



All 102 graduates in The Preuss School Class of 2017 will pursue higher education.

## Congratulations to the Class of 2017

In June, 102 seniors celebrated commencement, including valedictorian Quynh Truong. Born in Vietnam, Truong became the first in her family to graduate from high school. She will attend UC Berkeley in the fall with plans to become an architect and design homes for those in need. Two salutatorians were honored for their achievements: Yareli Cervantes Perez and Natalie Ruybal.

This year, 94 percent of Preuss graduates were accepted to a four-year institution. The entire class is going on to pursue higher education, attending such schools as Harvard University, UCLA and the University of Southern California. Twenty-nine seniors will attend UC San Diego, most as Chancellor's Associates Scholars. Congratulations to all!

## RECOGNIZING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

### Preuss Student and Teacher Named Bezos Scholars for Leadership Development

Eric Tran, an incoming senior at The Preuss School UCSD, envisions creating a mentorship program to motivate local youths to stay on track inside and outside the classroom. His desire to initiate lasting change in his community led Tran to be named a 2017 Bezos Scholar, one of 12 high school students nationwide to be chosen for the prestigious yearlong leadership development program.

"I thought the program would be the perfect opportunity to learn more about service and how I can help my community," said Tran.

Chellyn Boquiren, Tran's Advanced Placement U.S. history teacher, was chosen as one of 12 educators in the country to take part in the program. "This is an opportunity for me to reflect on my goals as an educator and think about how Eric and I will share what we learn," said Boquiren.

The program was founded in 2005 by the Bezos Family Foundation. Each summer, scholars and teachers are invited to the Aspen Ideas Festival in Colorado, where they have the chance to connect with

Bezos Scholars from South Africa, as well as with visionaries, leaders and artists from around the globe.

The event also includes a variety of seminars, plenary sessions and opportunities to share ideas and ask questions. After attending the festival, scholars return home to organize their own community change projects known as Local Idea Festivals.

For Tran, an aspiring lawyer, it is providing more disadvantaged youths with an opportunity to thrive.

"I feel like I'm one of the lucky few from my neighborhood to have a shot at making it out," said Tran. "My dream is to provide more children with such a shot."



Senior Eric Tran hopes to give others the same type of opportunity he received at The Preuss School.

## BULLETIN BOARD

- More than **\$400,000 was raised** at Preuss' annual benefit, The Preuss Promise: Excellence by Design, held this past spring. The support will go toward initiatives like The Preuss School's Campaign for Longer Learning Time, a fundamental tenet of the school's educational model.
- Recent Preuss graduate **Meron Lemmi** was among 40 local women and girls recognized at the Women and Girls of the Year Award Ceremony, hosted annually by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez to celebrate women who make a difference in our community.
- Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (**SIFMA**) **donated \$2,500** toward The Preuss School. The financial securities firm also provided school supply kits that were delivered during Advanced Placement exams, a wonderful surprise for students and teachers during a demanding time.

## ALUMNI UPDATES

### Noé Olivas '05

Noé Olivas studied visual art at San Francisco State University and San Diego Mesa College and finished his bachelor's degree at the University of San Diego. As part of his undergraduate senior project, Olivas transformed a 1967 Chevy bread truck into a gallery on wheels to engage local artists, performers and musicians. Olivas is pursuing an MFA in visual art from the University of Southern California. His recent work investigates the Mexican-American identity as a Californian.



Noé Olivas

### Amaris Tang '12

After graduating from UC San Diego with a degree in political science, Amaris Tang enrolled at Colorado State University, where she is pursuing a master's degree in student affairs in higher education. In the fall, Tang will take on the role of assistant residence director and partner with key campus programs to support underrepresented and first-generation college students. Her aspiration is to pursue a student affairs career at her alma mater, UC San Diego, focused on leadership, social justice and student development.



Amaris Tang

## Preuss Students Unite for Immigration Rights during Rally on Campus



Students' voices were heard during a rally about immigration.

Their posters read "Unity in Diversity," "Preuss Makes America Great" and "Migration is Beautiful."

On Feb. 16, more than 300

Preuss students walked out of their advisory class as part of "A Day Without Immigrants," a national rally to recognize the importance of immigration.

Assembled at the entryway to the school, students shared poems, led chants, shed tears and affirmed a message of empowerment. Many offered personal stories, including the desire to succeed in honor of their parents who immigrated to the U.S. to achieve a better life for their children.

