Exemplary leadership and high achievement characterize those selected for the Order of the Laurel and the Palm. Recipients display significant leadership that touches multiple facets of university life and have made notable contributions that leave a lasting impact on the university community and/or the world at large through their commitment to service and value of the university’s highest goals and ideals. Less than one percent of undergraduates earning their degrees are selected as members of the Order of the Laurel and the Palm.

The University and the Division of Student Affairs proudly congratulate these 15 gifted leaders and scholars for their vision and transformative leadership – the recipients of the Order of the Laurel and the Palm.

Blake Ackerman
Lauren Andrews
Zia Bedi
Rebecca Breitstein
Jamie Kagan
Giselle Kim
Christopher Lindsay
Aarohi Mahableshwarkar
Yasaman Pedram
Lisa De Rafols
Mahin Tahsin
Steven Vargas
Brandon Wexler
Nahid Yosufi
Zannatul Zannat
Recipients of The Order of Troy have distinguished themselves beyond their peers in at least one facet of university life and have made notable contributions to the university community as active leaders or critical contributors in service to peers, the university community or the world at large. These students have pursued academic excellence while devoting extensive time and energy in service outside the classroom.

This year, 93 students are bestowed the honor of the Order of Troy. The University and the Division of Student Affairs are proud to recognize each of these students for their outstanding leadership in the USC community.

Armand Amini
Savannah Benz
Nicolo Betoni
Princess Blamoh
Adrianna Borgatello
Rebecca Braganca
Yesenia Brasby
Mary Bronaugh
Edgar Bustos
John Cagney
Mariela Cardenas
Milena Castillio-Grynberg
Aria Catano
Amanda Cawley
Stephanie Chai
Jeffrey Cho
Dolly Chowdhury
Ronelle Copes
Giulia Corno
Syann Cromwell
Katherine Cunningham
Elliot Danielsson
Stephanie Davis
Alan De Santiago
Georgia Delgado
Anna Drabovskaya
Lillian Dyre
Alexandra Famiglietti
Courtney Fassett
Joelle Ferguson
Axel Fuentes Gutierrez
Marisa Fuse
Tingrui Gan
Victoria Garcia-Lopez
Paige Havens
Gwen Howard
Elizabeth Israelian
William Jackson
Pamela Joya
Inkoo Kang
Hana Khan
Hadassah Kim
Jasmine Klein
Harrison Knapp
Alyssa Lam
Jennifer Leal
Matthew Lee
Abigail Leung
Carolyn Levi
Samantha Levi
Sunshine Liu
Tiana Lyew
Joelle MacLean
Connie Machuca
Adriana Bernal Martinez
Andrea Mauro
Claire Mauss
Sabra Mendoza
Tomas Mier
Megan Moore
Maya McGrath
Alyssa Myers
Sameer Nair-Desai
Kenna Nguyen
Amari Page
Christine Park
John Perino
Colin Petersdorf
Kathy Pulupa
Jose Rico
Candace Ro
Ulysses Salcido
Dayanara Saucedo
Pooja Singh
Abigail Song
Kayla Soren
Beatriz Sousa
Alexandra Stella
John Tamisica
Lee Thibodeau
Camille Verendia
Tiffany Vuong
Rosa Wang
Cameron Whiteside
Elizabeth Winnicki
Erin Wolfe
Mya Worrell
Jonathan Xue
Jocelyn Yang
Linqi Yang
Kaidi Yuan
Angel Zayas
Arête, taken from the Greek, means virtue or excellence in attaining one’s utmost human potential. Members of the Order of Arête have distinguished themselves above their peers through campus or community leadership roles beyond those required for their programs of study, often making notable contributions to the university, academic discipline, community or world at large. In these leadership roles, members demonstrate significant depth and scope of responsibility, and they are recognized for upholding value and meaning over individual achievement. The award represents the highest honor accorded graduate students upon completion of their academic programs.

This year, 74 students are bestowed the honor of the Order of Arête. The University and the Division of Student Affairs are proud to recognize each of these students for their outstanding work within their individual programs and their dedicated service to the campus community.

