

Get to know some of fall 2025's remarkable graduating students

By Lisa Robbins, ASU News
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The fall season is known for many things — cooling temps, changing foliage, pumpkin spice. For more than 12,000 Arizona State University students, it also means graduation this year.

This fall cohort is prepared to join a workforce of high-demand careers, like engineering, health and sustainability — and many have already created real world impact.

Learn more about some of these exceptional graduates and their educational journeys.

[ASU Online helps conservation explorer turn passion into purpose](#)

After spending nearly four years working towards an engineering degree, Madison Eklund realized it wasn't her dream. She stepped away from school for almost 10 years, and when she was ready to go back to college to pursue a passion for conservation, ASU Earned Admission gave her a second chance.

[After immense loss, ASU graduate moves forward with purpose](#)

After tragically losing her husband in the line of duty, ASU Online graduate Amanda Rudd, founder of the 554 Foundation, is using a degree in family and human development to help others navigate trauma and build resilience.

[ASU grad finds purpose in serving her community through emergency medical services](#)

Growing up in Scottsdale, Arizona, Isabella Lirtzman always knew she wanted to stay close to home for college. Her decision to attend ASU led her to discover a deep sense of community, the value of mentorship and a passion for service that will shape her future in medicine.

[Olympic gold medalist adds ASU graduate to his list of accomplishments](#)

After winning four gold medals at the 2024 Summer Olympics, former Arizona State University swimmer Léon Marchand returned to ASU to get his degree in computer science through ASU Online.

After surviving illness, ASU sociology grad finds strength in helping others

Barbara Bennett has battled cancer, recovered from a stroke that left her temporarily paralyzed, moved her family across state lines and continued working full time while raising three children — all while earning a sociology degree from ASU Online.

ASU grad dreams of helping hometown residents with a career in family medicine

When it came time to choose a college, Eliu Zaragoza selected ASU, eager to explore new opportunities beyond his hometown of Yuma, Arizona, and stay close to his family — including his brother, who also attended ASU.

Psychology grad challenging a long-standing ‘culture of silence’ around mental health

Raised in a culture where mental health was rarely discussed, Yesenia Cruz-Carrillo found her voice in research. Now the first-generation scholar is completing her master’s on the way to a PhD at ASU and earning recognition for her work examining population-level health trends in midlife using national data from countries all over the world.

Grad dedicated PhD to uncovering evolutionary relationships between their favorite creatures: Weevils

Having grown up in the lush green mountains of Veracruz, Alexis Cortes Hernandez spent much of their childhood playing outside and had always been drawn to insects. Now they're graduating with a PhD in evolutionary biology from ASU, having dedicated their career to studying beetles' evolutionary relationships.

ASU Online launches graduate's childhood dreams

From watching shuttle launches with her dad at Jetty Park Beach in Florida as a little girl, dreaming about becoming an engineer, to now working as a test engineer for USfalcon, supporting missile warning and space operations, electrical engineering graduate Theresa Maheux’s dream has come full circle.

ASU partnership helps graduate career shift, fulfill personal goals

While working on personal training, Damon Jones started working for Uber and loved the flexibility it offered, allowing him to spend more time at home, pursue his passion and enroll in the healthy lifestyles and fitness science degree program at the College of Health Solutions through ASU Online.

Mom and Uber employee finds success through ASU Online to become a first-generation college graduate

This fall, transfer student and first-generation college graduate Leeza Topete will earn a bachelor's degree in criminology and criminal justice not only for herself — but for her son, her family and her parents.

Photography student explores cultural legacy through his lens

For Nicolas Morley, who graduates this fall with a BFA in photography from the School of Art, the path to photography began with a moment of clarity late in high school: "It took me a while to figure out what I wanted to major in. I chose photography because it was the only thing that really made sense to me."

Emergency manager connects on-the-ground experiences with systemic change

Last year, when Hillsborough County, Florida was hit with back-to-back-to-back hurricanes, Erik Challenger Sr. was there, helping his community. Being in service to his community is who he is as a professional, and who he is as a person. This fall, Challenger is the 2025 Outstanding Graduate from the School of Public Affairs.

Voyager Scholar advances accessibility in travel and higher education

As a recipient of the Obama-Chesky Voyager Scholarship for Public Service, business administration Jessica Lopez received a six-week travel stipend, which she used to travel to Chicago, Washington D.C., Las Vegas, New York City, and San Francisco and the Redwoods to study accessibility in travel across the U.S.

