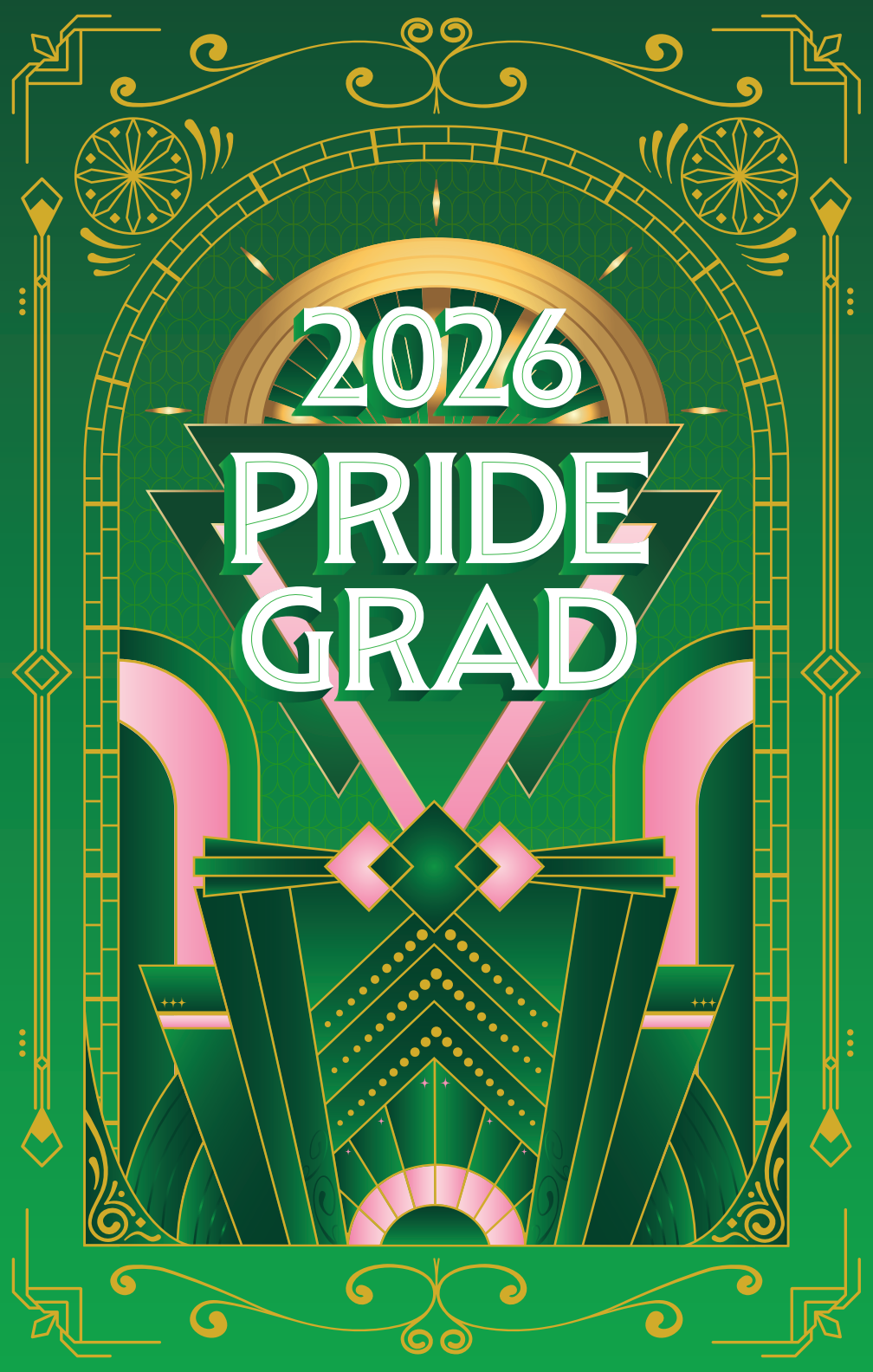


2026

PRIDE  
GRAD



In Celebration of Queer Graduates,  
the Pride Grad Planning Committee,  
The Gender & Sexuality Resource Center, and  
Cross Cultural Centers of the University-Student Union  
at California State University, Los Angeles  
Present

