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**Pacific Oaks College to Host 2026 Commencement Ceremony
at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium**

Graduates represent a strong cohort of educators and mental health professionals prepared to make an immediate impact in communities across the state

PASADENA, Calif., May 11, 2026 – [Pacific Oaks College](#) will celebrate the graduation of 421 students at its annual commencement ceremony at 10 a.m. PT on Saturday, May 16, at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. The ceremony will bring together faculty, staff, families, and supporters to honor the accomplishments of the Class of 2026. These graduates enter the workforce during a period when California schools and mental health systems continue to grapple with critical workforce shortages, increasing the need for qualified educators, social workers, therapists, and community-based professionals.

The ceremony will recognize graduates from a range of undergraduate and graduate programs in education, social work, counseling, human development, and related fields. Throughout their time at Pacific Oaks College, these graduates have demonstrated resilience, leadership, and a strong commitment to social justice and community engagement.

The commencement keynote address will be delivered by Dr. Eugenia Rodriguez, chair of the Marriage & Family Therapy Department at Pacific Oaks College and coordinator of the Latinx Family Studies and LGBTQIA+ Studies programs. Dr. Rodriguez, an alumna of Pacific Oaks College, has worked in social services and mental health since 1998, specializing in trauma, abuse, Latinx family systems, LGBTQIA+ competencies, and systems of care. She is also co-author of the Los Angeles LGBT Center's RISE (Recognize, Intervene, Support, and Empower) manual, which was developed to help reduce long-term foster care placements for LGBTQ youth and address bias in caregiving systems.

"This year's commencement marks an important milestone for our graduates, who have shown dedication not only to their academic pursuits but also to creating meaningful change in their communities," said Breeda McGrath, Ph.D., president of Pacific Oaks College & Children's School. "We are proud to celebrate their achievements and excited about the impact they will continue to make throughout their careers."

Pacific Oaks College is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and a national leader in teacher preparation, known for pioneering anti-bias curricula and launching one of the nation's first

Head Start training programs. As graduates step into their professional careers, they carry forward the college's ideals of advocacy, service and lifelong learning.

For more information about Pacific Oaks College, visit [PacificOaks.edu](https://www.pacificoaks.edu).

About Pacific Oaks College & Children's School

Founded in 1945, Pacific Oaks College & Children's School is composed of two educational entities. Pacific Oaks College is a nonprofit higher education institution offering bachelor's and master's programs in human development, marriage and family therapy, education, early childhood education, teacher preparation, social work, community psychology, business administration, and organizational leadership and management, as well as a doctoral degree in early childhood education leadership. Pacific Oaks Children's School provides early childhood education programs for children ages six months through five years and has pioneered achievements in the areas of anti-bias education, emergent curriculum, and peaceful conflict resolution. Pacific Oaks College & Children's School is part of [The Community Solution Education System](#), a nonprofit system of colleges working together to advance student success and community impact. To learn more, visit [PacificOaks.edu](https://www.pacificoaks.edu).

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