Outstanding Graduate establishes mentorship program

Kavya Walia, who is earning a degree in environmental engineering, plans to advance clean water equity in low-income communities worldwide and remediate contaminants such as forever chemicals and microplastics.

ASU graduate uses communication, fundraising skills to aid nonprofits

Madison Barton, the Fall 2025 Outstanding Graduate for the School of Community Resources and Development, leads community engagement initiatives at Love Never Fails, a Bay-Area nonprofit dedicated to preventing human trafficking and empowering survivors.

ASU staff member earns master's degree, embraces cultural bridge-building

Theresa Zimm is an avid traveler, community volunteer, former K–12 classroom teacher, fluent speaker of Russian, former website administrator, current university staff member and the mother of three grown children. And, now as she graduates with a master's degree at ASU, she says she's just getting started.

Engineering grad wants to develop next generation of electronic, quantum devices

An electrical engineering major in the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, Hanson Nguyen says he chose the Fulton Schools because of its inclusive, supportive and collaborative academic community.

Sun Devil DNA guided nursing grad to her calling

When Elizabeth Wakefield turns her tassel this December, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in nursing from the [Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation](#), she will continue a long and beloved family tradition.

Finding strength in stillness

For Phoenix-native Evangelina Lopez, social work is a calling that allows her to advocate and empower others to "find their own voices and strengths." She is the fall 2025 Outstanding Graduate in the School of Social Work.

First-generation grad finds purpose in planning a more sustainable future

Bethany Hawthorne graduates from the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning with a bachelor's degree in urban planning and a minor in sustainability as an online student. At age 40, she is a first-generation college graduate who balanced full-time work with academic excellence, earning the highest GPA among all graduating students in the school.

PhD grad decodes rhetoric of eating disorder recovery

Hannah Benefiel had gotten used to learning in a competitive environment and was expecting the same at ASU. But when this PhD student from Knoxville, Tennessee, set foot on the Tempe campus in early 2020, her anxiety dissipated. Instead of competition, she found camaraderie.

From Canada to Armenia: School of Art student pursues passion through global research

Fiona Gray, who will graduate this fall with a BA in art history and a minor in religious studies, said her time at ASU not only prepared her for pursuing a career in academia but also allowed her to learn more about herself, her drive and her dedication.

Grad overcomes language barrier to earn 2 degrees

When Angel Monroy, a first-generation college student from Sonora, Mexico, moved to the U.S. in 2022, he spoke little English. But with the help of a translator app, a lot of practice and hard work, he became the Fall 2025 Outstanding Graduate for the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

IT grad keeps computer science school wired for success

Alongside his information technology coursework, Daniel Demumbrum has spent two years assisting the School of Computing and Augmented Intelligence's IT Help Desk as a student worker under the supervision of Rodger Shmitt, a systems support senior analyst.

ASU film and media studies grad looks forward to shaping own story

Originally from Lahore, Pakistan, Simon Gill is graduating this fall with a Bachelor of Arts in film that he earned online. He said the flexibility and admissions support he received from the university made all the difference.

ASU Online graduate finds purpose through sports, creativity and connection

Through ASU Online, Kembly Gonzalez found the perfect degree program that would launch her career goals forward and the flexibility to balance her coursework with work and spend quality time with loved ones.

International graduate ready to return to India to do business

Mudit Lal has packed a lot into his time at ASU, creating a new student organization — the India Policy and Economy Research Club — working at the International Students and Scholars Center and founding a company.

ASU grad earns communication degree while performing across Europe

When professional ballet dancer Daniela Thorne takes a bow this fall, it will mark more than the end of a performance. It will celebrate the completion of her Bachelor of Arts in communication from the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, earned entirely through ASU Online.

Transfer student finds path to success at ASU

For ASU transfer student Matthew Vail, the path to higher education was never a straight line; it wound through depression and years of addiction. But this December, he will graduate with dual degrees in marketing and management through the W. P. Carey School of Business.

Family science shapes ASU grad's path to divorce law

Driven by a desire to advocate for children of parents going through divorce, ASU family and human development graduate Natalya Castillo is preparing for a future in law.