21<sup>st</sup> Annual  
**PRIDE GRAD  
CELEBRATION 2026**  
California State University, Los Angeles

Friday, May 15th, 2026  
UNIVERSITY GYM



# Congratulations to the Class of 2026

On behalf of the Gender & Sexuality Resource Center, we are delighted to welcome you to the 21st Annual Pride Grad Celebration. Today, we are recognizing outstanding scholars who have chosen to display their pride as they advance to new parts of their lives as LGBTQIA+ folks. This year's theme is Accepting Pride. Being present as Queer scholars empowers others to rise in their own endeavors. We hope this ceremony leaves a mark on the campus community and a lasting impression on each of you as you continue to pursue your goals. Your work and presence in the Cal State LA LGBTQIA+ community is greatly appreciated, but it should not stop here. Raise your pride, in times of adversity, hate, and on any occasion where love is necessary.

## PROGRAM

### University Welcome

**Blanca Martinez-Navarro, PH.D., M.S.W.**  
Associate Vice President and Dean of Students  
Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

### Hosts

**Mar Garcia & Mario Pizarro Rojas**

### Student Speaker

**Jelene Aira L. Villegas**

### Keynote

**Lushious Massacr**

### Musical Performance

**VHEX**

### Presentation of the Class of 2026

### Closing Remarks



**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**  
**Lushious Massacr**

Lushious Massacr is an Emmy award-winning makeup artist turned online personality originally from Brownsville, Texas now residing in Los Angeles. She's garnered over 180k subscribers on YouTube alone, where she leads weekly DRAGVESTIGATIONS and takes her viewers on hilarious reviews of popular establishments. All in all, she's here for the dolls, bricks, and little girls to remind us that we don't need permission to live our lives.



**MUSICAL PERFORMANCE:**  
**VHEX**

Vhex is a Los Angeles based Trans Drag & Burlesque artist. She is also a curator for a 3 year-old, Trans-inclusive event called TEAZE. Her performances embody everything glamorous and dark art into one. Shower her in money, cheers and love!

# MASTER'S DEGREES

## Master's Degrees

**Priscilla Marie Cuellar**

She/They

*Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies, M.A.*

I want to thank my ancestors, God, and my family. Their sacrifices helped me persevere and continue on the path towards educational success. I also want to thank and acknowledge myself for believing that with faith, and the ability to grow towards my highest power, I am successful, and being the first in my family to graduate with my master's. This accomplishment is for my community, for myself, and the next generation to come.

**Trent Green**

He/Him/His

*Mathematics, M.S.*

I would like to thank my family and friends for all of the support they have given me the entire time I have been in school. I am so grateful for all the friends I have made in my program and at my job on campus.

**Bridgett Elaine Khoury**

She/Her/Hers

*Educational Foundations, M.A.*

*Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies*

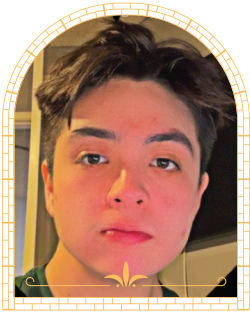
I would like to thank my Cal State LA comrades, and professors who have not only become my family but are the people that have kept me grounded throughout my educational career. It is because of you that academia has become my home and the place I feel most like myself.

2026  
PRIDE  
GRAD

2026  
PRIDE  
GRAD



## Pride Grad 2026



### Vic B Lozoya-Hernandez

They/Them/Theirs

Business Administration, M.S.  
Management

I would like to thank my parents for their love, support, and encouragement throughout my long journey at Cal State LA. I am grateful for the amazing people I have met at Cal State LA, especially at the Student Union. These experiences have shaped me into the person I am today, and I will always cherish them forever.



### Saul Soria

He/Him/His

Educational Foundations, M.A.

I would like to thank my chosen family and friends. It was you who kept me going through this program. You have always been there for me with love, support and encouragement. Thank you for seeing me and worst and at my best.



### Edgar Ivan Torres Perez

He/Him/His

Political Science, M.A.

I want to thank my family, friends, and professors for supporting me and encouraging me during this journey.

