

2025-26 School of Law
Academic Honors & Awards



JULY 2026

This program recognizes recipients of academic honors and awards, and various service, clinic and advocacy awards for 2025-26. Congratulations to all of the students who have attained these distinctions.

ACADEMIC HONORS (Degree Honors)

In accord with the Academic Rules of the University of San Diego School of Law, degree honors are conferred upon those students who distinguish themselves by their academic achievement.

SUMMA CUM LAUDE

Michael Dudzinski (LLM)
Ryan J. Haile
Vanessa Samer Hilo
Dylan M. Sawyer
Maria Grace Watters
Ming Yan

MAGNA CUM LAUDE

Tania Aleksanian
Scarlett Morgan Irene Anderson
Hannah Kerttu Bollinger
Brian Jerzy Buckley
Ji Woo Choi
Laurel Olivia Cinti
Judah Coker
Alexandra Carolina Contreras Abril (LLM)
Juan Antonio Diaz Villasmil (LLM)
Megan Hoffman Fitz-Patrick
Cole Phillip Garcia
Jose Manuel Gonzalez Tortolero (LLM)
Maria Gabriela Guanipa Archila (LLM)
Katelyn Ann Harper
Landon A. Hill
Adriana Leota (LLM)
Shania Rae Leveille
Genesis Carolina Miranda Morales (LLM)
Samantha Ann Mochel
Elva Lizeth Moreno Balderrama (LLM)
Danielle Marie Nead-Work
Rebecca Faith Parker
Sadie Elizabeth Parker
Ani Poghosyan
Molly Paige Regan
Eris Jesús Rovero Arriaga (LLM)
Leah Crawford Schumacher

Stella Vladimirovna Stoma (LLM)
Ana Cristina Tenorio (LLM)
Blanca Isabel Tigrera Cortez (LLM)
Sean Christian Van de Grift
Liliana Varela de Márquez (LLM)
Amir Reza Zargham (LLM)

CUM LAUDE

Javier Domingo Abreu Angulo (LLM)
William J. Adler III
Nouf Sulaiman M. Albarrak (LLM)
Emily Rose Alexander
Sara Anderson
Patricia Blanco Vargas (LLM)
Isabella Gray Cantwell
Tessa Chew
Felipe Cunha Antero de Carvalho (LLM)
Alexander Gabriel Fontg (LLM)
Yerenith Fuentes Gutierrez (LLM)
Antonio Giancarlo Cetin Gonden
Joan Luis Gonzalez Coronado (LLM)
Margarita Mabel Gonzalez Tirape (LLM)
Savannah Jane Hairston
Daniel Haro Garza (LLM)
Abigail M. Healey
Francisco Alberto Hernández (LLM)
Luis Alberto Hernandez Contreras (LLM)
Bryan Hernández González (LLM)
Yuechao Hu
Konstantin Edgar Huck (LLM)
Ashley Ingraham
Jacob Louis Jackson
Amri A. Jimenez Belisario (LLM)
Alexandra Vienna Kotsos
Regan M. Lambeth
Sandra J. Lawson
Shannon Lee
Celeste Leslie Lemos (LLM)

Angeleah Elizabeth Manosalva
Norelis Moreno Perez (LLM)
Cecilio Efrain Mujica Salas (LLM)
Xiomara Victoria de las Marías Muñoz Castro (LLM)
Sanaa Issa Mustafa Giraldo (LLM)
Michael Melhem Najem (LLM)
Maryeli Nazariego Arciniegas (LLM)
Alexandra Celeste Pace
Yasmin Daisy Pakzad
Delanie Elizabeth Pence
Daniel T. Pike
Margee Xiomara Pinilla Florez (LLM)
Jordan D. Pinkstaff
Breanna Vera Plares
Sady Patricia Quevedo (LLM)
Virgilio Rincón Salas (LLM)
José Mucio Ríos Solis (LLM)
Joshua Aaron Rips (LLM)
Catherine Schrader Rohrbaugh
Maria Cenobia Ruiz Valdespino (LLM)
Jamie Russo
Cyrus Sani
David H. Selis
Steven T. Soldani
Jeffrey P. Sylvester
Dzianis Talstyka (LLM)
Juhi Tanniru
Kailey Loren Taylor
Chelsea Caroline Tholen
Karen Evelina Thomas (LLM)
Ellie Amanda Tiskus
Daniel Velazquez Meza (LLM)
Bicneidy Jacknet Veloz Reyes (LLM)
Fawn A. Vickery
Greta Voci (LLM)
Kelsey Ann Walker
Josie Wigodsky
Rachel Williams
Lillian Edith Wood
Yixuan Zhang