Adylbek Abdykalikov  
Natasha Arief  
Christopher Alcala  
Esteban Alcala  
Yuta Ando  
Roland Azurin  
Ido Badash  
Stephen Baccari  
Talin Bchakjian  
Gabrielle Blanchette  
Katie Bui  
Latrice Burks  
Sierra Burton  
Celina Caovan  
April Marie Castro

Fedja Celebic  
Lauren Clarke  
Lakeya Cherry  
Kristi Culpepper  
Aamirah Dastgir  
Allison Dorr  
Kelsey Falkenberg  
Akeem Faustino  
Shangnon Fei  
Claudia Fendian  
Briah Fischer  
Cassandra Flores-Montano  
Jason Frenn  
Lauren Garchow  
Chasen Getty

Diana Greer  
Blaise Guerriero  
Thao Huynh  
Shomik Jain  
Jasmine Jefferies  
Matthew Katnik  
Rachel Kent  
Jong Su Kim  
Gavin Kress  
Brian Lee  
Julianne Lewis  
Soraya Levy  
Lauren Maldonado  
Benjamin Manibog  
Alexis McDonald  
Nubia Menchaca  
Taylor Millman  
Samuel Naimi  
John Oltean  
Kara Onouye  
Roxanna Pakkar  
Daniel Padilla Vega  
Bethrese Padini  
Cathy Park  
Krishan Patel

Jessica Pedersen  
Veronica Perry  
Ravali Reddy  
Nina Regan  
Larry Rodriguez  
Mari Rustebakke  
Maritza Salazar  
Sai Saraswathy Menon  
Komal Shah  
Joseph Skeate  
Kelly Smith  
Christic Sue  
Colleen Sweeney  
Zhanerke Temirgaliyeva  
Ian Thacker  
Payton Timmeney  
Justin Trop  
David Tyrpak  
Vijaya Vaikari  
Alec Vanden Berg  
Aram Vartanian  
Li Shan Wee  
D’Mitri Williams  
Jennifer Wilson  
Janis Yue
Academic Honors

Class of 2020 Valedictorian
Isabella Sarah Hauptman, Cognitive Science; Minor in Public Health

Class of 2020 Salutatorians
Thomas Jae Hyun Kim, International Relations; Minor in Environmental Studies
Gavin Thomas Kress, Biomedical Engineering (Biochemical Engineering); Minor in Physics

USC Provost’s Award
The USC Provost’s Award is granted to graduating seniors who have attained the highest scholarship average of all undergraduate transfer students at the University. The recipients have attained a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

Annelisse Cuellar-Montes, Human Biology
Honor Christabelle Hayball, Political Science
Mami Horikawa, Chemistry (Research)
Aris Mangasarian, Psychology
Danielle Haley Morales, Public Policy; Minor in Social Entrepreneurship
Zhonghao Shi, Computer Science
Adrien Verus, Narrative Studies; Minors in German and Jewish Studies
Elizabeth Winnicki, Human Biology

University Trustees Award
The University Trustees Award is granted to graduating senior men who have attained the highest scholarship average of all undergraduate men at the University. The recipients of this award have earned a perfect 4.0 undergraduate course of study at USC.

Nihar Goel Agrawal, Computer Science
Neelesh Bagrodia, Biomedical Engineering
Rae Lan, Neuroscience; Minor in Biotechnology
Michael James Wong, Health and the Human Sciences; Minor in Occupational Science
Jingyun Yang, Computer Science; Minor in Mathematics

Emma Josephine Bradley Bovard Award
The Emma Josephine Bradley Bovard Award was founded by USC’s Faculty Women’s Club and is granted to graduating senior women who have attained the highest scholarship average of all undergraduate women at the University. The recipients attained a perfect 4.0 grade point average for their entire undergraduate course of study at USC.