## Master's Degrees



### Nancy Velasquez

She/Her/Hers

Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies, M.A.

Thank you so much to my family, cohort, and friends for making this possible. Without you, I wouldn't be here. Thank you all for being my anchor and being there for me during the good times and the bad. Muah!



### Grace In Young Wilkim

Any

Social Work, M.S.W.

Thank you to my cohort, my professors, my family, and my partner, Matt. I am grateful for your support and for all the wonderful memories made. It has been an exhilarating two years in the program and I am ready to make a difference in the community as a social worker. I am proud of all of you and I am proud of myself. I hope to see you all again in the field!

# BACHELOR'S DEGREES

## Bachelor's Degrees

**Sandy Ayala Martinez**  
She/Her/Hers  
Sociology, B.A.



**Samira Emely Aguila**  
They/Them/Theirs  
Psychology, B.A.  
*Minor in Child Development*



I would like to thank my parents for their support and encouragement through my long journey at Cal State LA. Without my family and friends, I would not have accomplished all my goals. I am grateful for all the wonderful memories and friends I made at this university, and I will keep striving for the next big thing.

**Rebeca Esther Alvarez Lopez**  
She/Her/Hers  
Business Administration, B.S.  
*Option in Marketing*



Today honors the people who carried me forward and refused to let me fall. To my mentor, Casey, thank you for guiding me and pushing me to grow when I doubted myself. To my parents, especially my dad, thank you for the sacrifices and long days of work. And to my best friend, thank you for never letting me walk alone. Today, I'm proud of how far I've grown and who I've become.

## Pride Grad 2026



### Adilene Nayeli Araujo-Lopez

She/Her/Hers  
Child Development, B.A.

I would like to thank my partner and kids for always motivating me to do better and never give up.



### Grey Jolene Arias I

She/They  
Theatre, B.A.  
Minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Thank you to my friends and family for supporting me through this nine-year journey. Sammie, you're the best sister and my built-in accountability partner. Damaris, Logan, and Cindy, my CSULA girl-power crew, you kept me going. I'm grateful to Meredith Greenburg, Morgan Zupanski, Stephan Rothman, and Dr. Carolyn Dunn for shaping me as an artist. As a disabled, trans Latina theater creator, every step brought me here. This belongs to all of us.



### Isabella Leonor Benavides

She/Her/Hers  
Liberal Studies, B.A.  
Minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Shout out to all my friends that I've made at CSULA!!! Y'all made this place so much more bearable!! Shout out to Mario, love you thank you for holding this all down!! Love ya!!

## Bachelor's Degrees



### Darren Boodaghian

He/Him/His  
Political Science, B.A.

I would like to thank my friends for always being in my corner no matter what I'm going through. Helping me remember why I push through my hardest classes and who I'm going to be fighting for in the future. And accepting me for who I am and helping me flourish. From the bottom of my heart, there is not a shred of doubt we will spend the rest of our lives together, thank you.



### Caitlin Jane Mangaliman Calica

She/Her/Hers  
Criminal Justice, B.S.  
Minor in Asian American Studies

Thank you to everyone at Cal State LA and beyond who accepted me as I was and gave me the space to be myself. Your openness, kindness, and trust allowed me to grow without fear and learn without pretending. Being seen and welcomed made all the difference during these years. I carry deep gratitude for the people and spaces that let me exist fully and honestly.



### Haley Carranza

They/Them/Theirs  
Natural Science, B.S.  
Minor in Asian American Studies

I would like to thank everyone who has supported me throughout my years at Cal State LA, all the wonderful people in my life such as my friends and family have been the reason why I am able to proudly stand here today. I will always cherish all the memories I have made here and I am excited for the next chapter of my academic journey.

## Pride Grad 2026



### Jorge Carreon Jr.

He/Him/His

Journalism, B.A.

Minor in Creative Writing

My college journey began in 1985, but it was never designed to be a solo venture. Several universities and colleges later, I am a graduate at long last. As a queer Latino nearing 60, I proudly carry perseverance and resilience in my narrative. I thank my family, colleagues, and my family of friends for making sure that narrative was never compromised or undervalued.



### An Kang Chen

He/Him/His

Computer Science, B.S.

