



**Marshall B.
KETCHUM UNIVERSITY**

Meet Your Peer Advisors

Your Peer Advisors are second year students who have been selected for their academic excellence and student leadership. They are trained as your first level of support in transitioning to, and succeeding at MBKU. Peer Advisors provide informal advice from a student perspective about life and learning throughout your time at MBKU.

Though you are assigned a single Peer Advisor, you should take the time to get to know them all as they represent the best of what MBKU offers for students wishing to enhance their personal, professional, and leadership development.



Adam Ahmed

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hello friends! First off, congratulations in your acceptance to MBKU! My name is Adam Ahmed and I am part of MBKU's School of PA studies Class of 2023. I was born and raised in a small town located in the Central Valley and received my degree in Microbiology at San Jose State University. I love working out and often workout 6-7 times a week. Yes, even in PA school I am still able to find time to work out! I enjoy exploring local breweries, still play PC games, and love to travel. I also have a shitzu-poodle named Churro whose fur was initially brown as a puppy but is completely white now. My biggest advice to you is really learn how to manage time for your studies and your personal life. I study daily and am still able to do everything that I enjoy, which has greatly impacted my experience in this program. Find what study methods work for you and don't forget to ask for help if you feel overwhelmed. We are all a team working towards the same goal, so depend on each other and motivate each other to push forward. Lastly, remember that this program will provide you with all the knowledge and resources that you will need to become a great clinician. When I feel overwhelmed with the amount of information constantly being given to us, I remember that every class before me has also felt this way and eventually they persevered. Trust the process and believe in yourselves! Congratulations again and please don't hesitate to reach out to me or other faculty if you have any questions! :)

take up most of my time when I'm not studying. I enjoy gardening, cooking and one day, when I get my life back, I want to start fishing again! I'm looking forward to meeting all ya'll!



Jeremy Carlos

College of Pharmacy

Hello and welcome to MBKU! My name is Jeremy, and I am part of the College of Pharmacy Class of 2025. I was born in Upland, California, and grew up in the San Gabriel Valley. I graduated from Cal Poly Pomona in 2020 with a degree in Biochemistry. I enjoy cooking, videography, photography, dancing, and airplanes (I'm a huge aviation geek). I am also a big K-pop fan. One fun fact about me is that I used to dance on a competitive hip-hop dance team during my undergraduate years.

I chose to attend MBKU because of the sense of family within our college. Our professors are right across from our classrooms. Our class sizes are so intimate that you can establish good connections with faculty. With our small cohort, I was able to form close relationships with many of my classmates and develop a support network that rivals any other big institution. My biggest advice to incoming students is to know your class well. Don't be afraid to ask for help from the professors! They are the most down-to-earth and are there for you to succeed. You all will experience the next 4 years (both ups and downs) together; buy a planner, write down important dates, and plan ahead! As you begin this new journey @ MBKU, I hope you enjoy the whole experience because you are in for the time of your life. Looking forward to seeing you on campus! <3



Michael Alter

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hello and welcome to the SPAS! My name's Michael. I'm from the tarheel state of North Carolina, but I've spent a good deal of my adulthood in SoCal. Four years ago I graduated from UNC Chapel Hill where I studied economics and Arabic. Not really related to what I'm studying now, I felt called back to medicine and ended up back here in California. My wife grew up down the street from MBKU, so know the area despite not being a local. I met her 10 years ago when I was a navy corpsman stationed with the marines out here. Now I am the father of three small children who



Tina Chapman

Southern California College of Optometry

Congratulations on embarking on the first year of your journey at MBKU! My name is Tina Chapman and I am a second year optometry student at SCCO. I was born and raised in the Bay Area and graduated from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA in 2018 where I majored in Molecular

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Biology with minors in Math and Computer Science. I worked in private practice for 3 years before starting at MBKU, and now I'm so excited to be welcoming a new class to SCCO! Outside of school, I enjoy the outdoors (hiking, backpacking, and rock climbing), playing board games, gardening, and reading. When I have time on weekends, I also love to bring my dog to Long Beach! My biggest recommendation for your first year is to develop a support system both on and off campus. Getting to know classmates and upperclassmen is a great way to learn study tips for different classes and proficiencies. Make sure to take time for your hobbies, friends, and family outside of graduate school – they can help remind you why you're here! I am so excited for the Class of 2026 to start this journey and can't wait to meet you!