ORDER OF THE COIF

Steeped in the history of serjeants-at-law in medieval England, the American Order of the Coif dates back to 1902 and is the preeminent honor society for recognition of high academic attainment in the study of law. Membership in Coif is limited to those students in the top 10 percent of the graduating class. Congratulations to the students who have attained this high honor.

<i>Tania Aleksanian</i>	<i>Ryan J. Haile</i>	<i>Ani Poghosyan</i>
<i>Scarlett Morgan Irene Anderson</i>	<i>Katelyn Ann Harper</i>	<i>Molly Paige Regan</i>
<i>Hannah Kerttu Bollinger</i>	<i>Landon A. Hill</i>	<i>Dylan M. Sawyer</i>
<i>Brian Jerzy Buckley</i>	<i>Vanessa Samer Hilo</i>	<i>Leah Crawford Schumacher</i>
<i>Ji Woo Choi</i>	<i>Shania Rae Leveille</i>	<i>Sean Christian Van de Grift</i>
<i>Laurel Olivia Cinti</i>	<i>Samantha Ann Mochel</i>	<i>Maria Grace Watters</i>
<i>Judah Coker</i>	<i>Danielle Marie Nead-Work</i>	<i>Ming Yan</i>
<i>Megan Hoffman Fitz-Patrick</i>	<i>Rebecca Faith Parker</i>	
<i>Cole Phillip Garcia</i>	<i>Sadie Elizabeth Parker</i>	

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Recipients of the Irvin J. Kahn; Dean’s U.S. Law Award; Paul, Plevin, Quarles and Brady Labor And Employment Law Award; and Dean’s Tax Scholar awards also will have their names engraved on perpetual plaques which remain on display in the law school.

VALEDICTORIAN AWARD

For the highest cumulative grade point average overall.

Ming Yan

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FOR THE HIGHEST CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE, FULL-TIME DIVISION

Ryan J. Haile

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FOR THE HIGHEST CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE, PART-TIME DIVISION

Ming Yan

MASTER OF LAWS: DEAN’S TAX SCHOLAR AWARD

For the highest cumulative grade point average in the Master of Laws in Taxation Program.

Michael Dudzinski

MASTER OF LAWS: DEAN’S U.S. LAW AWARD

For the highest cumulative grade point average in the Master of Laws in U.S. Law program.

Elva Lizeth Moreno Balderrama

JUDGE GERALD BROWN PROGRESS AWARD

For the student with the greatest increase in grade point average, from first year to graduation.

Travis Russell Snider

IRVIN J. KAHN AWARD

For the outstanding student in real property courses.

Sadie Elizabeth Parker

QUARLES & BRADY LABOR & EMPLOYMENT AWARD

For the highest cumulative grade point average in the Labor and Employment Law Concentration.

Andrew Gregory Ward

VIRGINIA C. NELSON GRADUATION PRIZE IN ADVANCED ADVOCACY

For outstanding efforts and distinction of earning the highest grade in Advanced Trial Advocacy.

Sydney Olivia Mochel

SERVICE AWARDS

ACADEMIC SUCCESS FELLOW OF THE YEAR

For the graduating Fellow who consistently demonstrated exceptional teaching and mentoring, coupled with a deep sense of genuine empathy and understanding for law students at the start of their legal careers

Ellie Amanda Tiskus

MENTOR OF THE YEAR

The Mentor of the Year award honors a graduating J.D. student who has demonstrated exceptional mentorship, contributing profoundly to the law school experience and the professional growth of their peers.

Lillian Edith Wood

USD ENHANCEMENT AWARD

For the outstanding graduates who exemplify leadership and have improved and enriched the USD law community.