I would like to thank my friends and family for their constant support and encouragement throughout my journey at Cal State LA. Their belief in me helped me succeed in my coursework and overcome many challenges. I am also grateful for the friends and community I found through Alpha Phi Omega. The memories, experiences, and lessons I gained here will stay with me as I continue striving for the next big opportunity.



### Carlos Josue Castellanos

They/He/She

Sociology, B.A.

Minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Gracias a mi abuela por inspirarme a ser determinado, a buscar algo mejor, vivir sin remordimientos, tener opiniones inauditas, y reirme a carcajadas al decir una vulgaridad. Por ella y todas las mujeres en mi vida cargo con la maleta de mi autonomía, pesada y vigorosa, sabiendo que en ella llevo el costo de mi libertad. Y lo que no cambia es mi lucha, la cual encarno desde que nací.

## Bachelor's Degrees



### Eliza Cavestany

She/They

Art, B.A.

Option in Graphic Design/Visual Communication

Thank you to those who have supported me in my personal and academic journey. Because of everyone who believed in me, I am able to stand here as a proud, queer, Filipina artist. We'll meet outside the blindspot.



### Valerie Duran

She/Her/Hers

Psychology, B.A.

Thank you to everyone who believed in me and still continues to support my journey. I am proud of the accomplishments I have made and excited to see where it will take me.



### Hannah Marie Garduno

She/Her/Hers

Social Work, B.A.

Thank you to everyone who supported me through this journey as a first generation student. I'm making history by becoming the first in my family to graduate and I vow to make a positive change in the social work field.

## Pride Grad 2026



### Brandon Gonzalez-Garcia

He/Him/His

Biology, B.S.

*Minor in Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies*

I am grateful to the professors in the Biology Department for their guidance and commitment to my education and to the Chicano/Latino Studies program for broadening my perspective and strengthening my understanding of culture and community. I also thank the advisors, mentors, family, and friends whose encouragement and support made this achievement possible. This degree reflects not only my efforts but also the community supporting me.



### Ryo Mishka Goodman

They/Them/Theirs

Social Work, B.A.

I would like to thank my family for encouraging and supporting my educational path, without you I would not be here today. I also would like to acknowledge my loving partner, thank you for standing with me through the years, and keeping me going. Lastly I am so grateful for all my loving friends, your support has uplifted me so much.



### Allison Guzman

She/Her/Hers

Social Work, B.A.

*Minor in Psychology*

I would like to thank my support system for all of their love and encouragement through my long journey in school and at Cal State LA. Without my loved ones, I would not be here doing what I once thought was impossible. I am grateful for all the wonderful memories, connections, and friendships I made at this university, and I will keep striving for all the greatness that lies ahead!

## Bachelor's Degrees



### Kiet Nghia Huynh

He/Him/His

Business Administration, B.S.

*Option in Operations and Supply Chain Management*

Tôi muốn cảm ơn ba mẹ đã luôn ủng hộ và động viên tôi trong suốt hành trình dài tại Cal State LA. Nếu không có gia đình và bạn bè, tôi đã không thể đạt được những mục tiêu của mình. Tôi biết ơn về những kỷ niệm tuyệt vời và những người bạn tôi đã có tại ngôi trường này, và tôi sẽ tiếp tục phấn đấu cho những mục tiêu tiếp theo.



### Jae Teno Juarez

He/Him/His

Psychology, B.A.

I want to say thank you to my family and friends who have supported me on this journey knowing and loving me for myself. You all have always been in my corner and have kept giving me the strength to keep going and continue living life as myself and being proud of who I am. Thank you Uncle Eddie, Bianca, Ron, Madalyn, Ariell and lastly Professors Samoff and White.



### Scarlett Arlisa Rose Juarez

She/Her/Hers

Psychology, B.A.

I'm so thankful for my family and the close people in my life who have helped me grow and supported me through every step. Your love and encouragement mean more to me than I can express, I wouldn't be here without you. I love you all and appreciate everything you've done for me.

## Pride Grad 2026



**Sandra Lynn Keyes**  
She/Her/Hers  
Psychology, B.A.

Was a long road but glad I persevered, for myself and to prove to my kids that there is no time limit on goals.