Grad strengthens leadership in clean energy through legal studies

Joel Jorgenson serves as CEO and president of BWR Innovations LLC, a fast-growing company developing zero-emission electrical generators. As he prepares to earn a Master of Legal Studies, he proves that great leaders never stop learning.

Graduate charts a new course through ASU Online

Anna Apokina took advantage of the Starbucks College Achievement Plan to earn her degree in biological sciences through ASU Online. It not only made the dream of college a reality, it allowed her to participate in an in-person biology lab at the Tempe campus, where she gained hands-on experience and bridged classroom learning with real-world experience.

Dean's Medalist builds legacy of research, mentorship and innovation

When Shri Swaminathan steps onto the graduation stage at ASU, she carries with her not only years of hard work, discovery and growth, but also the story of a journey that spans continents, disciplines and life-changing opportunities.

Graduate humanizes scientific research through poetry

Biomedical informatics and data science graduate Sanyam Paresh Shah spent most of his life fascinated by science, technology and mathematics. He is also dedicated to finding the beauty in data and writes poetry to show the feeling behind the figures.

Health Solutions Outstanding Graduate combines innovation with empathy

Siddhi Kulkarni moved from India to build on her past experience in biotechnology and bioinformatics, completing her second master's degree in biomedical informatics and data science in just one and a half years.

From Bali to the Biodesign Institute: How this PhD grad found a home in biophysics

At ASU, Gde Bimananda Mahardika Wisna — who goes by "Bima" — rediscovered not only his love for science but a new direction. He shifted from a goal of working in theoretical physics to embracing experimental biophysics, which lets him explore biological systems through physical tools and principles.

Nontraditional path to degree inspires ASU grad's mission to expand access to health education

Growth does not need to be fast — or linear — to be meaningful, as Chloe Reyes' path to graduating with a BS in psychology from ASU shows. Reyes plans to attend medical school and become a physician to share information and access to care with the people who need it most.

Dean's Medalist pursues passion through ASU Online, anthropology program

Julia Cassella, the School of Human Evolution and Social Change's fall 2025 Dean's Medalist, has taken advantage of every opportunity available to set herself up for success after graduating. She took her experience — both shadowing autopsy teams in Pennsylvania to gain a deeper understanding of forensic pathology and taking part in research at ASU — and applied it to her independent research on occupational burnout among forensic pathologists and death investigators.

A leap of faith led this Outstanding Graduate to health care innovation

Meet Natasha Burrell, Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation's Outstanding Graduate for fall 2025. A first-generation student, Burrell is used to breaking barriers even when it's uncomfortable or inconvenient. She wants others to know that she was scared to pivot in her career and to pursue a master's degree after years away from school, but she chose to do it anyway.

A researcher emerges: ASU sociology grad finds her voice in qualitative work

Graduating sociology student Marissa Carreon found her spark in research, a turning point that set her on the path toward graduate school. One course in particular sparked her interest in become a researcher and, she says, changed her whole trajectory.

Active-duty service member earns Dean's Medal for Department of Economics

When looking for a school that provided exceptional support to both those currently serving and veterans, as well as offering an online economics major, Arizona State University stood out as the right choice for Tyler Murray. This December, he will graduate as the ASU Department of Economics' fall 2025 Dean's Medalist.

Science is a family affair for this ASU grad

Driven by a personal mission, Christina Flynn wants to give families hope through science. Inspired by her son, who was diagnosed with level 3 autism, her research focuses on developing a biological urine test for the early diagnosis of the condition. She now serves as research director at a biotech startup aiming to commercialize the technology she developed at ASU.

Music student's path to graduation demonstrates resilience, determination

William "Cael" Szabados was admitted to ASU on his third try — "It was stubbornness" — and this December graduates from the School of Music, Dance and Theatre as a double major in vocal performance and music learning and teaching. He discovered his passion for music while in high school and his love of performing while at ASU.

Dean's medalist says his humanities degree marks 'capstone of experiences'

Richard Lingua, who has been fascinated with history since he was a teenager, says earning his degree is how he will unify his life experiences thus far and move on to the next phase. This December, he is the School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies' fall 2025 Dean's Medalist.

Hope, resilience marks Ramero Russell's path to degree

Ramero Russell will make a statement when he receives his Bachelor of Science in sociology at The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' convocation ceremony on Dec. 16. With every step on the stage, the man who overcame a difficult childhood and a wrongful prison conviction will be telling people that they don't have to be defined by their past or feel constrained by their future.

