



Middlebury Institute *of*
International Studies at Monterey

SPRING COMMENCEMENT

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA
SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026

**MIDDLEBURY INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
AT MONTEREY**

Commencement Exercises and Conferring of Degrees



PROCESSIONAL

Please rise for the processional

WELCOME

Jeff Dayton-Johnson

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Institute

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Sophie Doddimeade

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Graduate Assistant

REMARKS

Michelle McCauley

Executive Vice President and Provost, Professor of Psychology

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

The Honorable William Monning

HONORARY DEGREE PRESENTATION

The Honorable William Monning

STUDENT SPEAKER

Julena Wuer MATLM '26

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Provost Michelle McCauley

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

Wallace Chen

Professor and Program Chair, Translation and Interpretation Degree Programs

Patricia Szasz

Dean, Middlebury Institute Online

CLOSING REMARKS

Vice President Jeff Dayton-Johnson

RECESSIONAL

Please remain seated for the recessional.

RECEPTION

Please join us for a celebration at the Pierce Street Promenade.



PLATFORM PARTY

Michelle McCauley

The Honorable William Monning

Julena Wuer

Hannah Ross

Wallace Chen

Patricia Szasz

Jeff Dayton-Johnson



GRAND MARSHAL

Kent Glenzer

Associate Professor, Global Governance and Policy

FACULTY MARSHAL

Philip Murphy

Faculty Senate President and Professor, Policy Analytics

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
CONFERENCE INTERPRETATION=CI
MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERPRETATION
FOR DIPLOMATS AND EXECUTIVES=IDE
MASTER OF ARTS IN TRANSLATION=T
MASTER OF ARTS IN
TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION=TI**

CHINESE

Ganesh Kumar Baskar (TI)

Madurai, India

Tianying Chen (T)

Zhuzhou, China

Xiaohui Chen (CI)

Beijing, China

Zhengxian Chen (T)

Kunming, China

Ya-Fang Fang (CI)

Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Xin Feng (T)

Beijing, China

Himanshu Gupta (TI)

New Delhi, India

Jingxi Huang (TI)

Xiangtan, China

Qianyi Huang (TI)

Chengdu, China

Shana Jessie Kushevski (T)

Chantilly, Virginia

Ching-Yi Lin (TI)

New Taipei City, Taiwan

Meng Chin Lin (T)

Taipei City, Taiwan

Kevin Xinyuan Liu (T)

China

Shuang Liu (T)

Dangshan, China

Qin Lu (T)

Chengdu, China

Ji Young On (CI)

Taipei, Taiwan

Jiaxin Shi (CI)

Xinjiang, China

Ruoqi Shi (T)

Liaoning, China

Zhiyu Tang (CI)

Wuhan, China

Yu Chen Teng (T)

Taipei City, Taiwan

Qian Wan (T)

Chengdu, China

Zhijun Wan (T)

Hubei, China

Ling Wang (T)

Tianjin, China

Jiajing Wu (T)

Fuzhou, China

Peiyun Wu (TI)

Shanxi, China

Yihui Wu (CI)

Wuxi, China

Yue Xi (T)

Shenzhen, China

Zixi Xiang (CI)	<i>Wuban, China</i>
Ruolin Xiao (CI)	<i>Guangzhou, China</i>
Wenyang Xu (TI)	<i>Changsha, China</i>
Yiru Xu (T)	<i>Zigong, China</i>
Yuchen Yan (CI)	<i>Hangzhou, China</i>
Shu-Han Yang (T)	<i>Taichung, Taiwan</i>
Xiaoni Yang (CI)	<i>Shanghai, China</i>
Kaiwen Zhao (T)	<i>Beijing, China</i>
Shenghao Zheng (CI)	<i>Shandong, China</i>
Yifan Zhou (T)	<i>Xining City, China</i>
Xiao Zou (T)	<i>Wubu, Anhui, China</i>

FRENCH

Mounica Devagudi (IDE)	<i>Hyderabad, India</i>
Andrea Kathryn Phelps (TI)	<i>Fairfax, Virginia</i>

JAPANESE

Nao Ihara (CI)	<i>Chiba, Japan</i>
Dongyuan Ji (T)	<i>New York, New York</i>
Ryan Ronald Koski (T)	<i>Columbus, Montana</i>

RUSSIAN

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Richa Rathi (TI)	<i>New Delhi, India</i>
Leathea Alexis Thomason (TI)	<i>Lexington, South Carolina</i>