Jaclyn Charbonneau

Southern California College of Optometry

Hi, and welcome to MBKU! My name is Jaclyn, and I am part of the OD Class of 2025. I was born and raised in South Orange County and went to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo for my undergraduate degree in Biological Sciences. When I'm not busy with school, you can probably find me at the beach, working out,

and traveling when I can. I'm a big foodie and a shameless coffee addict, so feel free to reach out if you're looking for any recommendations. One piece of advice that I have after completing my first year is to prioritize balance and to enjoy the process; grad school isn't always a breeze, but it is so important to continue making time for yourself and your hobbies and to prioritize your family/friends. When things get challenging, just know that MBKU is a wonderful support system and that you should never be afraid to ask for help from faculty and staff, your peer advisors, or your classmates. It's amazing to be part of a group where everyone wants you to succeed, so embrace this mindset to lift up and lean on your classmates as needed. MBKU truly is a family, and I'm so excited for you all to be a part of it. Enjoy your summer, and please don't hesitate to reach out. Congrats on starting your OD journey—I am so excited to meet you all in the fall!



Jessica Cincotta

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hi everyone, welcome to our MBKU family! My name is Jessica Cincotta, and I am part of the SPAS Class of 2023. I grew up in Dana Point, CA but I went to college in Boston, MA where I earned my Bachelor of Science degree in Health Science from Northeastern University in 2017. While in college, I

worked as a medical assistant in a primary care office and when I returned home after college, I worked as a patient care technician in pre-operative and recovery services. In my free time, I enjoy hiking, going to the beach, playing trivia, reading, and taking my dog, Fritz, on adventures. Coming to MBKU for PA school is one of the best decisions I have ever made, and I hope you enjoy your time here as much as I have so far. I encourage you to get involved, especially since it is a small school, which give you an opportunity to make a difference. I also encourage you to lean on your professors and your classmates, as well as your peer advisors, because everyone here wants you to succeed. And of course, don't forget to take time for yourself- you will need to spend a lot of time studying but don't forget to take breaks and make a little time to do the things that you love. Congratulations on making it this far and I can't wait to help you transition into this next exciting stage of your life!



Emily Coan

Southern California College of Optometry

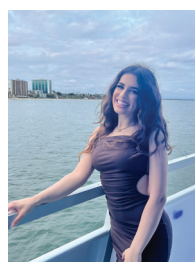
Welcome! My name is Emily Coan and I am a member of the SCCO Class of 2025. I am from Redondo Beach, CA and graduated in 2021 from UC Irvine with a double major in Biological Sciences and Dance. When I'm not studying I'm usually indoor rock climbing, listening to music, shopping at Trader Joes, on Hulu/Netflix/TikTok, traveling, or feeding my guinea pig. Congratulations on starting graduate school! School can get super difficult at times, so my advice is to learn to study effectively for YOU and have a good mindset! Believe you can! While grades are important, I recommend you get involved on campus with events, clubs, and resources; MBKU sure has a lot! You only have a few years in graduate school and a lifetime left in the workforce, so try to make the most out of your time here. Work hard, be involved, pace yourself, and make friendships and memories with your future colleagues. The community and positivity at MBKU is unmatched, so enjoy your time as you start this exciting new chapter of your lives!



Rose Compton

Southern California College of Optometry

Congratulations Class of 2026 and welcome to MBKU! My name is Rose Compton and I'm part of SCCO '25. I've moved around a bit but I grew up in Orange County and went to college at Columbia University in New York, where I played volleyball and majored in neuroscience! I had so much fun during my first year and made time to fit in some of my favorite activities such as traveling, hiking, volleyball, and going out with friends! Your first year is an adjustment period, but make sure you still leave time for the things that make you happy along the way. You're going to meet your future colleagues as well as your best friends here! I also highly recommend getting involved early— it's such a great way to meet people and feel connected to the school. I can't wait to meet you all soon, make sure you say hi if you see me on campus!