Addiction psychology grad works to overcome stigma associated with substance use

An anthropology minor led Vanessa Carney to study addiction science, and with her Master of Science in addiction psychology, she plans to become licensed to practice and wants to work with

local Indigenous communities.

How one longtime patent attorney catalyzed his love for biochemistry

After graduating with a chemical engineering degree from ASU in 2004, William Vancuren went back to school for a law degree, built a career as a patent attorney, and then 16 years later, returned once more, this time to pursue a biochemistry degree that reconnected him with the science that had first captured his interest.

ASU history programs inspire graduate to 'think bigger'

Cass Walrath enrolled at ASU to complete a bachelor's degree she had started years before. Little did she know, though, that she would discover a passion for history and go on to complete a master's degree in history and a public history graduate certificate.

PhD grad chased her dreams while navigating family and work

College of Health Solutions graduate Mariana Silva credits hard work, along with building and relying on a support network, for helping her complete her PhD in speech and hearing science.

Biochemistry graduate finds his path, and a future in pharmacy, through versatility of ASU degree

Math and science have always clicked differently for Parker Henmi. This December, the biochemistry major will graduate from ASU's School of Molecular Sciences with a clear goal: to channel those strengths into a pharmacy career that offers both opportunity and flexibility.

Industrial design graduate is turning big ideas into real-world impact

From launching a bioplastics startup to leading med-tech innovation with Mayo Clinic, Outstanding Graduate Malek Attar is using design to build a more sustainable, life-centered future.

ASU Online helps grad move forward, succeed on own terms

Before beginning his freshman year at an East Coast college, Hardie Kressler experienced a life change that altered his academic needs. Requiring the flexibility of an online program, Kressler enrolled in ASU Online and is now graduating with a bachelor's degree in history.

Dean's Medalist inspired to pursue a career in school psychology

Inspired by the lasting effects of the pandemic, College of Integrative Sciences and Arts Dean's Medalist Christina Robusto found her calling in helping others and is pursuing a career as a school

psychologist.

Thunderbird at ASU grad turns family legacy into global journey

Born into a “Thunderfamily” and raised across continents, Anna Laine turned a global upbringing into a global future. As she graduates with her Master of Global Management this fall, she reflects on the legacy that brought her to Thunderbird at ASU, as well as the bold, purpose-driven path she’s carving for herself.

ASU Law grad revives a long-paused dream of legal study

As Lisa Buckallew prepares to graduate this fall, she is prepared to take the next step in her career, armed with new knowledge, a renewed sense of purpose and a desire to serve clients with even greater clarity and compassion.

ASU grad transforms AI Into meaningful health solutions

For Aashritha Machiraju, engineering has always been about people. Machiraju, who is graduating with her master’s degree in computer science with a concentration in biomedical informatics, is a recipient of the fall 2025 Impact Award. After graduation, Machiraju plans to continue her work at the intersection of artificial intelligence and health care.

From inquiry to impact: How the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership inspired Jack Silver

Throughout his time at ASU, Dean’s Medalist Jack Silver discovered a genuine passion for the questions, texts and conversations at the heart of the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership. Drawn to SCETL’s emphasis on inquiry, leadership and understanding diverse perspectives, the community he found there challenged him to think more deeply about the world and his place in it.

After 20 years in gymnastics, ASU Law grad finds new purpose in sports industry

A lifelong gymnast, Peyton Valdez transformed her love of athletics into a career in sports and event innovation through ASU Law’s MSLB program. As she prepares to join Mass Media Marketing as a client service intern after graduation, Valdez reflects on the journey that brought her here and the lessons that will carry her forward.

ASU Law grad discovers new path through lifelong learning

When the pandemic opened an unexpected door into a new career, Kelly Mannes chose to walk through it with intention. As a compliance consultant for the University of Arizona, she loved the

work — the problem-solving, the human dynamics and the opportunity to support people and processes behind the scenes — but she wanted to understand it on a deeper level.

Dean's Medalist turns internship into full-time career

Tempe native Nathan Andrews will graduate with a degree in physics and as the fall 2025 Department of Physics' Dean's Medalist after finding his footing in the field. He is set to start his career at Northrop Grumman after graduation.