**Dani Lagunas**  
They/Them/Theirs  
Sociology, B.A.

I want to thank my family and friends for all their support! And all the love in the world goes to Laura we all miss and love you so much!



**Jose Mascorro**  
He/Him/His  
Fire Protection Administration and Technology, B.S.  
Minor in Fire Service Administration

I would love to thank my beautiful husband for always being so supportive of me. My angel, Roman. My parents and all of my sisters for showing me unconditional love. This is for the young queer Latino boys who look like me and live like me but are never celebrated in academic spaces. Never dim your light for anyone.

## Bachelor's Degrees



**Kim D Leon Mayorga**  
They/Them/Theirs  
Spanish, B.A.  
Minor in Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies

I would like to thank my loved ones for supporting me throughout this journey. Without the love and support I received, I would not have made it this far. Thank you for encouraging me to follow my passion and stay true to myself. ¡¡LOS AMO MUCHO!!



**Elizabeth Lizama**  
She/Her/Hers  
Child Development, B.A.

I thank my little seed, Solecito, mi mami, and my partner Gurjote, whose love and support carried me through this journey. Their belief in me reflects the spirit of Luis Valdez's In Lak'ech, "Tu eres mi otro yo", reminding me that when we love and respect one another, we rise together. I also thank the chingona mentors, librarians, and professors who inspire me every day and remind me that knowledge, community, and resilience guide the path forward.



**Michael Angel Medrano**  
He/Him/His  
Theatre, B.A.  
Minor in Communication

I want to thank my aunt Vanessa, an MA graduate from CSUDH, my sister Bree, an MBA graduate from GCU, and my uncle Frank, who served our country and patrolled LA County, they inspire me every single day! I'm so grateful for the memories I've made working and living on campus and starring in student films, while building incredible friendships! Transferring from RHC to graduating from CSULA is everything! I'll always remember: We are LA!

## Pride Grad 2026



### Melissa Perez

She/Her/Hers  
Social Work, B.A.

Thank you for your support!



### Alvaro Antonio Ramirez

Chicano/o Latina/o Studies, B.A.  
*Minor in Latin American Studies and Mesoamerican Studies*

For my ancestors, my family, and my community this degree is ours. May the knowledge gained through Chicanx/Latinx, Mesoamerican, and Latin American Studies serve as a tool for empowerment, justice, and collective liberation.



### Arizbeth Nicole Rivera-Gonzalez

She/Her/Hers/They/Them  
Psychology, B.A.  
*Minor in Child Development*

I would like to thank my family and my partner for their support and encouragement through my journey at Cal State LA. Without them, I would not have accomplished getting this degree. I am truly grateful for all the wonderful things they have done for me, and I will keep striving for the next big thing

## Bachelor's Degrees



### Lisa Marie Rodriguez

She/Her/Hers  
Child Development, B.A.

I would like to thank my family for standing by my side and giving me the strength and confidence to finish what I started and to my husband thank you for being patient with me while I'm working towards my goal I love you.



### Alondra Isabel Santana

She/Her/Hers/They/Them/Theirs  
BS in Criminal Justice

Had I not received the support from my friends and loved ones - through jokes, advice, rants, gossip sessions, hangouts, or memes - I would not have the cherished memories from school that will forever live rent-free in my mind and heart.



### Laiya Simone Sheppard

She/Her/Hers  
Biology, B.S.

I want to thank my mother for supporting me throughout my entire time in school and for listening to me cry on the phone, stressed about classes. I would also like to thank my friends I met in school for all the laughs and late-night talks to keep me sane.

## Pride Grad 2026



### Angel Skewes Rojas

She/Her/Hers

Art, B.A.

*Option in Animation*

I would like to thank all my trans brothers and sisters that lifted me up to this point in my life. A special thank you to my sibling Mario for always pushing me to make the most out of my existence, without your acceptance and love I'd never have the confidence to be who I am. And thank you to my partner Ted for showing me what it truly means to be loved, thank you.



### Alex Ramos-Jimenez

They/She

Communicative Disorders , B.A.

Thank you to my family, friends, professors, and everyone who has been a part of my academic journey. This wouldn't have been possible without you!