Danitra Davood

Southern California College of Optometry

Hi class of 2026!! Congratulations on making it one step closer to becoming an optometrist - you've all come so far! My name is Danitra Davood and I am part of the OD class of 2025. I grew up in Santa Clarita, CA and I graduated from UCSB in 2020 with a degree in Biology (GO GAUCHOS!). When I'm not studying, I enjoy going to concerts, hanging out with my friends, working out, trying new restaurants or traveling! This past year has been very challenging but also very rewarding. This experience has allowed me to learn so much already and find friends that I know will stick with me for a long time! My biggest advice is to meet your class as soon as possible and step outside of your comfort zone. Optometry school will definitely not come without its challenges but finding a group of friends you can share this experience with will make your journey so much better! Your class will soon become the people you see everyday. They will become your study group as well as your biggest supporters. I also recommend joining clubs where you can meet others who are interested in the same things you find interest in. Most importantly, find the strategy that works best for you, get

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involved, have fun outside of school, and enjoy the next four years of your life! Congratulations again on beginning this journey and I'm so excited to meet you all and be a part of your first year here at MBKU!!



Michelle De Los Reyes

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello everyone and welcome to MBKU! My name is Michelle De Los Reyes and I absolutely can't wait to meet all of you! I am part of SCCO Class of 2025, the "Eyecons". I am originally from the Bay Area, specifically Antioch, CA and I went to University of California, Berkeley for undergrad. I was so stoked to move down to Southern California for the first time on my own and I've been loving every moment of sunshine down here! A little about me.... I am really passionate about food, both going out to eat and cooking. I really love diving deep into a complicated recipe and getting engrossed in cooking shows. There's something beautiful when a dish comes together just as you wanted it and you get to share it with friends! In my spare time, I really enjoy gaming on my PC, bingeing shows, and attempting to take care of my dying balcony garden. I also have this really adorable fat cat named Rey! While daunting, balancing leisure time and grad school isn't quite as hard as you think it is! My first year at MBKU was nothing but joy and I'd do it again in a heartbeat! I really hope to welcome you all to campus and see you off on one of the hardest, but most rewarding journeys of your life! Congratulations and welcome to the MBKU family!



Helen Dinh

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hello and welcome to the MBKU family! My name is Helen Dinh and I am part of the SPAS Class of 2023. I was born and raised here in the OC and I graduated from UCSB (olé!) in 2015 with a B.S. in Cell and Developmental Biology. Aside from the sciences, I've always had a passion for music; I play piano, guitar, and ukulele, but most people know me for my singing. I also love baking (macarons in particular), video games, concerts and festivals, traveling, food, photography, and puns. My time at MBKU so far has been filled with enjoyable experiences – one of those being serving as Vice President of MBKU's Pre-PA Mentorship Club. It has been truly rewarding to help see Pre-PAs through to their goals, and I am thrilled to be able to bring things even more full circle now by helping you navigate the chapter that comes after! Something you'll learn to value about MBKU is its strong sense of community and family from both faculty and students. You'll only be strangers for a second; soon you'll laugh, cry, celebrate, and begin feeding each other's Celsius addictions together. I know things might be overwhelming at first, but remember you are so capable and deserving of being here. Lean into that support system and trust the process! Continue to put in the work, but also give yourself grace and time to have fun. Onwards!



Russell Dunagan

College of Pharmacy

Hello and welcome to the MBKU family Class of 2026! My name is Russ, and I am a pharmacy student in the Class of 2025. I grew up in Whittier, California and I received my B.S. in Biochemistry from CSUF (right across the street from MBKU). Before starting pharmacy school, I worked in a

community pharmacy for almost 7 years, so if you have any questions related to community pharmacy, I am here to help! I thoroughly enjoy working out, which I try to do about 6 days a week to stay fit. I have also found working out to be a great way to relieve stress. A few hobbies of mine are hiking, paddle boarding, and saltwater fishing. A fun random fact about myself that most do not know is that I started to grow dragon fruits during COVID, and currently have over 15 different varieties. I absolutely love In N Out and Mediterranean food. My best advise is to get to try and get to know all your new classmates and never be afraid to ask for help if you need it! A great way to get involved and meet new people at MBKU is to join clubs that you find interesting. Although you will be busy studying quite often, remember to always make time for yourself. Congratulations again on making it to graduate school and I you hope your first year is both amazing and memorable!