ASU aerospace engineering graduate launches rockets and career

Luke Wybourn has had a lifelong interest in rockets and airplanes. He explored his passion for aircraft through leadership positions in Sun Devil Rocketry, leading the club's first liquid-fueled hotfire engine test.

LA fashion business student says ASU is 'the right place to grow'

Emily Vuduris, who received the New American University Scholarship and the ASU FIDM Award, says ASU FIDM gave her the skills and confidence to continue building her creative career in the fashion industry.

Dean's Medalist looks ahead to law school, advocacy

After four years studying how systems shape people's lives, ASU Dean's Medalist Maggie Leone is preparing for her next chapter: law school and community-driven nonprofit work. "I've always been really passionate about improving conditions in our society, systemically and on all other levels," she says.

Thunderbird grad uses global perspective to find a lifelong community

When Tate Mulligan came to Thunderbird at ASU seeking a truly global learning environment, she found far more than a degree. From multilingual debates to hands-on work with international partners, her experience reshaped how she thinks about leadership, culture and ultimately the world.

Thunderbird grad prepares to strengthen diplomacy across African continent

From Freetown's Brookfields to the halls of the United Nations, Isaac Sheku Bayoh has carved out his own purpose-driven path in diplomacy, maintaining moral leadership and an unwavering belief in the power of young Africans to shape the world.

From self-doubt to Dean's Medalist: ASU grad turns struggle into advocacy

Kyle Bennett Davis found purpose in helping others through advocacy, empathy and community connection. Now, with a degree in family and human development, he's preparing to build a career centered on resilience and mental health.

From massage table to research lab, psychology grad earns Dean's Medalist honor

When Melissa Roeder realized her clients' pain often stemmed from unspoken trauma, she set out to understand the science behind healing. That path led her to New College, groundbreaking research and the Dean's Medalist distinction.

Online biochemistry graduate finds her path forward at ASU

Kea Gustavus has lived in a few very different places — she grew up in Las Vegas, moved to Wisconsin as a teenager and now calls the state's city of Madison home. This month, she's celebrating another milestone: graduating from Arizona State University with an online degree in biochemistry.

Media arts and sciences student co-creates game that explores sobriety

Zamara Porter graduates this fall from The GAME School with a BA in media arts and sciences, with a concentration in art. For her capstone project, she is working as the artist and animator on "Day in the Life: Sober Edition" — a video game that deals with addiction and the trials and tribulations that come with sobriety.

Public servant, Navajo legislator earns Outstanding Graduate distinction

Arizona House member Myron Tsosie says his master's degree in organizational leadership provided immediate tools for governance as he balanced graduate coursework with his duties at the state Capitol.

Dean's Medalist, Marine turns a new leaf at ASU West Valley

This fall, Andrew Borseth completed his BA in history with a minor in classical civilization, crediting New College, NROTC and his family for helping him chart a new path toward teaching.

Grad committed to making a difference for students with disabilities

Athena Garcia, who studied special education with a focus in visual impairments at ASU's West Valley campus in her hometown of Glendale, said she always knew she wanted to pursue a career

in which she could help others.

Doctoral graduate works to regrow the desert's 'living skin'

Much of the biocrust across the world's drylands has been degraded or destroyed, leaving areas like the Sonoran Desert susceptible to erosion and dust storms. Ana Heredia-Velasquez, graduating with PhD in microbiology, has been working to improve biocrust restoration efforts.

Community advocate and ASU soccer vice captain graduates with honors

Selected as a Dean's Medalist in the College of Integrative Sciences and Arts for her academic distinction, Meighan Farrell excelled in the classroom and on the soccer pitch.

International neuroscience student named Dean's Medalist

ASU psychology Dean's Medalist and Barrett Honors College student Kirsten Gabrielle "Gabby" Dicang shares how neuroscience research, pre-health internships and global service experiences shaped her path toward medical school and a future in neurosurgery.

Cronkite grad finds purpose in the ASU charter

Hannah De Leon Bolick chose the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication for its inclusivity, affordability and hands-on opportunities. She is graduating after discovering her passion for nonprofit communication.

W. P. Carey grad channels discipline, curiosity into academic excellence

Before stepping into the classroom, Alex Holt spent four years serving in the Marine Corps as an infantryman and scout sniper, earning four meritorious promotions and leading teams built around precision, accountability and mental toughness. When he transitioned out of the military, Holt carried those values with him into his academic journey.