Isaiah Artis
Victoria Solares

ALEC L. CORY PRO BONO AWARD

For the student with the highest total pro bono hours, who promoted pro bono work on campus, and also contributed the most to make the San Diego community a better place through the type of pro bono work they completed per the California definition of pro bono.

Kaitlyn M. Connolly

PRO BONO SERVICE RECOGNITION

The Pro Bono Service Recognition is given to those students who have completed in excess of 100 hours of pro bono legal service during their law school career.

<i>Noor Nameer Albandar</i>	<i>Regan M. Lambeth</i>	<i>Dina Taher</i>
<i>Sara Anderson</i>	<i>Chloe Ann Mietzel</i>	<i>Mia Sophia Casalegno Theodorou</i>
<i>Yasmin Caroline Bernardes Lima</i>	<i>Sydney Olivia Mochel</i>	<i>Sydney Mahana Verga</i>
<i>Jacquelyn Marie Bitar</i>	<i>Asal Oskoui</i>	<i>Philippa Sage Villalobos</i>
<i>Lisette Cruz</i>	<i>Rebecca Faith Parker</i>	<i>Anastasia Whittemore</i>
<i>Genesis Diaz</i>	<i>Daniel T. Pike</i>	<i>Josie Wigodsky</i>
<i>Megan Hoffman Fitz-Patrick</i>	<i>Amber Shanieste Rahim</i>	<i>Rachel Williams</i>
<i>Angelica Flores Villegas</i>	<i>Caroline Gomes Sharp</i>	<i>Kathryn Kelly Wood</i>
<i>Liliana Hakim</i>	<i>Eileen Solano Navarro</i>	<i>Lillian Edith Wood</i>
<i>Shun Fung Lam</i>	<i>Carly N. Steele</i>	<i>Deanna Ji Tong Xu</i>

PRO BONO SERVICE HIGH DISTINCTION

The pro bono service high distinction is given to those students who have completed in excess of 250 hours of pro bono legal service during their law school career.

<i>Cassandra Elisabeth Acevedo</i>	<i>Samantha Louise Deutsch</i>	<i>Danielle Marie Nead-Work</i>
<i>Tania Aleksanian</i>	<i>Shelby Leilani Durham</i>	<i>Laura Renee O'Connor</i>
<i>Emily Rose Alexander</i>	<i>Aaron Kyle Ekenstam</i>	<i>Maya R. Patel</i>
<i>Jose Ramon Almejo</i>	<i>Napoleon Edward Herrera Gatmaytan</i>	<i>Ani Poghosyan</i>
<i>Scarlett Morgan Irene Anderson</i>	<i>Amanda Maree Herrera</i>	<i>Nicholas Alexander Ramos</i>
<i>Nawha Bahar Arghandiwal</i>	<i>Isabelle Chiemi Deeley Horio</i>	<i>Rebecca Marie Shanks</i>
<i>Grace Katherine Caponetto</i>	<i>Sala Kurtz</i>	<i>Elizabeth Dawn Stauffer</i>
<i>Meaghan Caskey</i>	<i>Matthew Leung</i>	<i>Juhi Tanniru</i>
<i>Taylor Rose Christian</i>	<i>Madeline Rose Lynch</i>	<i>Kelsey Ann Walker</i>
<i>Laurel Olivia Cinti</i>	<i>Eduardo Daniel Mendoza</i>	<i>Evan Kai Wilson</i>
<i>Kaitlyn M. Connolly</i>	<i>Sylvia T. Montijo</i>	<i>Athena Zhang</i>

ALCALÁ 100

The Alcalá 100 award honors graduating students who have demonstrated exceptional leadership, advocacy, and commitment to campus life, earning recognition as distinguished ambassadors for the University of San Diego.