Trang Hoang

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello and welcome to MBKU! My name is Trang Hoang, and I am part of the OD Class of 2025. I grew up in Irvine and graduated from UCI in 2021 with a major in Biological Sciences. In my free time, I enjoy calligraphy, bullet journaling, doing my nails and watching kdramas.

My advice to incoming freshman would be to take care of yourself. School can quickly become stressful, so it's important to take breaks from studying and make time for yourself, even if only for a few hours at the end of a busy week. Lastly, I wanted to remind you that you are not alone here at MBKU. Everyone at this school, from your instructors to upperclassmen and fellow classmates, all want you to succeed, so don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help. We are all here to support you as you start on this journey of becoming a doctor! Congratulations and good luck on your first year of graduate school!



Andrew Iliuta

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hello friends, and welcome to MBKU! My name is Andrew, and I am part of the SPAS class of 2023. Originally from Visalia in the central valley, I attended UC Santa Cruz in 2011 where I founded the Emergency Medical Slugs and finished up my B.S. in Neuroscience, followed by a post-baccalaureate at CSU East Bay. I became an EMT in 2013 and spent the next few years mixed between BLS / CCT / 911 ambulances across the state. Working through paramedic school until my acceptance to MBKU. Since attending MBKU and through a series of fortunate events, I have become the SPAS Class of 2023 vice president, a Pre-PA Club mentor and treasurer, and now a peer mentor! The program has been full of opportunities to grow and challenge myself alongside supportive and kind students and faculty. Education aside, I enjoy flying planes, growing plants in unique ways, spend a significant amount of my study time at Disneyland, never grew out of my emo concert phase, and will always say yes to a good burrito. If there's one thing I'd recommend to you as a new student, it's making sure you find time to focus on yourself and incorporate the things you enjoy into your next few years! There's a lot to do and learn on your way towards becoming a PA -- make sure investing in your happiness and mental health is one of those things!

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Karlee Kawasaki

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello and welcome class of 2026! My name is Karlee Kawasaki and I'm part of the SCCO class of 2025. I was born and raised in Hawaii, Oahu to be specific, but I got my B.S. in Biology from Saint Martin's University in Washington. I enjoy going to the beach, hanging out, going for drinks, and working out. I am excited to welcome you all to MBKU and your journey that is to come. My favorite thing about MBKU is the people, not only are the faculty and staff friendly and supportive but also my peers are some of my favorite people and we really are in this together. My advice to you is to take the time and enjoy your first year, take time to get to know everyone in your class, academics are important, but it is equally important to make time for yourself. Enjoy your summer and if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me. Congratulations on starting your journey! I can't wait to meet you all in the fall!



Kim Kelly

Southern California College of Optometry

Welcome to MBKU! My name is Kimmy and I am part of the OD Class of 2025. I grew up in San Diego, CA and graduated from UCSD in 2021 with a bachelors in Human Biology. In my free time I enjoy trying new food places, bouldering, hiking, traveling, and trying new things. Starting grad school can be a lot to take in at first, but MBKU has a lot of resources for you! My advice is to attend school workshops (some of them have free yummy lunches!) which range in a variety of topics throughout the year. Also, it is okay to take study breaks! Don't forget to do things that you enjoy outside of academics because it's such a great way to recharge especially when the quarter starts to get more intense. One last thing that helped me stay motivated each quarter was to plan things with my friends so I had something to look forward to whether it was just after completing one exam or finals. I'm so excited for you all to be joining MBKU and I look forward to meeting you soon!