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Montserrat Cancino Aguilar (TI)	<i>Chicago, Illinois</i>
Juancruz Montalvo Rivas (TI)	<i>Fairbanks, Alaska</i>
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Luis Diego Reynoso (TI)	<i>Guadalajara, Mexico</i>
Gabriela Rivero (TI)	<i>Farmington, New Mexico</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Sylvie M. Alexander	<i>Norwich, Vermont</i>
Emily Ann Blythe*	<i>San Antonio, Texas</i>
Natalie Ann Boston*	<i>Darien, Connecticut</i>
Nathan Birch Buchanan	<i>McLean, Virginia</i>
Imane Darkaoui	<i>Hoceima, Morocco</i>
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Caleb Warren Fineske	<i>Hunt, Texas</i>
Elena K. Gavigan	<i>Aurora, Colorado</i>
Angela Izi Nkusi*	<i>Kigali, Rwanda</i>
McKenzie Ploen*	<i>Chaska, Minnesota</i>
Thomas Leiali'I Richards	<i>McLean, Virginia</i>
Miles Tepper	<i>Niskayuna, New York</i>
Rongrong Wan	<i>Guangzhou, China</i>
Youlin Xie	<i>Chongqing, China</i>
Shimeng Zhu	<i>Xuzhou, China</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

Xinyue Li*	<i>Bengbu, China</i>
Levi Chanelle Mahler	<i>Las Vegas, Nevada</i>
Amanda Michelle Miller	<i>Macomb, Illinois</i>
Danie N. Moss-Velasco*	<i>Northridge, California</i>
Nathan Palmer	<i>Bremerton, Washington</i>
Ariana Venero-Rodriguez*	<i>Miami Lakes, Florida</i>
Xiangjie Wang*	<i>Zhangshu, China</i>
Xinzhi Wei	<i>Lanzhou, China</i>
Zihao Yin	<i>Weifang, China</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

Katie Rose Claggett Rojas	<i>Easton, Maryland</i>
Abigail Homer	<i>Missoula, Montana</i>
Kaitlynn Azevedo Pimentel*	<i>Watsonville, California</i>
Sasha Sofia Roley	<i>Bellingham, Washington</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

Christian Joel Beltran	<i>Santa Rosa, California</i>
Emma Charlotte Beveridge	<i>Charlotte, North Carolina</i>
Kerra Belle Blotz	<i>San Martin, California</i>
Baoyi Cao*	<i>Wuban, China</i>
Mary Elizabeth Cardon*	<i>Madison, Wisconsin</i>
Olivia Centis*	<i>Beaverton, Oregon</i>
Ellie Crist*	<i>Ventura, California</i>
Jessica Madelin Frazier*	<i>Boston, Massachusetts</i>
Marissa Lakuehi Gonzalez*	<i>Brownsville, Texas</i>
Irina N. Gonzalez Marquez*	<i>Corrientes, Argentina</i>
Rachel G. Halliday*	<i>Carson City, Nevada</i>
Yaohui Christopher Han	<i>Shan Dong, China</i>
Jing Hu*	<i>Wuxi, China</i>
Zijie Hu*	<i>Shangrao, China</i>
Yu Jiao*	<i>Jinan, China</i>
Nathan Kobell	<i>Pebble Beach, California</i>
Sierra M. Lennon*	<i>Tulsa, Oklahoma</i>
Edgar Leon*	<i>Bell, California</i>
Timothy Charles Link*	<i>Salinas, California</i>
Chunyue Liu*	<i>Yinchuan, China</i>
Yiling Ma*	<i>Beijing, China</i>
Matthew Martinez*	<i>Monterey, California</i>
Alexander Morales*	<i>Cape Coral, Florida</i>
Liyao Ou	<i>Laibin, China</i>
Xiaoyu Pan	<i>Shijiazhuang, China</i>
Hunter Rayburn*	<i>Los Angeles, California</i>
Yutong Ren	<i>Zoucheng, China</i>
Tarrah Skye Safran*	<i>Oneonta, New York</i>
Karla Daniela Salazar Chavira*	<i>Phoenix, Arizona</i>
Tsering H. Skeele	<i>Kathmandu, Nepal</i>
Yuebing Tan*	<i>Shaanxi, China</i>
Julia Elizabeth Tucker*	<i>Annapolis, Maryland</i>
Shenglan Wang*	<i>Chengdu, China</i>
Yuxin Wang*	<i>Xiamen, China</i>
Yixiao Weng*	<i>Jiaxing, China</i>
Sarah Rebecca Witten	<i>Taos, New Mexico</i>
Jialu Zhang*	<i>Beijing, China</i>
Runpeng Zhang*	<i>Beijing, China</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Christian Joel Beltran	<i>Santa Rosa, California</i>
Sijing Lyu	<i>Nanchang, China</i>
Julia Elizabeth Tucker*	<i>Annapolis, Maryland</i>
Sarah Rebecca Witten	<i>Taos, New Mexico</i>
Ye Yu	<i>Qingdao, China</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN LOCALIZATION PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Edgard Alfonso Areas*	<i>Long Beach, California</i>
Richard B. Beazer	<i>Erda, Utah</i>
Oualid Boulekbache*	<i>Constantine, Algeria</i>
Leslie Alejandra Chavez Cortes*	<i>Sanger, California</i>
Audrey Shelley Hosman*	<i>Cambria, California</i>
Sarah Songyi Kim*	<i>Conshohocken, Pennsylvania</i>
Xin Li*	<i>Hangzhou, China</i>
Koffi Mawulolo Mahouna*	<i>Champaign, Illinois</i>
Stephanie Marie Maldonado	<i>Quito, Ecuador</i>
Destry C. McAbee	<i>Broken Bow, Nebraska</i>
Nikkita Cheyenne Mitchell	<i>Los Angeles, California</i>
Thi Thu Thuan Nguyen*	<i>Da Nang, Vietnam</i>
William Parucki II*	<i>Madrid, Spain</i>
Abigail Leigh Smith*	<i>Carmel, California</i>
Minxuan Sun*	<i>Nanjing, China</i>
Megan F. Thomas-Danyow	<i>Middlebury, Vermont</i>
Lin Yuan*	<i>Houston, Texas</i>

