



Resolution: Author(s): Michael Jay Sandoval Jr., Tatiana Colon, Mattea Battenfield, Sophia Vaux, Rhonel Aquino, Alisha Gupta, Holiday Barrett

Sponsoring Senator(s): Eliana Freitas, Ella Nosti, Gilberto Esquer Jr, Hope Lowery, Isabelle Barako, Jose Arradondo, Lexi Boyd, Natalie Trujillo

Date: May 7, 2026

A Resolution to Institutionalize Latine Graduation and Establish Financial Equity

WHEREAS, the University of San Diego (USD) identifies as an **Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)**, a designation that according to USD's own "HSI Journey" is a direct result of **The Horizon Project** and the **Envisioning 2024** strategic plan.

WHEREAS, "to be recognized as a Hispanic-Serving Institution by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), at least 25% of an institution's undergraduate student body must identify as Hispanic," meaning USD's HSI status is directly contingent on Hispanic student enrollment.

WHEREAS, according to USD's official "HSI FAQs," the university is actively striving for full federal HSI designation because it "enables USD to apply for vital federal grants" from the U.S. Department of Education, including **Title V** funds which ranges from **\$600,000 to over \$1,000,000 annually**.

WHEREAS, these federal grants are intended specifically to "expand educational opportunities for, and improve the attainment of, Hispanic students" and to ensure "institutional stability" for those institutions who serve a Hispanic Community on their campus.

WHEREAS, while the University benefits from the presence, identities, and enrollment of Latino and marginalized students, cultural milestones are still often treated as optional and nonessential student organization activities rather than meaningful academic and community achievements deserving institutional support.

WHEREAS, the Associated Student Government (ASG) recently allocated a mere **\$2,500** for Latine Graduate Celebration providing for a population that qualifies the school for federal funding is a profound moral and institutional failure; while the Senate recognizes that the original funding request was submitted with some limitations, including a separate request for graduation stoles, that were later funded for \$2,250, ASG must remain fair and considerate to all



student organizations requesting funds for events, and therefore cannot be expected to carry the full financial responsibility for events that align directly with the University's stated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and Hispanic-Serving Institution efforts. We aim to reach out to the university and their HSI committee.

WHEREAS, students from the Hispanic community came before the Senate to voice concerns regarding insufficient funding and further demonstrated community support through a petition that gathered 449 signatures.

WHEREAS, to help address this concern, ASG allocated an additional \$4,000 to their funding through the ASG President's Discretionary Fund.

WHEREAS, one student quote from the petition stated, "These institutions must demonstrate that being culturally inclusive requires equitable financial support, in order to empower cultural diversity!"; and students who came before the Senate also expressed the emotional impact of insufficient funding, with one student stating, "To be a student in this position of graduating, as much as I want to celebrate my achievements, I can't celebrate without recognizing that it's being challenged. My celebration, my moment, and my hard work, not just of myself but of my peers, is being challenged by not being allowed to have any sort of funding... And I can't say that it's surprising, because it isn't. That decision is reflective of how our society has been treating Latino students".

WHEREAS, institutionalizing these events would ensure that students do not have to advocate year after year for the right to celebrate the meaningful accomplishment of graduating as members of minority communities at a Predominantly White Institution; and these celebrations recognize not only academic achievement, but also the resilience, culture, family support, and lived experiences that shape many students' journeys through higher education; and

WHEREAS, consistent institutional support would affirm that these milestones are not temporary or optional student-led efforts, but important traditions that deserve long-term recognition, funding, and stability;

WHEREAS, the University of San Diego is a Catholic private institution whose beliefs of the Catholic Church proclaiming that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society; and as believers that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person. Let the actions of this university align with the proclamation of the Catholic Church;

WHEREAS, other 4 year private HSI institutions commit to funding and honoring diverse graduates through commencement ceremonies. These institutions include California Lutheran University's Latines Poderosos Graduate Send-off, Loyola Marymount University's Día de



Reconocimiento, and University of the Pacific's Latinx Grad. By offering these celebratory ceremonies, these universities are successfully honoring the commitment they made to the Hispanic community. All of these universities have student populations of less than or close to USD's undergraduate numbers.

WHEREAS, USD's Lighting the Way to 2030 strategic plan states a goal to "Become the preeminent Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution in the nation." As other peer institutions with HSI designations already fund commencement celebrations for diverse graduates, USD has an opportunity to match their commitment to equity and strive towards becoming the preeminent Catholic HSI in the nation. The traditional Catholic teachings of how we organize society in economics and politics, in law and policy, directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. It further believes people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the ASG formally acknowledges that the current funding model for student organizations does not reflect equitable funding for Latine Graduation, that is composed of multiple student organizations, yet may only be funded as one through ASG. This leads to a failure to meet the standards of "Inclusive Excellence" set by **The Horizon Project**; that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. These rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families and to the larger society; and be it further.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That USD shall transition Latine Graduation from student-led fundraisers to **Institutionally Funded Events**, with a permanent annual baseline budget that will provide tangible quality, which instills belonging, honor and dignity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the University shall provide institutional funding for affinity graduation celebrations at a minimum rate of \$108 per graduating student, with this amount adjusted annually for inflation to ensure the value remains consistent with current market conditions. This amount is based on ASG's Center Funding Guide, which is already used by the Finance Committee to determine fair and consistent funding allocations for student events. Using this guide provides a clear and reasonable basis for the funding request because Latine Grad is organized by multiple student organizations across the Hispanic/Latine community, rather than by one single organization; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the \$108 per graduating student amount reflects \$26 for graduate food, \$5 for essential supplies and decorations, and \$25 for graduation stoles, totaling \$56 per graduating senior, with an additional \$26 per person for two family members or guests, adding \$52 in recognition of the family support behind each graduate's achievement. For non-graduating USD students who attend in support of their peers and community, the recommended amount shall be \$31 per student, reflecting \$26 for food and \$5 for essential supplies and decorations, but excluding the \$25 stole cost because stoles are specific to

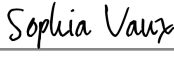


graduating seniors. This calculation honors both the student and their family while helping ensure that graduates, their loved ones, and supporting students can participate in this milestone without unnecessary financial barriers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the allocation shall be a protected line item in the University's General Operating Budget—not the **ASG discretionary fund**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the University shall provide these funds as a requirement of its **HSI status**, ensuring that every graduate receives cultural regalia at no cost and a ceremony that reflects the "Premier Standard" USD claims to uphold; We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are called to protect people and the plant, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This institutional challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored; and be it finally; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That failure to provide meaningful funding for these milestones shall be formally documented as a reflection that the University is not adequately prioritizing the academic achievement, recognition, and success of its diverse student body.

	June 7, 2026
Michael Jay Sandoval Jr., Co-Author	Date
	June 7, 2026
Tatiana Colon, Co-Author	Date
	June 3, 2026
Mattea Battenfield, Co-Author	Date
	July 22, 2026
Sophia Vaux, Co-Author	Date
	June 3, 2026
Rhonel Aquino, Co-Author	Date



Alisha Gupta

July 8, 2026

Alisha Gupta, Co-Author

Date

Holiday Barrett

June 3, 2026

Holiday Barrett, Co-Author

Date

Lily Giovannelli

June 12, 2026

Lily Giovannelli, ASG President

Date

Gabriella Mercado

June 3, 2026

Gabriella Mercado, ASG Speaker of Senate

Date



**ASSOCIATED STUDENT
GOVERNMENT**
UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

Student Life Pavilion, 308 | 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492
(619) 260-4802 | www.sandiego.edu/associatedstudents