Source: https://www.valleycollege.edu/news/2025/june/sbvcs-special-graduations-celebrate-student-identities-and-cultures.php

SBVC's Special Graduations Celebrate Student Identities and Cultures

November 2025
October 2025
September 2025
August 2025
July 2025
June 2025
May 2025
April 2025
March 2025
February 2025
January 2025

No two students are alike at San Bernardino Valley College, and as a way of recognizing their diverse backgrounds, several distinct graduation celebration were held in the weeks leading up to Commencement 2025, including Black Grad, Nuestra Graduación, and Lavender Grad.

"These special graduations are crucial because they create a sense of belonging by celebrating the unique identities and cultures of our students," said Stu Engagement Specialist Marie Maghuyop. "These events provide a platform for visibility and representation, ensuring that students feel seen and valued, ar foster a sense of community."



Islander Grad

On May 3, local Pacific Islander graduates came together for Island Grad, an evening recognizing their culture and community. The event kicked off with t Aloha welcoming chant, and included several traditional dance performances and the presentation of scholarship awards and stoles.



API Grad

Open to all San Bernardino Valley College and Crafton Hills College graduates, the API Grad on May 8 marked the achievements of Asian and Pacific Isla students. The afternoon celebration included performances by Pasefika Student Union and Taiko Mix and remarks from Sefa Aina, Associate Dean and Dir of the Draper Center for Community Partnerships at Pomona College, who spoke about the strength of each graduate's ancestors and how community pla a role in their educational journeys.



Lavender Grad

LGBTQIA+ graduates and allies celebrated their accomplishments on May 13 during the Lavender Grad, hosted by Prof. Todd Heibel with music provided b Les. This was the third Lavender Grad held on campus, with 12 students participating in the festivities. A highlight was one of the graduates sharing that "it him 18 years and several different schools to get to this point, and they credit the supportive environment of SBVC, specifically STAR Program, that believed him when he didn't believe in himself," Maghuyop said.



Black Grad Celebration

Spirits were high during the 45th Annual Black Grad Celebration on May 17, honoring the accomplishments of dozens of graduates from San Bernardino V College and Crafton Hills College. The evening was filled with laughter, food, music, and live entertainment. This event was founded in 1980 by the San Bernardino Community College District's Black Faculty and Staff Association as a way of celebrating students who persevered and completed their educat journey.



Nuestra Graduación

More than 500 people gathered on May 18 for Nuestra Graduación, a celebration of academic achievement and Latinx culture. Organized by the Latino Faculty, Staff & Administrators' Association (LFSAA), the event honors the "diverse journeys of Latinx students, ensuring that each student's experience is recognized in a way that resonates with their identity," LFSAA President Aida Gil said. The festivities included music from a mariachi band, speeches from campus and district leaders, and the presentation of special Latinx stoles "symbolizing pride and connection to their heritage." This annual observance is "r than a graduation ceremony," Gil said. "It is a space for reflection, celebration, and closure."