MASTER OF ARTS IN NONPROLIFERATION AND TERRORISM STUDIES

Justin Bigelow*	<i>Denver, Colorado</i>
Isaac Hawareyaw Byrne*	<i>Hollywood, Northern Ireland</i>
Jennet Charyyeva	<i>Ashgabat, Turkmenistan</i>
Daihan Cheng*	<i>Anqing, China</i>
Eric Scott Clark	<i>Austin, Texas</i>
Ekaterina Grishakova*	<i>Moscow, Russia</i>
Ranna Gulzat Jarukin	<i>Tokyo, Japan</i>
Olivia Kilborn*	<i>Seattle, Washington</i>
Eunhye Kim	<i>Seoul, Republic of Korea</i>
Max Ho Bong Hirokuni Lau	<i>Port Coquitlam, Canada</i>
Michael J. Lopata*	<i>San Clemente, California</i>

Rowan Bertrand Lott* *Poughkeepsie, New York*
Paige Stewart MacKinnon* *Brunswick, Maine*
Maxwell Henry Mitchell Patterson *Highland Park, New Jersey*
Justin T. Sanford *Manteca, California*
Shaiq Ahmed Shah* *Kashmir, India*
Amir Tadros* *Carmel, California*
Min Wang *Weifang, China*

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES**

Jonathan Rezach* *Manitowoc, Wisconsin*

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Bayan Hatem AlAbrach *Syria*

MASTER OF ARTS IN THREAT INTELLIGENCE

Tekla Gagoshidze *Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia*
Lauren Barbara Godsey *Cincinnati, Ohio*
Evan Greco* *Greenfield, Wisconsin*
Christian Ibarra *Miami, Florida*
Ahmed Jawad *Islamabad, Pakistan*
William A. Kerr III *Seaside, California*
Teagan Karis Klinkner *Corvallis, Oregon*
Satyajit Lall *New Delhi, India*
Samsor Atal Nasimi *Paktia, Afghanistan*
Michael Nevares* *Seaside, California*
Zaha Sookia *Mauritius*

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
TRANSLATION AND LOCALIZATION MANAGEMENT**

Shu Bai *Shanghai, China*
Ella Grace Barton *Austin, Texas*
Leonardo Eric Cabrera *Montevideo, Uruguay*
Xiaoyue Cao *Kunming, China*
Jinxing Chen *Beijing, China*
Peng Chen *Nanjing, China*
Yanlin Chen *Henan, China*
Xin Yue Cui *Xinjiang, China*
Leo Yunzhou Dai *Fuzhou, China*