Sean Kim

College of Pharmacy

Congratulations on coming this far and allow me to welcome you to your next exciting step towards a promising future in healthcare! I'm Sean Kim, a P2 student of the MBKU COP Class of 2025. My hometown is in Lake Forest, CA and I grew up here in SoCal. My interests and hobbies include: golfing, fitness, martial arts, collecting watches/fountain pens, cars, reading, watching shows/movies, exploring new food/drinks, and hanging out with friends! My path through life has always been non-traditional, as I tend to be a bit rebellious by nature and a trailblazer. For example, I am one of very few students who do not have a BS/BA degree, therefore I completed the Prerequisites at community colleges and took the PCAT prior to admission. Upon finishing my first year, I held the positions of '21-'22 Class President, C/APhA President-Elect, Admissions Ambassador, and Experiential Education Representative. I also have 4.5+ years of pharmacy experience, working my way up from a Pharmacy Clerk, to Pharmacy Technician, and Immunizing Technician prior to starting my first year. However, my success as a pharmacy student and working professional would not have been possible without the continual grace and support of my mentors, friends, fellow students, and MBKU faculty. That is why, my most valuable advice

is this: set short-term/long-term goals for yourself, learn how to rely on others, and always try to bring out the best in yourself and others. The future is bright for you and the possibilities endless, however, I will guarantee this: you might endure many personal, professional, and academic challenges in these next few years. Therefore, I recommend you steel your resolve, challenge yourself physically/mentally, and become the author of your future. Looking forward to seeing you on campus!



Ryan Kobayashi

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello class of 2026 and welcome to MBKU! My name is Ryan Kobayashi and I am part of the class of 2025. I was born and raised locally in Torrance, California. I graduated from Boston University where I majored in biochemistry. When I'm not in the library studying, I'm probably doing something outside. I enjoy EDM, working out, skiing, surfing, and going on hikes. MBKU is an amazing community and everyone here from students to faculty is immensely supportive. Optometry school can get stressful, so do not be afraid to reach out if you need help! Everyone here is rooting for you to become a successful clinician. My best tip for first year is to balance out school with having some fun as it will definitely help you not burnout. Congrats on taking your first steps towards becoming an OD and I cannot wait to meet you all soon!



Leanne Lee

Southern California College of Optometry

Welcome to the MBKU family! My name is Leanne Lee and I am part of the OD class of 2025. I was born and raised in Temple City, California and graduated from UCLA in 2021 with a degree in Biochemistry. When I am not studying, I love to try new foods, go rock climbing, do DIY projects, and spend time with family and friends. My advice to you is to enjoy the journey here at MBKU - not only for the excellent education but also for the quality friendships you will form. Although this next season of your life may be one of the most difficult, it is here that you will find a community that will support your growth and help you reach your full potential as a future clinician. Looking back on my first year, some of the best memories I made were when I stepped outside of my comfort zone only to discover that this was exactly where I was supposed to be all along. Congratulations on beginning your first year of graduate studies! I look forward to meeting and getting to know you all!



Jasmine Lovan

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello Class of 2026! Congratulations on joining the MBKU family. My name is Jasmine Lovan and I am a part of SCCO's Class of 2025. I was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada and went to UNLV for undergrad where I studied Biology and Neuroscience. Aside from studying I spend a lot of my time traveling, playing with my dogs, hanging out with friends, painting, or exploring new places to eat! I am so excited to welcome you to our school and to offer my encouragement and guidance along the way. Transitioning into graduate school is a tough feat, but is extremely doable with the help of your instructors and peers. To add, MBKU offers so much in

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terms of extracurriculars and overall support in order to help you succeed. One piece of advice I would give is to remember to take care of yourself! Graduate school can be overwhelming and stressful, but learning how to balance your school responsibilities and personal life in a healthy way will help you get through it. Please don't be afraid to reach out! We're all here for you. I can't wait to meet you all and congratulations again on starting a new chapter at MBKU!



Kasey McWilliams

Southern California College of Optometry

Welcome to the MBKU family! I'm Kasey McWilliams, and I am part of the OD class of 2025. I grew up around Denver, Colorado, and graduated from Colorado State University. I had a marketing career for a couple of years before making my career change to optometry. I love optometry and enjoy learning new things about vision and

eye health. I am truly grateful for the support and welcoming atmosphere that MBKU has to offer. The faculty wants everyone to succeed and my classmates have been great. In my free time, I enjoy going to trivia with friends, rewatching *The Good Place* or *The Office*, spending time on the beach, and visiting Disneyland. My advice for your first year is to get to know your classmates, keep your big picture in mind, and remember to always find time to relax. I can't wait to meet you all in the fall!



