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Major General Salinas delivers Commencement address

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Major General Salinas delivers Commencement address

Major General Angela Salinas, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired), received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree and delivered the keynote address at Dominican University of California's 2015 commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 16.

About 400 undergraduate and 200 graduate students participated in the ceremony. Tarik Boukhari, who received his MBA in Global Management from the [Barowsky School of Business](#), delivered the Graduate Class Address. [Yema Khalif Manyanki](#), who received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications and Media Studies from the [School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#), delivered the Senior Class Address. He was introduced by Hollywood actress Connie Nielsen.

"Step up and vote for leaders with integrity, or better yet, step up and be leaders yourselves," Manyanki addressed his classmates.

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Major General Salinas, who graduated from Dominican in 1976, served for 39 years as a member of the United States Marine Corps. She was the first woman to command a recruiting station, the first woman assigned as an Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Policy of a major combatant organization, and the first woman assigned as a Ground Major's Combat Service Support Monitor.

In 2006, she became the first [Hispanic](#) woman to become a [United States Marine Corps](#) General Officer, and the sixth woman in the Marine Corps to reach the rank of Brigadier General.

"At Dominican, we claim a long-standing commitment to serving students who represent the hope of the future," said Dominican University of California President Mary B. Marcy. "We educate and prepare students to be ethical leaders and socially responsible citizens whose work is grounded in Dominican's values of study, reflection, community, and service. Throughout her career, Major General Salinas has represented these Dominican values with honor, dignity, and tremendous dedication. It is particularly fitting that we honor her on Armed Forces Day."

Major General Salinas began her military career as an enlisted Marine in May 1974 and earned her commission in 1977. While in the Marine Corps, she commanded at every rank from Lieutenant to general officer and held multiple key staff positions. Upon retirement in 2013, she earned the distinction as the longest serving woman in the history of the Marine Corps, the senior ranking woman, and the senior ranking Hispanic in the Corps.

Her personal decorations include the Navy Distinguished Service Medal; the Defense Superior Service Medal; the Legion of Merit with gold star; the Meritorious Service Medal with two gold stars; the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal; the Army Commendation Medal; and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars.

Her civilian awards and accolades include the U. S. Hispanic Leadership Institute's Dr. Hank Lacayo Lifetime Achievement Award; The Hispanic Heritage of Texas Estrella's de Texas; Lifetime Achievement awards from Latina Style Magazine and North star; The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Leadership Award; San Diego Chamber of Commerce's Chairman's Award; Women's International Center's Living Legacy Award; San Diego's Athena Chairman's Award for Community Leadership. She has been named Women of the Year for California District 74 and named one of six women who Move the City by San Diego Magazine as well as one of 15 Phenomenal Women by *Latina Magazine*. She is a 2014-2015

Masters Leadership Program participant and currently serves on the board of the Admiral Nimitz Foundation. She resides in San Antonio Texas.

In addition to an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree, Major General Salinas received a black Dominican Penguins basketball jersey with No. 76 on the front and her name on the back. Dominican graduating women's basketball players Sarah Nelson, Lauren Hyatt and Danielle Yamaguchi made the presentation on stage to Major General Salinas, who organized the first women's basketball team on campus and served as its captain.

Margaret (Maggie) Hibert, an [Art and Art History](#) double major planning to enter graduate school in Fall 2015, was named the Outstanding Student at Commencement. Ivy Patterson, a senior in [Dominican's LINES Ballet BFA in Dance program](#), was named the winner of the Veritas Cup as a "friend of the class."

The four Outstanding Graduate Students were Jennifer Kregel (School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), William Bertacco (Barowsky School of Business), Deena Reyes (School of Education and Counseling Psychology) and Amy Smith-Schwartz (School of Health and Natural Sciences).

Alison Howard, chair of the Department of Political Science and International Studies, was named full-time faculty Teacher of the Year and Ekaterina Kalashnikova from the Department of Natural Sciences and Mathematics was named adjunct faculty Teacher of the Year.

Students nominate faculty who they believe make a difference in the lives of students through inspiring teaching and mentoring; who are creative and successful in course development; and who are respected and admired by students and colleagues for consistently superior teaching. A selection committee made up of the recipients of the awards in the preceding two years, two student leaders, and a representative of the Academic Affairs Office make the final selection by taking into account those criteria and also the candidates' professional activity and engagement in service to the University.

Howard was described by students as "an excellent advisor" who is "genuinely concerned about the achievement...of her students" and "works tirelessly to encourage citizens to be an active part of their government."

Kalashnikova, it was noted, "keeps her classroom consistently in awe of her knowledge in the field" and "inspires students" with her passion."