Adrian C. Delgado Martinez *San Ysidro, California*
Hongqiang Ding *Baoshan, China*
Jue Dong *China*
Allison K. Frankel *Oakland, California*
Chia-Mei Hou *Taipei, Taiwan*
Po-Hsin Huang *Kaohsiung, Taiwan*
Boce Jia *Wuhan, China*
James Allen Masato Kuba *Santa Clarita, California*
Simon A. Leach *Bakersfield, California*
Seong Eun Lee *Jeonju, Republic of Korea*
Jinghan Li *Fuzhou, China*
Shang Li *Zhengzhou, China*
Kevin Xinyuan Liu *China*
Qiaohan Liu *Jiangxi, China*
Sayana Maraktaeva *Ulan-Ude, Russia*
Jonathan Peter Myers *Wheaton, Illinois*
Robbye Devyn Raisher *Albuquerque, New Mexico*
Rebekah Salazar Acevedo *Guatemala City, Guatemala*
Zhaoyi Shen *Yangzhou, China*
Victoria Rae Shimkus *Draper, Utah*
Jingjing Tan *Jiangxi, China*
Anqi Tong *China*
Gabriela Unguez *Enumclaw, Washington*
Marley Kazumi Uyemura* *Los Angeles, California*
Zhijun Wan *Hubei, China*
Runjia Wang *Beijing, China*
Yewen Wang *Yangzhou, China*
Yufan Wu *Fuzhou City, China*
Julena Wuer *Meigu, China*
Yizhuo Xiang *Monterey, California*
Zixi Xiang *Wuhan, China*
Fengshi Xu* *Shanghai, China*
Shiyu Yang *Wuhan, China*
Xiaoni Yang *Shanghai, China*
Meng Xian Yu *Taitung, Taiwan*
Huiyi Zhang *Chengdu, China*
Ruiyi Zhang *Shenzhen, China*
Kaiwen Zhao *Beijing, China*
Shuning Zhu *Luoyang, China*
Shiying Zhuo *Xiamen, China*

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN SOCIAL CHANGE

Madison Bishop	<i>Cape Carteret, North Carolina</i>
Kerra Belle Blotz	<i>San Martin, California</i>
Nathan Kobell	<i>Pebble Beach, California</i>
Chanel T. Leonard	<i>Clinton, Maryland</i>

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN SUSTAINABILITY

Kessa Andrews	<i>Minneapolis, Minnesota</i>
Elekcia Clegg	<i>Chandler, Arizona</i>
Alexis Marjory Clouser	<i>Roseville, California</i>
Omari J. Hines	<i>Riverside, California</i>
Noah B. Laber	<i>Ventura, California</i>
Kyle S. Weatherhogg	<i>Stowe, Vermont</i>

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CYBERSECURITY

Cassie Kays	<i>Seattle, Washington</i>
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* *With distinction*

FLAGS OF MANY HOMELANDS

Today's flags represent 222 students from 27 homelands.

Afghanistan
Algeria
Argentina
Canada
China
Ecuador
Guatemala
Hong Kong
India
Ireland
Japan
Mauritius
Mexico
Morocco
Pakistan
Republic of Georgia
Republic of Korea
Russia
Rwanda
Syria
Taiwan
Togo
Turkmenistan
United Kingdom
United States of America
Uruguay
Vietnam

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER



THE HONORABLE WILLIAM W. MONNING

Senator William “Bill” Monning (ret.), California State Senate majority leader emeritus, is an attorney, mediator, and professor who served on the faculty at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) from 1991 to 2008.

At the Institute, Professor Monning taught international negotiation and conflict resolution and served for two years as the director of the Program on Trade and Commercial Diplomacy. Monning also worked as a consultant with the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution (IIMCR). He received two Fulbright Scholarships to teach and conduct research in Peru and Chile.

During his years with the Institute, Monning was a cofounder of Global Majority, Inc., which included MIIS students, faculty, and international partners committed to education, training, and advocacy in nonviolent conflict resolution. Global Majority convened training programs in the Middle East, South Africa, and Chile, and with the Monterey County Office of Education.

Monning was the founding executive director of the Mandell Gisnet Center for Conflict Management at Monterey College of Law, where he continues as a distinguished professor of law.

Prior to his work with MIIS, Monning served as the executive director of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and the Salvadoran Medical Relief Fund (SMRF). He worked as an attorney with the United Farm Workers Union and as a directing attorney of the Migrant Farmworker Project with California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA).

Senator Monning was elected to the California State Assembly (2008) and the California State Senate (2012) where he was selected as majority leader from 2014 to 2019. His legislative accomplishments include coauthoring the End of Life Option Act (2015) and SB 200 (2019), which established the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund. He had over 100 bills signed into law with a focus on labor rights, environment, education, and health care. His Senate district included Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo Counties and parts of Monterey and Santa Clara Counties.

Monning received an AB in the dynamics of international development at UC Berkeley (1972) and his Juris Doctor degree from the University of San Francisco (1976).

He lives in Carmel, California, with his wife, Dana Kent, MD. They have two daughters and four grandchildren.