*William J. Adler III
Isaiah Artis
Brian Jerzy Buckley
Grace Katherine Caponetto
Ji Woo Choi
Kaitlyn M. Connolly
Coleman Tefft Fuquea
Vanessa Samer Hilo*

*Alexis LeeAnn Hughes
Jacob Jones
Chloe Ann Mietzel
Sloane Juliet Needleman
Jaxon Leah Novack
Alexandra Celeste Pace
Daniel T. Pike
Logan J. Quessenberry*

*Sophia Amelia Roning
Leah Crawford Schumacher
Elizabeth Dawn Stauffer
Juhi Tanniru
Ellie Amanda Tiskus
Lillian Edith Wood*

CLINIC AWARDS

OUTSTANDING APPELLATE CLINIC INTERN

Sara Anderson

OUTSTANDING CIVIL CLINIC INTERN

Jacquelyn Marie Bitar

OUTSTANDING EDUCATION & DISABILITY CLINIC INTERN

Mary Kaye Celine Mora Valdez

OUTSTANDING ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLINIC INTERN

Kathryn Kelly Wood

OUTSTANDING FEDERAL TAX CLINIC INTERN

Brianna Marie Trevino

OUTSTANDING HOUSING RIGHTS CLINIC INTERN

Makenna N. Haskill

OUTSTANDING IMMIGRATION CLINIC INTERN

Amber Shanieste Rahim

OUTSTANDING INNOCENCE CLINIC INTERN

Ani Poghosyan

OUTSTANDING STATE INCOME TAX CLINIC INTERN

Matthew Tarasen

OUTSTANDING STATE SALES & USE TAX CLINIC INTERN

Ahmad Mansoor Almakhaita

OUTSTANDING VETERANS CLINIC INTERN

Yuanyun Fang

OUTSTANDING WOMEN'S CLINIC INTERN

Meaghan Caskey

OUTSTANDING WORKERS' RIGHTS CLINIC INTERN

Christina Theresa Muraskas

ADVOCACY AWARDS

CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICY CENTER'S OUTSTANDING PUBLIC INTEREST ADVOCATE AWARD

For outstanding external advocacy in the legislature, courts, or before administrative agencies.

Isaiah Artis

Zoe Ellen Bulls

CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICY CENTER'S OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR TO *THE CALIFORNIA REGULATORY LAW REPORTER*

For contributions to the journal that monitors the activities of California's major regulatory agencies.

Konstantin Edgar Huck

ENERGY POLICY INITIATIVES CENTER'S OUTSTANDING STUDENT LEADER AWARD

Eva Mercedes Voigt Sánchez

Carly N. Steele

ENERGY POLICY INITIATIVES CENTER'S OUTSTANDING LAW CLERK AWARD

Dina Taher

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY INSTITUTE'S JAMES A. D'ANGELO OUTSTANDING CHILD ADVOCATE AWARD

For the graduates who have demonstrated the special skills, knowledge, and dedication necessary to be effective child advocates.

Katelyn Ann Harper

Yasmin Tala Madjidi

Delanie Elizabeth Pence

Alexander Matthew Wood

ORDER OF BARRISTERS

For demonstrated excellence in appellate and/or trial advocacy.

Grace Katherine Caponetto

Coleman Tefft Fuquea

Alexis LeeAnn Hughes

Sandra J. Lawson

Shannon Lee

Lexi Elizabeth McCrillis

Nicole A. Parks

Juhi Tanniru

Evan Kai Wilson

Lillian Edith Wood

Order of Barrister Statue of Lady Justice

Lexi Elizabeth McCrillis

COMMUNITY DEFENDERS AWARD

For commitment to constitutional protections in indigent criminal defense.

Emily Rose Alexander

Shelby Leilani Durham

Sylvia T. Montijo

Brianna Ashley Noriega

Ani Poghosyan

Elizabeth Dawn Stauffer

Josie Wigodsky

MICHAEL T. THORSNES TRIAL ADVOCACY AWARD

For the outstanding National Mock Trial team member.

Lillian Edith Wood

BAR PREPARATION AWARDS

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP BAR PREPARATION AWARD

The Hope Scholarship goes to members of the Black Law Student Association (BLSA) who demonstrate leadership on campus, continuous support of fellow law students, and dedication to addressing issues impacting the local Black community.

Kyra Fischbach

Caroline Gomes Sharp

MIDDLE EASTERN LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION 3L BAR PREP AWARD

The Middle Eastern Law Student Association (MELSA) USD Law Scholarship is in support of third-year law students who have demonstrated a commitment to serving the Middle Eastern community's legal needs.

Ramsha Nadeem Khan