Grad finds his storytelling voice at the intersection of psychology and journalism

Outstanding Graduate Lorenzo Gomez, from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, found his voice and passion on a Borderlands Initiative trip to Panama and never looked back.

Dean's Medalist's transfer story leads to Italian summer experience

Judith Guerrero, is taking what she learned in her double majors of Italian and English linguistics into a summer internship at the Biblioteca Classense, housed inside a Camaldolese monastery built in 1512 in Ravenna, Italy.

US Navy intelligence analyst earns associate degree in military studies

Beginning his degree while deployed in the Mediterranean Sea, U.S. Navy reservist and intelligence analyst Anthony Konrad balanced his coursework, research and military service, while earning a 4.25 GPA.

Dean's Medalist pursues psychology to save lives

Spurred on by a deep personal loss, Jixin "Anna" Zhou pursued a master's degree in psychology to better understand mental illness and develop the tools to help others.

Hugh Downs School graduate strengthens her leadership through online MA program

When Mariana Lozovanu began the online MA in communication program at ASU's Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, she already believed that communication was the foundation of how people build relationships, solve problems and create change.

Award-winning piano performance grad discovers creative opportunities at ASU

Moyi Liu has been nurturing his curiosity for making music since he was very young. It led him to ASU, where he is an Outstanding Graduate of the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts and is graduating with a Doctor of Musical Arts in piano performance.

First-generation ASU grad found opportunity and community through networking

Mariana Torres dreamed of attending ASU since eighth grade. Now, the double major credits her network and mentors with setting her on the path to success.

Graduating Barrett student helped save threatened Arizona amphibian

Raedon Anderson conducted research about the breeding patterns of the endangered Chiricahua leopard frog. She hopes to keep working with turtles in the future, either as a graduate student or entering the conservation workforce.

From fish tanks to fieldwork: Dean's Medalist makes waves in ocean research

From a desert childhood spent raising hermit crabs and coral in his bedroom to earning ASU's Dean's Medal for marine research, Viktor Meszaros proves you don't need an ocean to dive into ocean science.

Graduate student Rahul Manoj brings architectural insight to the 3D bone atlas project

ASU's Polytechnic campus offered Rahul Manoj the space to grow his skills and refine his approach to complex engineering challenges.

Film student's passion for producing takes her across the world

Kiara Agrawal knew since she was a child growing up in Mumbai, India, that she was destined for a life in film. Now, she's graduating this fall with a BFA in film and media production from The Sidney Poitier New American Film School at Arizona State University.

Starbucks scholar takes inspiration from heritage, the power of information

Donovique Castillo turned persistence and resilience into a bachelor's degree from ASU's Cronkite School, and discovered that education isn't about buildings, but about community, discipline and the power to redefine legacy.

International student earns Dean's Medal in mathematics

As a child growing up in Cairo, Egypt, Mohamed Mostafa describes himself as "being as quiet as you can imagine; the stereotypical math person." Mostafa will graduate from Arizona State University this month with a bachelor's degree in mathematics and as the School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences' fall 2025 Dean's Medalist.

ASU grad translates immersive dreams into real-world impact through narrative and emerging media

Inspired by immersive media pioneers, Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication grad Ashley Buschhorn is turning her Texas-sized media dreams into LA realities.

From doctor to sustainability leader, ASU Online grad moves into new position to merge sustainability with health care

After 20 years as a pediatric critical care physician, Dr. Michele Domico returned to school to pursue a Master of Sustainability Leadership to unite her passions while advancing her career. Now, after graduating, she's become the first Medical Director of Environmental Sustainability at Rady's Children's Health.

Business school grad 'rebuilt' himself throughout ASU journey

David De Sousa says his academic experience proves your past doesn't define your future. When he began his ASU journey two years ago, he carried a heavy dose of self-doubt: He had dropped out of high school, and at 35, was older than many of his peers. But his commitment to consistent academic discipline paid off: This winter, he'll graduate as a W. P. Carey Dean's Medalist honoree.

International relations grad aims to make an impact on global migration

Julian Mydlil is graduating with a bachelor's degree in international relations and was recognized as the spring 2025 Dean's Medalist for ASU's School of Politics and Global Studies.

