­**UCCS NEWS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Record-breaking number of UCCS graduates celebrate at spring commencement**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** — Nearly 1,600 graduates earned their degrees from the University of Colorado Colorado Springs on Friday, with more than 1,200 participating in the first in-person spring commencement celebration since 2019.

UCCS awarded 21 doctoral degrees, 353 master’s degrees and 1,223 bachelor’s degrees to graduates during the May 13 event, hosted at the Broadmoor World Arena. Graduates and their families celebrated alongside UCCS faculty, staff and students, including 25 graduates from the Classes of 2020 and spring Class of 2021, who returned to walk across the Commencement stage after having celebrated their graduation virtually.

Venkat Reddy, Chancellor of UCCS; Todd Saliman, President of the University of Colorado system; and this year’s Student Achievement Award winners each shared words of wisdom with the new graduates.

“Graduates, you rose above every single setback you faced,” Chancellor Reddy said. “You demonstrated courage and resilience, and you did not give up on your dreams. Your triumph today is not just that you have succeeded in the face of difficulty — it is that you are stronger and better equipped to take on any obstacle that may come your way. As you graduate today, you will go back out into the world – using the work of your minds and your hearts to make it a better place.”

“I celebrate your achievement, your commitment to yourselves and your journey from CU students to CU alumni,” said President Saliman. “I can’t wait to see what you’ll bring to your communities and the world.”

“CU will always be there for you – like it has been for me – as you make your way in the world,” he continued. “The network of incredible people, and the knowledge, skills and experience you gained during your time here – all are forever part of you. All of it will help you get where you’re going.”

In the morning ceremony’s keynote speech, Hadeel Khammash, a biomedical sciences major and Student Achievement Award winner, addressed the graduates: “The potential, talent and abilities of the people in this room cannot be captured with words. We truly are fireworks that would light up the sky. We would be a colorful and explosive display. I urge you to continue to be the fuse and use what you have learned in your time here to be the color and wonder our world is in desperate need of. You are the future, and you have the power to make and be the change that we all wish to see.”

The ceremony also included a celebration of five Golden Graduates, members of the Class of 1972, who celebrated a 50-year milestone from their own UCCS graduation.

Also celebrated were the first Bachelor and Master of Social Work graduates. In all, 29 students earned their degrees, in a win for both the graduates themselves and Colorado Springs social service programs, counseling centers, psychiatric hospitals, criminal justice facilities and the many Colorado Springs community members who benefit from community services.

To close the ceremonies, CU Regent Ken Montera delivered the traditional Norlin Charge to graduates. The charge dates back to CU Boulder president George Norlin’s delivery of the June 1935 Commencement ceremony. The words of the Norlin Charge are now read to the graduating class each year at each of the four CU campuses, as a reminder that graduates will carry their experiences at the university with them forever.

“Commencement does not mean, as many wrongly think, the breaking of ties and the beginning of life apart,” reads the charge. “Rather, it marks your initiation in the fullest sense into the fellowship of the university, as bearers of her torch, as centers of her influence, as promoters of her spirit...the university consists of all who come into and go forth from her halls, who are touched by her influence and who carry on her spirit. Wherever you go, the university goes with you. Wherever you are at work, there is the university at work.”

## About the UCCS Spring 2022 Commencement Ceremonies  The UCCS spring 2022 Commencement ceremonies will celebrate degrees conferred to nearly 1,600 graduates. More than 1,200 attended the morning and afternoon ceremonies at the Broadmoor World Arena on May 13, 2022, along with family and friends. [See the full Commencement program](https://commencement.uccs.edu/spring22) online. [View the livestreamed ceremony on YouTube.](https://commencement.uccs.edu/spring22)­­­

**About UCCS**

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) offers 55 bachelor’s, 24 master’s and eight doctoral degree programs and enrolls about 12,000 students annually. Located in the heart of Colorado Springs, UCCS has a strong student focus and access mission, with a goal of transforming lives for the better. Learn more about UCCS at uccs.edu.

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