### Jennifer Valenzuela

She/Her/Hers

Liberal Studies, B.A.

Thank you to my friends and family for supporting and encouraging me during my time at Cal State LA! Thank you to the students who trust me to be their teacher, and thank you to myself for pushing through! Free Palestine, Free Congo, Free Sudan, Free Haiti, and ICE OUT!!!

## Bachelor's Degrees



### Kelsey Daniela Valladares

She/Her/Hers

Social Work, B.A.

*Minor in Political Science*

I want to thank my community for supporting me and helping me see that another world is possible. Free Palestine. Free Congo. Free Sudan. Divest from War. Abolish all systems of oppression.



### Alexis Marie Valles

She/They

Psychology, B.A.

I would like to thank my loved ones for their unconditional love and support throughout my journey here at Cal State LA. I am grateful for this opportunity I have earned to learn more about myself and those around me. This university has motivated me to acquire knowledge the rest of my life. Stay curious, be open, and spread compassion.



### Kai Kiara Venable

They/Them/Theirs

Television, Film, and Media Studies, B.A.

I would like to thank the people who have accepted me for my differences and supporting me through this tough year and the trials that was put upon me.

## Pride Grad 2026



### Kevin Joel Vega

He/Him/His

Business Administration, B.S.

*Option in Human Resources Management*

I would like to take my family for the support in my academic journey. If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't have been where I was at today. I would also like to give a special thanks to my mom because she was the main one who pushed me to continue pushing in my educational journey and always taught me to make my dreams a reality.



### Jelene Aira L. Villegas

She/Her/Hers

Philosophy, B.A.

*Minor in Criminal Justice*

Having found the version of myself that lived through it all and the "her" that needed to become after everything, you're okay; and if not now, it ~will~ be okay :))



### Jackson Vitello

He/Him/His

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, B.A.

I want to thank my chosen family both near and far for their love and support, for always believing in who I want to become. I also want to thank my professors, advisors, and classmates for seeing and encouraging a potential in me beyond what I could see in myself. And lastly I want to thank the Trans community for giving me back my life, and showing me the way to a beautiful future.

## Bachelor's Degrees



### Emily Webb

She/Her/Hers

Political Science, B.A.

I would like to start off with a quote from the Delta Zeta creed, love that is ever steadfast, because I truly love the people who made it possible for me to be here. To my parents, thank you for everything you gave up to support me. To my friends, thank you for countless memories that I will hold onto for life. To myself, you did it, you made it through, amazing job.



### Nytia Yazzie York

She/Her/They

Communication, B.A.

I am here to inspire my loved ones to do great things. To represent the ability to accomplish goals and strive for better things. This is a moment long awaited to get my flowers for my dedication to my education. Realize it as a stop before my next big project. Success is where I'll be getting off but I enjoyed this bumpy ride of finding myself.



### Lucia Donagy Zepeda

They/Them/Theirs

Sociology, B.A.

I would like to thank my family for their unconditional love and support throughout my journey at Cal State LA. Their encouragement kept me motivated during difficult moments. I am grateful for the opportunities, lessons, and friendships I gained during my time at this university.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Gender & Sexuality Resource Center, in conjunction with the Cross Cultural Centers, would like to give a special recognition to the following staff and departments for their constant support. A special thank you to the following for their commitment to creating an affirming environment for members of the LGBTQIA+ community at Cal State LA.

### Mar Garcia

Student Program Coordinator,  
Gender & Sexuality Resource Center,  
Cross Cultural Center

### Mario Pizarro Rojas

Coordinator, Gender & Sexuality  
Resource Center, Cross Cultural Centers

### Imani Thomas

Coordinator, Pan African Student  
Resource Center, Cross Cultural Centers

### Malia Otuhiva

Coordinator, Asian Pacific Islander  
Student Resource Center, Cross Cultural Centers