Hugh Downs School dean's medalist excels in academics, service and leadership while serving in US Air Force

When Brandon Garlitos began his academic journey at ASU, he was already balancing a demanding military career with a full slate of responsibilities. That commitment carried through his academic journey. His dedication was recognized this fall when he was awarded the Dean's Medal from The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for Outstanding Academic Achievement.

First-generation grad finds purpose in sustainability

Joslyn Knutson was fully convinced that she would become an English major and published author until a high school teacher's realistic optimism about changing the world changed her trajectory. Knutson is graduating this December as the 2025 Outstanding Graduate from the Rob Walton College of Global Futures.

From Guyana to ASU and back: PhD student advances innovation for climate-resilient development

ASU doctoral student Denise Simmons is advancing climate-resilient development in her home country of Guyana by blending scientific research with community-driven collaboration.

Applied mathematics graduate discovers passion for biostatistics and meaningful research at West Valley campus

For applied mathematics graduate Samuel Ingram, the journey to finding his academic calling wasn't defined by a single "aha" moment, but by a series of opportunities, mentors and discoveries that revealed just how powerful math could be in solving real-world problems.

Dog's cancer diagnosis inspired grad's preveterinary journey

Determined to address the shortage of veterinary specialists, Brelyn Fidler made the most of her time at ASU — including rehabbing wild rhinos in South Africa during a study abroad trip.

PhD student uses biotechnology to sustainably produce chemicals humans rely on

Amanda Godar, who's graduating with a PhD from ASU's microbiology program this fall, spent her degree investigating how to produce those chemicals in more eco-friendly ways, such as using bacteria that can convert sugars derived from crops.

With resilience and mentorship, graduate forges her path to medical school

First-generation graduate Denise Quizon found a home at ASU's West Valley campus, where New College's community and hands-on opportunities helped shape her path to medicine. Now, she's preparing for medical school with a passion for research, inclusion and serving others.

Outstanding Graduate finds purpose in research and clinical care

Lucia Xueqing Yuan Zhang used her time in New College's DREAMS Lab to investigate how emotion regulation influences healing and decision-making. Her graduate training strengthened both her clinical skills and her commitment to pursuing a PhD that bridges research and practice.

Former unhoused teen graduates with master's degree to focus on housing justice

Earning her master's degree in sociology this fall, Rebeca Bonilla is using her own history with housing instability to inspire her studies on how housing, race and community conditions shape people's lives.

From MCAT to data crunch: How one ASU grad pivoted like a pro

From taking the MCAT for fun — her bachelor's degree is in pre-med — to earning her master's degree in business analytics, Arizona State University student Ritika Anand shows how a willingness to be open to opportunities can redirect your career.

ASU Online grad finds new worldview through biomimicry program

Fiona van Haeringen discovered biomimicry a decade ago and was immediately drawn to the philosophy and ideology of the practice. Over time, she realized biomimicry was the path for her. Now she is the fall 2025 Outstanding Graduate for the School of Complex Adaptive Systems at the Rob Walton College of Global Futures.

Polytechnic campus has always been home for W. P. Carey grad

From middle school to college, Edgardo Jauregui's time at ASU's Polytechnic campus helped shape his future in human resources.

ASU grads' lifelong pursuit of education becomes a reality

After years of putting family first, Makita Hogans is celebrating a long-awaited milestone: earning her bachelor's degree in innovation in society at ASU. Her story is one of resilience, self-belief and using education to uplift communities through meaningful, real-world impact.

Graduate awarded Dean's Medal for approach to science education

Lindsey Tober was looking for a way to combine her creative side with her passion for science when she found the technological leadership degree at ASU and ultimately used it to pursue her love of filmmaking. Now she's one step closer to moving her undergraduate work into a full-time career.

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Photo of ASU graduation regalia by Samantha Chow/Arizona State University.

Text image(s)



Madison Eklund



Léon Marchand



Yesenia Cruz-Carrillo



Damon Jones



Erik Challenger Sr.



Madison Barton



Elizabeth Wakefield



Hannah Benefiel



Daniel Demumbrum (right) pictured with his supervisor, Rodger Shmitt.