STUDENT SPEAKER



JULENA WUER MATLM '26

Julena Wuer graduates today with a Master of Arts in Translation and Localization Management, a milestone that reflects both her academic excellence and the extraordinary journey that brought her here. Born and raised in Liangshan, China, within a Yi minority community where educational opportunities for girls were limited, she became the first person from her hometown to earn a graduate degree in the United States. She holds a Bachelor of Agriculture with a minor in English from China Agricultural University, where she earned the Outstanding Student Leader Award and a National Third Prize at the China Interpreting Contest. Her academic excellence later earned her the Stilwell Scholarship, which made her journey to the Middlebury Institute possible.

At MIIS, Julena served as a graduate assistant and teaching assistant for the TLM program, led the MIIS Dance Club as president, served as social media manager for Women in Localization MIIS, and volunteered as room manager at LocWorld54. Through these experiences, she deepened her knowledge of the industry, forged meaningful connections, and found deep purpose in giving back to her community. As she steps forward into the ever-evolving world of localization, she will continue to carry with her a belief that language is the most powerful bridge between people, and that stories, told well and shared widely, have the power to change the world.

**PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS
OF MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE 2025–2026**

PRESIDENT

Ian B. Baucom

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Kenshin Cho '20

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Jeni Henrickson
Sharad Joshi
Marley Uyemura

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We pause to acknowledge that the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) sits in the Village of Achasta on the ancestral and unceded land of the Ohlone (Costanoan) Rumsen/Rumsien people, a Rumsen speaking group. Several contemporary tribes, including Esselen, call this land home today. The surrounding Monterey Bay region includes lands traditionally inhabited by the Esselen (to the south), Chalon (to the south), Mutsun (to the north), and Salinan (to the east) groups. We honor these groups' experiences in the past, present, and future, as we work collaboratively with them to protect the land and its inhabitants. Let us take a moment of silence to honor these Indigenous communities, past and present. We give thanks for the opportunity to respectfully share in the bounty of this place and are working collaboratively to protect it. We are all one in the sacred web of life that connects people, animals, plants, air, water, and earth.

A FEW NOTES

GRADUATION WITH HONORS

Undergraduate students completing all degree requirements with a record of high academic achievement are awarded traditional Latin honors: cum laude (3.50–3.74), magna cum laude (3.75–3.89), and summa cum laude (3.9–4.0). Master's degree recipients completing with a cumulative GPA of 4.00 graduate with distinction. Recipients of summa cum laude and distinction honors are awarded honors cords.

COMMENCEMENT RECEPTION

The Middlebury Institute has a long tradition of sustainable practices and innovative initiatives. In 2015, we adopted a policy of featuring at least 50 percent plant-based food at all official Institute events where food is served. In that spirit, and in an effort to meet our sustainability policy goals, we are proud to serve 100 percent plant-based foods at today's Commencement reception.

PHOTOS

A photo area is available near the front of the stage on the right. To help alleviate congestion, please remain in your seats and proceed to this area only when your graduate is ready to receive a diploma. Thank you for your cooperation.

We are pleased to offer complimentary Commencement ceremony photographs to our graduating students. Details will be provided via email once photos become available.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Special thanks to Professor Mike Gillen for playing the bagpipes leading the procession. Thanks to our students and professors for providing interpretation for guests during today's ceremony.

SUPPORTING THE MIDDLEBURY INSTITUTE ANNUAL FUND

We are grateful to the generous alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends who support the many facets of an Institute education by donating to the Annual Fund. Your contributions give future students the opportunity to pursue their dreams and lead purposeful lives. Visit go.miis.edu/give to learn more about how to make a gift.

MIDDLEBURY INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The Middlebury Institute of International Studies educates professionals to advance understanding, promote peace, and drive change in pursuit of a more just world. The Institute's students join faculty and a global network of alumni who are actively addressing some of the most critical issues of our time—including climate change, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation. Through a range of both in-person and online degree programs, students build critical in-demand skills in public policy, intercultural communication, mixed-methods and open-source data analysis and research, leadership and administration, education, and translation, interpretation, and localization.

The Institute is also home to a wide range of research centers and initiatives, including the renowned James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, the Center for the Blue Economy, and the Center on Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism, as well as the Monterey Initiative in Russian Studies. Middlebury is anchored by the undergraduate college in Vermont, which was founded in 1800 and has long been recognized as one of the finest liberal arts colleges in the country. Founded in 1955, the Institute became affiliated with Middlebury College in 2005 and was fully integrated as a graduate school of Middlebury in 2010.



Middlebury Institute of
International Studies at Monterey