### Emily Urrutia

Coordinator, Chicanx/Latinx  
Student Resource Center, Cross Cultural Centers

### Eliza Cavestany

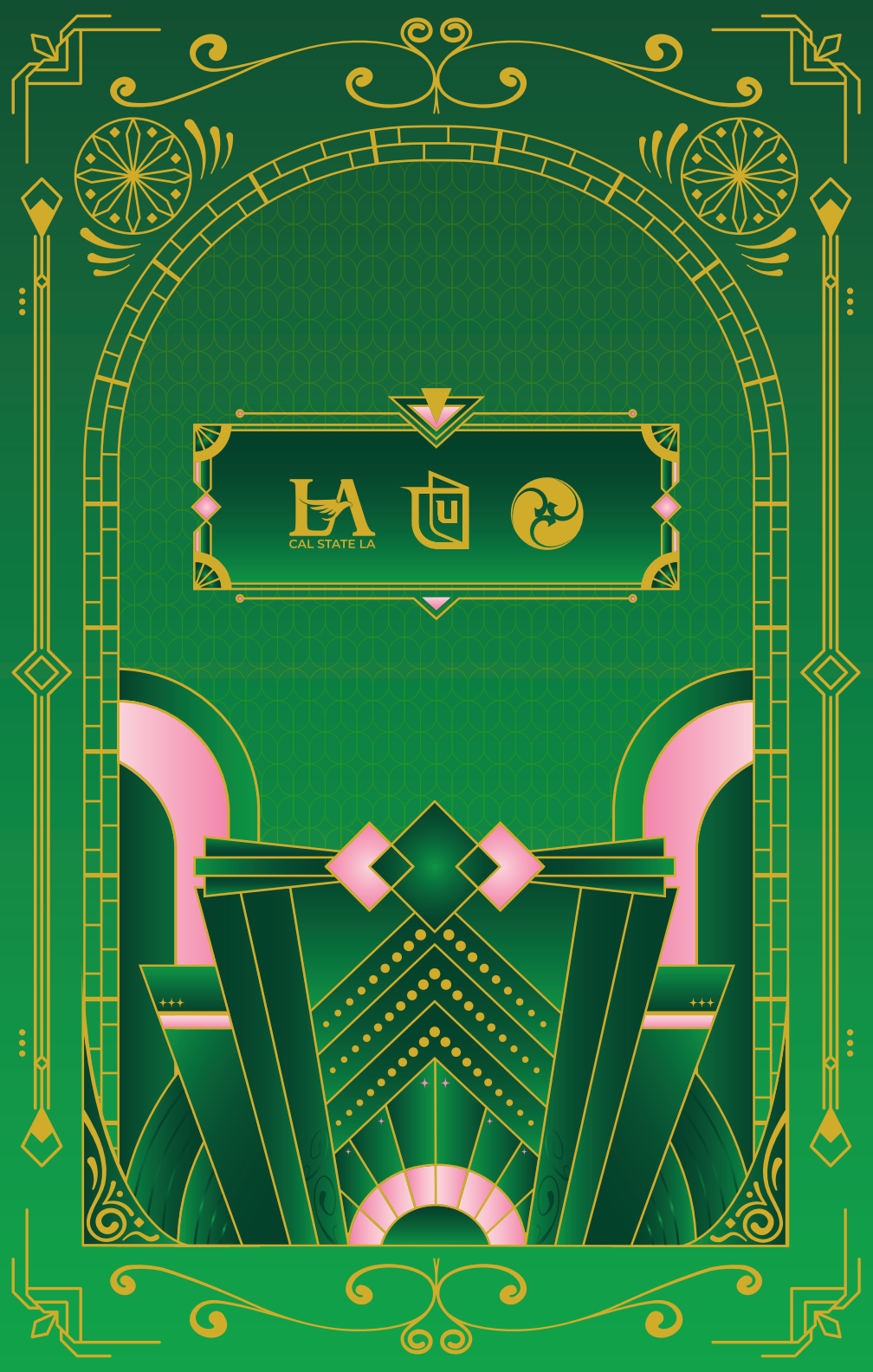
U-SU Graffix Designer

Cal State LA Athletics  
Cal State LA Facilities  
Center for Student Involvement  
Division of Student Life  
Office of Diversity, Equity,  
Inclusion, & Belonging

University-Student Union Graffix  
University-Student Union Staff  
University-Student Union Operations  
Office of the President

Thank you Eliza for flawlessly executing our vision for our Pride Graduation 2026 Booklet!





LA  
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