Adam Moret

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello and welcome to the MBKU family, Class of 2026!! My name is Adam Moret, and I am part of the SCCO Class of 2025. I grew up in Mankato, Minnesota and graduated with a degree in Biology: Biomedical Science Concentration from the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. I enjoy

playing video games, spending time with friends and family, as well as watching sports, specifically basketball (Go Timberwolves!!). One of my favorite things about MBKU is the comradery not only between students of all years, but also with faculty as well. One saying I've overheard from older (and wiser) students is that "Optometry School is a team effort", meaning you will rely on others, and they will rely on you. One piece of advice I can give is to really look into each club that there is on campus; there are plenty of them and I believe that there is a club out there for everyone. One of my most fond memories of first year was helping people in underserved communities through Lions Club, and seeing their trust in me really pushed me to become a better student and clinician. One final (and most important) piece of advice that I can give is to always (and I mean always) make time for yourself and your hobbies: hang out with friends, go to the beach, watch Netflix. Taking time to recharge is not only necessary, but essential in graduate school. I can't wait to see you all this fall, and congratulations on starting your first year in grad school!!!



Hannah Nandor

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hello there! My name is Hannah and I am part of the SPAS Class of 2023 here at MBKU. We're excited that you'll be joining us this year! I've lived my whole life in Simi Valley, CA and graduated with degrees in Political Science and Biology from CLU in 2021. Prior to PA school, I worked as a back-office EMT

in Internal Medicine, scribed in both Sports and Pediatric Orthopedics, and shadowed providers in OB/GYN, Asthma/Allergy, and Immunology. In my free time I enjoy riding horses, hiking, bonfires at the beach, cooking, Christmas time, Disneyland trips (to study of course!), and eating ice cream or tacos. You will soon see for yourself but let me reassure you, MBKU is a wonderful place to continue your education! The faculty care about your academic successes and personal growth. They want to know you on an individual level and will support you through hard times. You will meet some of your best friends in this program! Students at MBKU are hardworking and uplift one another in so many ways. Don't miss the opportunity to develop relationships with those around you and find ways to encourage them! While school will always be your priority, you can still have fun and be involved on campus. Since starting school, I've had the opportunity to serve as SPAS Class President, Community Outreach Chair for the Pre-PA Club, a Peer Tutor and now as a Peer Advisor. MBKU has many avenues for leadership development and community service. Put yourself out there and try new things, I promise it will be well worth your effort! Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions about anything, we are here to support you. Again, we're excited you'll be joining us on campus this year and I can't wait to meet you!



Vu Nguyen

College of Pharmacy

Hello and welcome to the MBKU squad! My name is Vu Nguyen and I am a class of 2025 pharmacy student! I'm from Sacramento but spent my undergraduate career at UCI with a degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences, so I've been around SoCal for a while now! I've spent most of my time

in SoCal as a dancer on many dance teams and performing at many big events! As for why I'm at MBKU, I found my interest in pharmacy very early on, in high school, which is mainly why I went to UCI and eventually here for their amazing Pharmacy program! While my education here and eventually my career is very important to me, I find that understanding ones self and others around them is very crucial. Thus, I highly encourage everyone to socialize, interact, and be active in our little community! Don't be afraid to take on challenges and meet new people. If I hadn't done that, I wouldn't be where I am now, writing this biography and still dancing! I hope that everyone who comes to MBKU finds a place for themselves and thrives in their careers! Feel free to talk to me about anything (especially dance)! Congratulations and welcome to MBKU!



Joan Oyelakin

College of Pharmacy

Dear Class of 2026, congratulations on being one step closer to achieving your healthcare goals!! Welcome to MBKU--a place where opportunity never fails to present itself. My name is Joan Taiwo Oyelakin, I am in the College of Pharmacy program class of 2025. I was born and raised in Visalia,

California with my roots tracing back to Nigeria. I graduated from University of California, Merced with a Public Health major and Writing minor. A few of my favorite activities include trying different restaurants and writing spoken word poetry because they are both peaceful and enjoyable.

