wesleyan University • Kentucky Christian University • Lincoln University • Loyola Marymount University • Massachusetts Institute of Technology • New Mexico Highlands University • Park University • San Diego State University • San Francisco State University • San José State University • Santa Clara University • Sonoma State University • St. Mary’s College • Texas Tech University • University of California, Berkeley • University of California, Davis • University of California, Irvine • University of California, Los Angeles • University of California, Merced • University of California, Riverside • University of California, San Diego • University of California, Santa Barbara • University of California, Santa Cruz • University of Colorado • University of Hawai’i at Mānoa • University of Idaho • University of Nevada, Las Vegas • University of Nevada, Reno • University of San Diego • University of San Francisco • University of Southern California... and more!

Congratulations!