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Scientific, technological, social, economic and cultural news for the
Korean-American professional community

KASTN

KOREAN-AMERICAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

ISSN 1089-7518

Founded May 23, 1995

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Issue 09-11 (No. 610) June 3, 2009

1. MICHELLE AT MERCED

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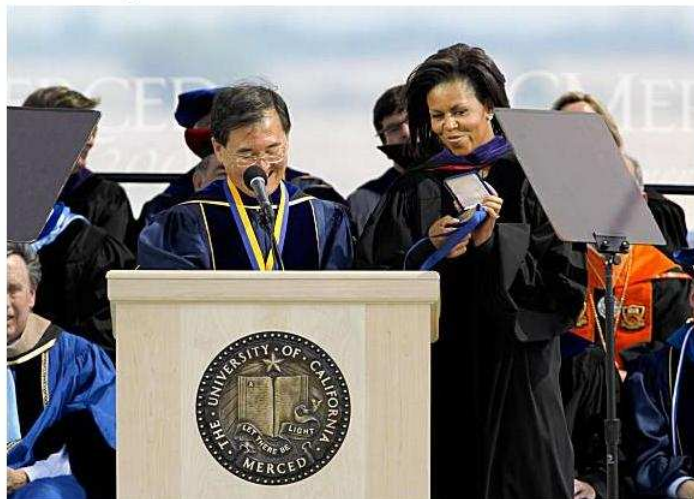
Inspiration and Encouragement from First Lady Michelle Obama Highlight Historic Commencement for UC Merced's Inaugural Class



Dr. Sung Mo (Steve) Kang, Chancellor of UC Merced

With First Lady Michelle Obama providing inspiration and encouragement, and with more than 12,000 attendees cheering them on, some 350 members of the University of California, Merced's historic inaugural class were awarded bachelor's degrees on May 16, 2009 at the four-year-old university's first full commencement ceremony.

First lady Michelle Obama receives the Chancellor's Medal from UC Merced's Chancellor Sung-Mo "Steve" Kang before she delivers the commencement speech. (Michael Macor / The Chronicle)



The University of California does not give out honorary doctoral degrees (One sole exception will be made when UC approves 88 honorary bachelor's degrees to those Japanese-Americans who could not have completed their degrees due to internment in 1940s).

The highest honor any UC chancellor can bestow is the Chancellor's Medal.



The First Lady's keynote address highlighted a historic ceremony honoring the first class of undergraduate students to complete a full four-year course of study at UC Merced. Another 23 graduate students received master's or doctorate degrees during the two-hour ceremony. Approximately 145 students who completed their degree requirements "off cycle" (between 2008 and 2009 commencement exercises) or are expected to do so before next year's commencement also participated.

U.S. Congressman Jerry McNerney, California Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, Sr., California Attorney General Jerry Brown, University of California President Mark Yudof, UC Board of Regents Chairman Richard Blum and numerous other state and local dignitaries attended the event.



The commencement speech by the First Lady is available in its entirety on YouTube.com, in three installments:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP3W3P-xQxk>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcicqNPLihI&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ql3ufrBGc4&feature=related>

UC Merced opened its doors in September 2005 as the first new campus in the UC system in more than 40 years, and the first ever in the fast-growing but largely underserved San Joaquin Valley. It traces its history to 1988, when the UC Board of Regents authorized planning for a 10th UC campus. Merced was chosen as the location in 1995.

The university has quickly grown to more than 2,700 students, with the most diverse student body in the UC system. More than half are first-generation college students, many from families whose incomes fall below the state poverty level. All meet or exceed the UC system's high standards for eligibility and sustained academic performance.

Kang, who became the university's second chancellor in 2007, said the graduation of UC Merced's inaugural class is a tribute to the city and region that helped make the university's development possible.

ED. M. Y. Han, the Editor-in-Chief, spent one semester in the fall of 2008 teaching a course at UC Merced's School of Natural Sciences.

The media coverage of this momentous event for a young university has been very extensive:

May 18

MSNBC Today Show: Video: [Michelle Obama: Think Broadly](#) (yesterday's stories on this link as well on 'playlist')

Chicago Sun-Times: Article: [Michelle Obama's early alienation from the University of Chicago. UC Merced speech transcript](#)

New York Daily News: Article: [How graduation speeches of President Obama, Michelle Obama stack up](#)

CBS 47 TV: Article: [Merced Back to Normal Following First Lady's Visit](#)

Insciences Organisation: Article: [New tool isolates RNA within specific cells](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [First lady's speech inspires UC Merced grads, city](#)

Sacramento Bee: Photo Gallery: [First Lady Michelle Obama Addresses UC Merced Commencement Ceremony](#)

May 17

ABC News: Article: [Leader's Words of Wisdom](#)

ABC News: Video: [Words of Wisdom from First Ladies](#)

MSNBC Today Show: Videos: [Michelle Obama urges grads to give back](#), (Also on this link, further down page, First Lady gives words of wisdom, and Viral campaign woos First Lady to speak at California school (5/16/09) and Excitement before First Lady Speech, (5/16/09)