Incoming Student Pharmacists, please, never give up. This life can take you to a place you've never dreamed of, but it is up to you to conquer the obstacles and stay the course--no matter what people or situations try to throw your way. You are in a rigorous program and it will not always be easy,

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but I guarantee that your positive attitude and heart of gold will push you to the finish line.

As you continue to move closer to your passion in the Fall, I declare an overwhelming amount of peace and strength over you. Please reach out if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or need any advice. Just in case no one has told you this yet--I AM SO PROUD OF YOU! See you soon.



Cindy Pham

College of Pharmacy

Hello guys! My name is Cindy Pham and I am part of the College of Pharmacy class of 2025! I am currently residing in Huntington Beach, but grew up in the Westminster area. I graduated from CSULB with a Bachelor of Science in General Biology. During my 2 years break of undergraduate school to graduate school, I explored many opportunities in the pharmacy field which led me to where I am today! I love to travel, explore, and watch horror movies! I am always trying to balance out my social life, school life, love life, and work life! A lot of people ask me what's the secret, but I do not really have an answer to that! What I love about MBKU is it's a place where individuals from different cultures can join as one and feel connected! I was never really involved in my younger days, but since I am stuck with the same faces for 4 years, I've decided to become more involved! Some words of advice for the upcoming class: don't underestimate yourself because you are here for a reason and remember that pharmacy is a small world! Good luck and hope to see you guys soon!



Katie Salmon

Southern California College of Optometry

Congratulations and welcome to our MBKU family! My name is Katie Salmon, I am part of the SCCO class of 2025, and I am thrilled to be one of your peer advisors. I grew up in Washington state, graduated from WSU with my bachelors in Genetics and Cellular Biology, then took a detour to teach public elementary English in Seoul, South Korea for two years. Returning to the US in 2019, I worked in a joint optometry/ ophthalmology practice and fell in love with the field. Now, having completed the first year of Optometry school, I am even more convinced that this is the profession for me. In my free time you can find me at the bouldering gym with classmates, reading, or on motorcycle rides in the area. I have curated a phenomenal support system here at SCCO and I encourage you to do the same. Your peers and upperclassmen will prove invaluable resources as you enter this new challenging, yet incredibly rewarding, chapter of your life. The best advice I can offer is to strike a balance, to strive for academic growth and challenge while also taking care of your emotional and physical health. Again, congratulations on the accomplishments that have brought you here, and those still to come!



Trey Sano

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello and welcome to MBKU! My name is Trey and I'm part of the SCCO class of 2025. I was born and raised in Clovis, CA and spent my undergraduate education at the University of the Pacific and Fresno State University as a Biology major. I enjoy playing basketball, volleyball and finding new tv

shows/anime to binge (so let me know your favorites!). I'm also a proud Disneyland annual pass holder! If you have the funds, I'd recommend getting one for your first year! Nothing beats going to the happiest place on Earth after a long week of lectures! I know some of you might feel nervous about your first year in optometry school. Just know that the faculty and upperclassmen are here to help you through it! My classmates and the upperclassmen have all been through the same thing, so we know all the little secrets that'll make your first year just a tiny bit easier! Also, know there are plenty of opportunities to go out, meet classmates, and get involved on campus! My advice is to use these opportunities to help you step out of your comfort zone! If not, that's okay! Instead, try to find a small group of friends that you don't mind spending countless hours with. Trust me, they'll help keep you sane. Above all else, remember to have fun and do what makes you happy! I'm super excited to meet you all this fall! If you see me on campus, please don't hesitate to say hi! :)