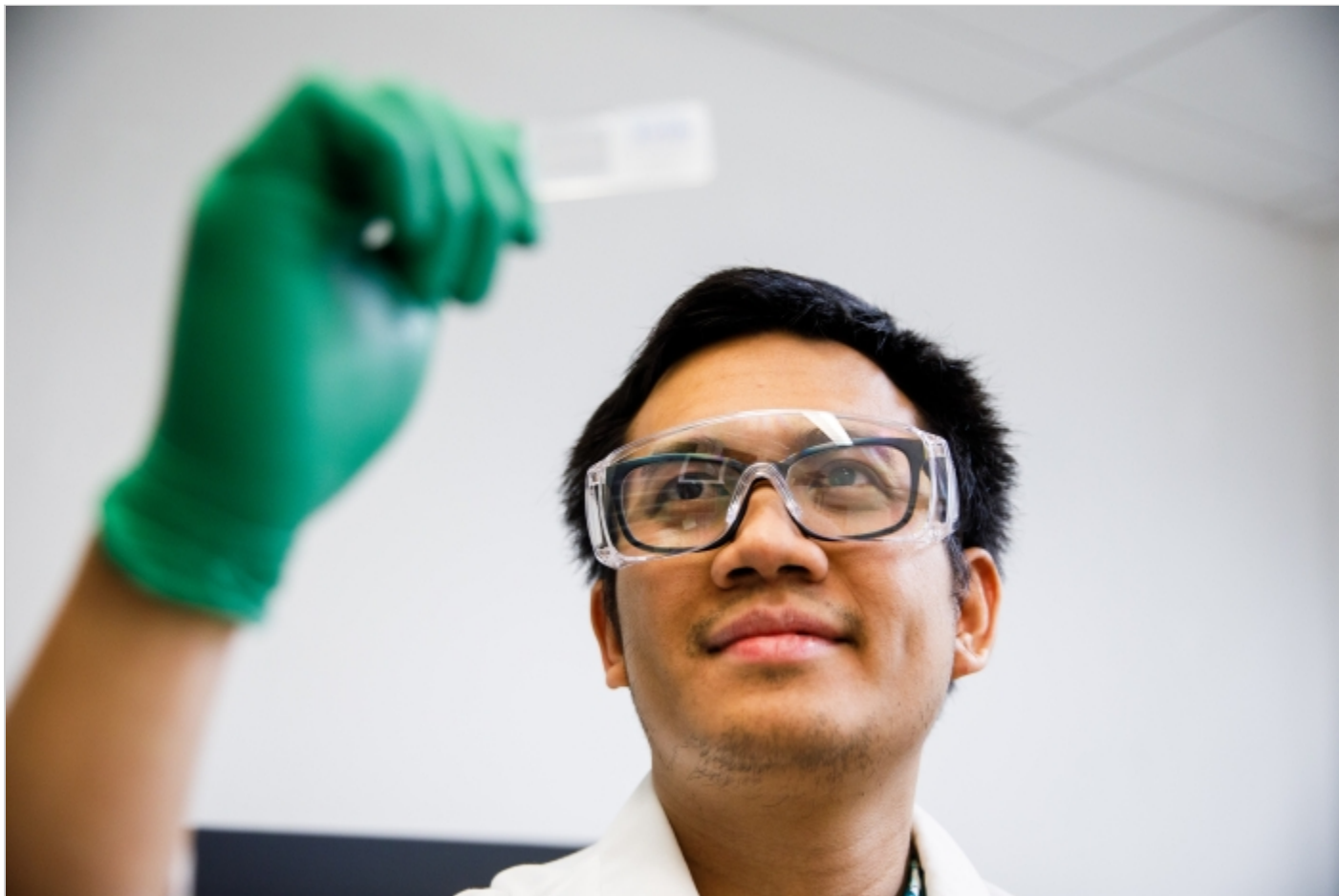
Mudit Lal



Natalya Castillo



Shri Swaminathan



Gde Bimananda Mahardika Wisna



Natasha Burrell



Christina Flynn



Ramero Russell



Cass Walrath



Malek Attar



Anna Laine



Jack Silver



Nathan Andrews



Maggie Leone



Kyle Bennett Davis



Zamara Porter



Athena Garcia



Kirsten Gabrielle "Gabby" Dicang



Lorenzo Gomez



Jixin "Anna" Zhou



Mariana Torres



Rahul Manoj



Mohamed Mostafa



David De Sousa (center)



Joslyn Knutson



Brelyn Fidler



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