Savannah Abbey Benz, International Relations; Minor in Management Consulting
Rose Francesca Bueno, Cinema and Media Studies
Danielle Lynne Collins, English; Spanish
Sarah Elizabeth Leitner, Law; History and Culture; Minor in Political Science
Isabella Sarah Hauptman, Cognitive Science; Minor in Public Health

Steven & Kathryn Sample Renaissance Scholars
USC Renaissance Scholars are students who graduate in two or more widely separated fields of study with both a major and a minor, or two baccalaureate degrees. Renaissance Scholars must meet requirements for superior academic performance, including no less than a 3.5 overall grade point average, and no less than a 3.5 grade point average in their respective programs of study.

This year, the University recognizes 201 seniors as USC Steven & Kathryn Sample Renaissance Scholars Candidates. Of this group, 97 scholars applied for the prize competition, and 11 have been selected to receive a $10,000 prize toward graduate study.

Jeffrey Daeyun Cho, Linguistics (B.A.); Minor: Education and Society
Alexandra Marie Famiglietti, Global Health (B.S.); History (B.A.)
Megan Elizabeth Goodman, Neuroscience (B.A.); Minor: Theater; Cinematic Arts; Health Care Studies
Abigail Margaretha Jackson, Computational Neuroscience (B.S.); Philosophy (B.A.)
Kanan Kapur, English (Creative Writing) (B.A.); Minor: International Relations
Sina Karachiani, Computer Science (B.S.); Composition (B.A.)
Catherine Elizabeth Knox, Engineering (Environmental Engineering) (B.S.); Minor: International Relations
Micah Gabriel Light, Anthropology (B.A.); Art (B.A.)
Emily E Liu, English (B.A.); Political Economy (B.A.); Minor: Applied Computer Security; Environmental Studies
Ryan Rene Moreno, Computer Science (B.S.); Minor: English
Katarzyna Maria Pilch, Cognitive Science (B.A.); Minor: Two-Dimensional Studies

Discovery Scholars
USC Discovery Scholars are students who have produced exceptional original scholarship or creative work at USC while compiling a distinguished overall academic record, including no less than a 3.5 overall grade point average.

This year, the University recognizes 110 USC Discovery Scholars. Of this group, 35 scholars were nominated as prize finalists, and 10 have been selected to receive a $10,000 prize toward graduate study.

Rose Francesca Bueno, School of Cinematic Arts
For, “Comfort Cinema”
Nicole Elizabeth Buss, Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
For, “Possible Occupational Therapy Interventions for Homeless Individuals in a Library Setting”
Joelle Marie Ferguson, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
For, “Remove the Barrier”
Nicholas Joseph Guardino, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
For, “PGDA is Required for the Alert Response of Muscle Stem Cells and the Peripheral Nervous System to a Distant Injury”
Tasfia Jahangir, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
For, “What to expect when you’re expecting: Perceptions of Postpartum Depression among low-income mothers and families in Mumbai, India”
Shomik Jain, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
For, “Modeling Engagement in Long-Term, In-Home Socially Assistive Robot Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders”
Guadalupe Mota, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
For, “Disrupting the Ordered City: The production, festivities, and riot of early Colonial Mexico City (1521-1700)”
Mitiasoa Helianta Razafy, Keck School of Medicine
For, “Assessment of Respiratory Health Symptoms and Asthma in Children near a Drying Saline Lake”
Pooja Singh, School of Pharmacy
For, “Developing Novel Opioid Antagonist Treatments for Opioid Overuse Reversal: The Role of Governmental Agencies and the Need for Diverse Clinical Trials”
Hannah Elizabeth Walker, Viterbi School of Engineering
For, “Autonomously Mapping Nearshore Coastal Bathymetry”

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For, “Autonomously Mapping Nearshore Coastal Bathymetry”
Global Scholars

The Global Scholars program recognizes undergraduates who have excelled in their studies both at home and abroad, spending at least 10 weeks outside the U.S. as part of their undergraduate experience, and achieving no less than a 3.5 overall grade point average. This year, the University recognizes 51 seniors as USC Global Scholars. Of this group, 22 graduating scholars were nominated as prize finalists by their schools, and 10 have been selected to receive a $10,000 prize toward graduate study.