KCRA 3 TV (Sacramento): Article/Video: [First Lady Inspires UC Merced Graduates](#)

KPIX CBS 5 TV: Video/Article: [Michelle Obama Gives UC Merced Graduation Speech](#)

National Public Radio: Audio: [Small College Nets Big Fish: First Lady To Speak](#)

San Francisco Chronicle: Article: [Michelle Obama inspires UC Merced graduates](#) and Photo Gallery: [Michelle Obama inspires UC Merced graduates](#)

Los Angeles Times: Article: [Michelle Obama applauds UC Merced graduates' creativity and persistence \(text here\)](#)

San Jose Mercury News: Article: [First Lady Michelle Obama tells UC-Merced grads 'you inspired me'](#)

**Also appeared in the Monterey County Herald*

Modesto Bee: Article: [Elated UC Merced crowd welcomes first lady](#)

Record: Article: [Michelle Obama delivers optimistic message to graduates of UC Merced](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [An alternate ceremony in Spanish](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [97-degree heat caused the only problems on otherwise flawless day](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [Local folks want to see 'Michelle'](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [James Burns: UC Merced Bobcats of '09 a special class: Bright people with bright ideas](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [Meanwhile, Obama opposition forms around a microphone in the media room](#)

Chicago Tribune: Blog: [Obama, Bush: Service is the key](#)

New York Times: Blog: [The Caucus: The Sunday Word: Commencement](#)

Los Angeles Times: Blog: [Top of the Ticket: What will Michelle Obama tell Calif. graduates? Chances are at least one joke](#)

ToTheCenter.com: Blog: [First Lady Delivers Commencement Speech](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Commentary: [Brittany Best: Despite it all, the wait was worth it](#)

May 16

CNN: Article/Video: [Remember to give back, first lady tells UC Merced grads](#)

New York Times: Article: [First Lady Delivers a Charge to Graduates Who Inspired Her](#)

New York Times: Article: [Michelle Obama's Commencement Address](#)

Associated Press: Article: [Michelle Obama urges graduates to give back](#)

**Appeared in the [ABC News](#), [Boston Herald](#), [KNX 10.70 News Radio](#), [New York Daily News](#), [San Diego Union-Tribune](#), [USA Today](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), and more*

Huffington Post: Article/Video: [Michelle Obama commencement speech: UC Merced](#)

Huffington Post: Article: [First Lady Shows UC Merced No-Brainer Style](#)

Los Angeles Times: Article: [Michelle Obama to UC Merced: Give back to the community](#)

Los Angeles Times: Article: [Michelle Obama making debut as graduation speaker at Merced, Calif., school that wooed her](#)

Los Angeles Times: Photo Gallery: [Michelle Obama speaks at UC Merced](#)

CBS 47 TV: Video/Article: [First Lady Michelle Obama Addresses Graduates at UC Merced](#)

KGO ABC 7 TV: Video/Article: [First Lady gives U.C. Merced commencement](#) (2 videos on this link)

KMPH Fox 26: Article: [Students Worked Hard to Woo First Lady](#)

ABC 30 News: Video/Article: [U.C. Merced Graduation Ceremonies](#)

KSEE 24 News (Fresno/Visalia): Video/Article: [First Lady addresses first graduating class at UC Merced](#)

KSBY 6 News (San Luis Obispo): Video/Article: [First Lady speaks at UC Merced graduation](#)

Fresno Bee: Article: [First lady to UC Merced: 'You inspired me'](#)

**Also appeared in the [Sacramento Bee](#), [Honolulu Advertiser](#)*

Modesto Bee: Article: [Obama inspires huge crowd at UC Merced graduation](#)

Modesto Bee: Article: [Michelle Obama tells California graduates to remember who helped them](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [First Lady Michelle Obama to UC Merced graduates: 'Dream big'](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [First Lady's visit a boon for struggling city](#)

**Also appeared in the [Fresno Bee](#), [Taiwan News](#)*

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [UC Merced has been 20 years in making](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [Anticipation peaks for Michelle Obama's appearance at UC Merced](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Article: [Read the full text remarks by student speaker Jason Castillo](#)

Merced sun-Star: Article: [UC Merced student project recounts history of campus](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Commentary: [An old friend's open letter to Michelle Obama](#)

Merced Sun-Star: Editorial: [Our View: Graduation really about the students](#)

Turlock Journal: Article: [UC Merced readies for first lady's visit](#)

Politics Daily: Blog: [Michelle Obama Tells UC Merced Grads: 'Dream Big'](#)
**Also appeared in the [Chicago Sun-Times](#)*

May 15

Christian Science Monitor: Article: [A campus – and a whole town – await the first lady](#)

New York Times: Article: [Mrs. Obama Visits Students as Motivator in Chief](#)

Fresno Bee: Article: [5 congressmen won't be at UC Merced ceremony](#)

California Majority Report: [Commentary: With Michelle Obama's Visit, University of California Merced Gets Its Day](#)

May 14

Diverse Issues in Higher Education: Article: [A Chancellor's Choice](#)

KSFN ABC 30 TV (Fresno): Article/Video: [U.C. Merced Heightened Security Measures](#)

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