Preuss student America Sanchez, who organized the walkout, explained that the goal was to offer an opportunity for students to make their voices heard. Students



Students led chants and some shared personal stories during the rally.

revealed in the reality that, despite the diversity of their backgrounds, they would not have had the chance to meet if they did not attend Preuss. Numerous students acknowledged the role of Preuss School faculty and staff for the mentorship and support provided during times of personal struggle. Students also praised the school for investing in their future.

"We are very proud of our students who found a way to express themselves and participate in the rally," said Principal Scott Barton. "We encourage all of our students to use their voice to help create a dialogue on important issues that affect us all."



**Stay up-to-date!** Connect with us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThePreussSchoolUCSD](https://www.facebook.com/ThePreussSchoolUCSD) or send your email address to [kdyoung@ucsd.edu](mailto:kdyoung@ucsd.edu) to receive important announcements and updates.

## PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE



It is truly a heart-felt moment for me to celebrate commencement with Preuss seniors. Each summer, I am filled with immense pride and incredible excitement for our

students as they begin the next chapter of their educational careers.

Our greatest charge is to prepare Preuss students to become strong college candidates and thrive in their higher education pursuits. And we are achieving our goal. This year, 94 percent of our seniors were accepted to a four-year institution and

the entire class will go on to pursue a college degree.

Our academic model continues to attract attention. In April, The Preuss School was featured on "Inside California Education," a public television series that tells in-depth stories about schools that are making a difference. The segment featured our unique elements — from a longer school day to one-on-one mentorship — and how the cumulative impact adds up to a student population that is uniquely equipped for a bright future.

But it is more than just a model or curriculum: It's heart. It's the sacrifices made by parents, the perseverance of our students and the passion of our staff and teachers that makes Preuss great.

In fact, one of our standout teachers, Christobelle Tan, was named Educator of the Year by the La Jolla Rotary Club. In addition, Preuss science educator Anne Artz will help train current and aspiring teachers this summer in Vietnam with the support of a Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Short-Term grant — one of only nine U.S. educators chosen for the prestigious program.

Congratulations to our graduates, and thank you to our faculty, staff, parents and friends for your meaningful support.

Best regards,

Scott Barton  
Principal

## SPOTLIGHT Astrid Solorzano '07, NBC 7 San Diego News Reporter

"If you had asked me at 10 years old where I saw myself as an adult, I wouldn't have guessed I would grow up to be a TV reporter that little girls like me could look up to," said Astrid Solorzano.

Astrid, a 2007 Preuss School graduate and current news reporter for NBC 7 San Diego, shared her story at Preuss' annual benefit on April 28. A first-generation Mexican-American who was raised by a single mother, she enrolled at Preuss in sixth grade with little expectation that she would attend a four-year college in the future. But each year, she gained more conviction and began to believe she could defy the odds.

"My teachers told me I was special," said Astrid. "I know for a fact that I would not be where I am today if it were not for the people who believed in me at The Preuss School."

She went on to earn a bachelor's degree in global studies at UC Santa Barbara. During this time, she began her career as a reporter, appearing on-air as an intern for Univision's local affiliates in Santa Barbara and Washington, D.C. After, Astrid pursued a master's degree in journalism at the University of Southern California, ultimately returning to San Diego to become a reporter for NBC.

As a Latina reporter, Astrid seeks to be a role model to other first-generation and undocumented youth, inspiring confidence the same way her Preuss teachers did for her.

"Preuss School teachers and mentors look past circumstances and sacrifice their time to convince students that they are capable of success," said Astrid. "They have changed the lives of thousands of students and their families."



TV reporter Astrid Solorzano recently visited her alma mater with UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla, left, and Preuss Principal Scott Barton.

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## FOCUS ON | Preuss Robotics Team Honored



The Preuss School robotics team was honored for outreach initiatives and commitment to diversity.

For the second consecutive year, The Preuss School robotics team — called the Midnight Mechanics — qualified for the national robotics championship. Each year, the team spends six weeks raising funds, developing the team brand and constructing an industrial-sized robot to engage in friendly duels against other high school teams across the state.

In March, the Midnight Mechanics traveled to San Francisco for the regional competition, where they were recognized with the Engineering Inspiration Award for their outreach

initiatives and commitment to diversity. Just as exciting as the competition was the trip up north; students had the chance to walk across the Golden Gate Bridge and enjoy a pizza party on the beach.

Facilitated by community partner FIRST Robotics, the goal is to ignite an interest in STEM learning while building leadership and nurturing creativity. In May, several team members were chosen to represent FIRST at STEM Solutions, a U.S. News & World Report national leadership conference.