Sofia Maria Bosch, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
For “Financing Female Empowerment in Mexico”

Virginia Page Boxley Bullington, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
For “Children of Democracy”

Lisa Sofia de Ráfols, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
For “The Potential for the Codification of Climate Refugees”

Brooke Leanne Helstrom, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
For “A Mixed Blessing: Colonialist Legacies and the Natural Resource Curse Theory in Botswana and Angola”

Rae Lan, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
For “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Historical and Modern Analysis”

Aarohi Atul Mahableshwarkar, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
For “Mitigating Opioid Crises in the United States, India, and Greece: A Comparative Case Study of Government Policies”

Ellen Bowers Murray, School of Dramatic Arts
For “Aesthetic Decolonization: Magic Realism and Rewriting Postcolonial Trauma in Brie Grace-Smith’s Paraponarolatah”

Doménica Sofia Ordoñez Molina, School of Architecture
For “Domestic Planning”

Erin Melissa Pineda, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
For “The Kindness of Strangers: Latin American responses to the Venezuelan Migration Crisis”

Julia Marie Thorner, Marshall School of Business and Leonard School of Accounting
For “Promoting High-Tech Industries in Poland: Recommendations for the Polish Start-Up Ecosystem”

Competitive Fellowships

David L. Boren Scholarship for International Study
Shir Dina Attias, International Relations; Political Economy
Lisa Sofia de Ráfols, International Relations; Economics; minor: French
Eunbyul Abigail Koh, International Relations; East Asian Languages and Cultures; minor: Human Security and Geospatial Intelligence
Isabelle Lily Nazha, International Relations; French
Erin Melissa Pineda, International Relations; minor: German
Megan Keely Smith, International Relations; French

Fulbright U.S. Student Program
Natalie Morgan Balladarsch, English Teaching Assistantship, Spain
Thomas Brown, English Teaching Assistantship, Greece
Alexander Peter Bruno, Research Grant, Poland
Ashley Kishore Chainani, English Teaching Assistantship, Spain
Lisa Sofia de Ráfols, English Teaching Assistantship, Colombia
Nathan Viet Duy Duong, English Teaching Assistantship, Spain
Abigail Margaretha Jackson, Research Grant, Germany
Nayanika Kapoor, English Teaching Assistantship, Taiwan
Catherine Elizabeth Knox, Graduate Degree Grant, Netherlands
Aarohi Atul Mahabelshwarkar, Research Grant, India
Kristen Malini Mascarenhas, English Teaching Assistantship, India
Chinyere Nwodim, Creative Arts Research Grant, Brazil
Jorge Sandoval, English Teaching Assistantship, Mexico
Michael Albert Smith, English Teaching Assistantship, Bulgaria
Kurtis Allen Weatherford, English Teaching Assistantship, Greece
Melissa Jane Xu, English Teaching Assistantship, Ecuador

National Science Foundation
Graduate Research Fellowship Program
Arynn Orlanes Gallegos, Electrical Engineering (B.S.)

Schwarzman Scholars Program
Songzi “Richard” Huang, Business Administration (World) (B.S.)

Truman and Udall Scholarships
Kayla Marie Soren, International Relations (B.A.); Environmental Studies (B.A.)
The Order of the Laurel and the Order of the Palm awards originated at USC in 1960. The Order of the Laurel was presented to outstanding senior women; the Order of the Palm was presented to outstanding senior men. Several years later, the Orders of the Laurel and the Palm were combined and redefined as the highest honor bestowed on graduating seniors. Distinguished leadership in multiple facets of university life and external community service were key descriptors along with excellent scholarship. A cumulative grade point average of 3.25 was customary.

The Order of Troy award originated in 1977 to recognize students who were excellent scholars and leaders, who had attained a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. In 2005, the Order of Arête was established to recognize graduate students who have demonstrated significant depth and scope of responsibility in a campus or community leadership role.

Reflective of university growth, the formal recognition program has been expanded to honor a larger number of remarkable outstanding scholars and leaders deserving of recognition and formal expression of gratitude for their contributions to student life. In addition, the program also recognizes Academic Honors, Renaissance Scholars, Discovery Scholars, Global Scholars, and Competitive Fellowships.