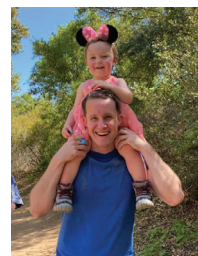


Ani Tarverdian

College of Pharmacy

Hello and welcome to MBKU! I want to take a moment here and congratulate you for making it to graduate school. My name is Ani Tarverdian and I am a pharmacy student, class of 2025. I came to the United States when I was ten years old, and I have lived in Los Angeles since then. I attended CSULA, where I got my B.S. in Chemistry. During my free time I like going to the beach and enjoying the beautiful nature. I also love drawing; I find it very therapeutic. My advice to you is that you are not alone in pharmacy school, you've got your classmates, so get to know them. If at any time things get tough, just remember to practice self-care and remind yourself of your dreams and ambition. The faculty here at MBKU are very friendly and helpful. You are going to love it here. Once again, congratulations and have an amazing year!!!! See you soon.

Don't forget you have a wonderful support system here and we can't wait to watch you succeed!



Conor Tibbs

School of Physician Assistant Studies

Hey there everyone, congratulations and welcome to MBKU! My name is Conor Tibbs and I am a member of the PA graduating class of 2023. I was born and raised around San Diego, California and graduated from USC with a major in Vocal Performance with a minor in Musical Theater. I made a pretty respectable name for myself in the San Diego theater circles but after a few years, I decided to try my hand at medicine. This involved becoming an EMT which helped me to confirm several important things about myself. First, that I really enjoyed getting back in the classroom and second, that I have no sense of direction. Less than ideal for an ambulance driver. Eventually, I found my way to PA and I couldn't be happier about studying at MBKU. I love the small class size and the faculty is incredibly encouraging and always willing to help. In my limited free time, I enjoy having board game nights and especially playing Dungeons and Dragons (yes, that thing you saw on "Stranger Things"). It's a huge outlet for my creativity and serves as a needed route of escapism from class and reality in general when things get hectic. That being said, my advice would be to realize that now that you are here, the competitive portion of your education is behind you. Each of you want to succeed and several people can get a lot more done with a lot less stress than one person alone. If you let it, starting at MBKU

Meet Your Peer Advisors

can be a shift from striving to be at the top of the class to the detriment of others to celebrating each other's victories that were only possible through teamwork. It truly does make the dream work. Can't wait to meet all of you!



Vanessa Tran

Southern California College of Optometry

Congratulations on taking this enormous stride and starting your graduate school journey here at MBKU! I'm Vanessa Tran and I'm part of the SCCO Class of 2025. I've grown up here in Orange County and I went to undergraduate school at UCSD, graduating with a Major in Human Biology and a Minor in Global Health! Words cannot express how much I've loved my time here at SCCO already. My favorite part of school is sharing a sense of camaraderie with my classmates and peers. You can almost always catch me and my friends picking up coffee and boba, staying late on campus, taking part in leadership positions, and occasionally going out to festivals on weekends! If there's anything I've learned this past year, it's that balance between studying and enjoying your free time is the key to getting through the hardest parts of graduate school so you don't get burnt out! I absolutely cannot wait to meet all of you incoming students and I am already so excited for you to find your place here at SCCO. I know it can be daunting coming to a whole new environment, but I can assure you that the faculty, peers, and upperclassmen here are the most supportive and friendly groups of people you will ever meet! See you soon and don't be afraid to say hi!



Michelle Zou

Southern California College of Optometry

Hello and welcome to the class of 2026! My name is Michelle Zou and I am a part of SCCO's class of 2025! I was originally born in Manhattan, New York; spent a few years in Fuzhou, China; and then grew up in Bloomington, Indiana. I also graduated from Indiana University with a degree in Chemistry. My background in optometry is mainly focused on clinical optics and contact lens research. When I am not at a cafe studying, you can find me playing tennis for fun, watching anime, making memories with friends, traveling, and enjoying music at festivals! MBKU has created an empowering yet encouraging community filled with driven, young professionals in-the-making; as well as top-tier faculty members. Know that there are resources available around every corner. My advice for the incoming students is to put yourself out there and join any organizations that peak your interest! This is a wonderful opportunity to network with practicing doctors, volunteer, or simply connect with your classmates outside of the classroom. Optometry school can be tough so always remind yourself to have a healthy school life balance. Additionally, feel free to contact me if you have any questions and congratulations on joining the MBKU family!

