

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, and 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 the 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 Island students. The afternoon celebration included performances by Pasefika Student Union and Taiko Mix and remarks from Sefa Aina, Associate Dean and Director of the Draper Center for Community Partnerships at Pomona College, who spoke about the strength of each graduate's ancestors and how community played 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 by DJ 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 took 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 in 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."