



**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.

Southern California College of Optometry



Maggie Allers

Welcome class of 2027! My name is Maggie and I am a member of SCCO's class of 2026. I grew up here in Orange County and graduated from UC Santa Barbara in 2021 with a Bachelor's in Biological Sciences and a Spanish minor. I spent my gap year working at a group private practice, and am very happy to have landed at MBKU and have the privilege to have met so many amazing classmates,

faculty, and staff. When I'm not in the library, you can find me drinking iced oat milk lattes, doing yoga, reading fantasy novels, or rewatching New Girl for the 20th time.

Grad school will keep you busy, so find the organization and study methods that work best for you personally. Remember that you deserve to take time for yourself regardless of how busy or demanding your week is - you will be more productive (and happy!) when you are taking care of yourself. Congrats on beginning this next chapter of your lives and I look forward to meeting you all soon!



Katherine Dinh

Hello and welcome class of 2027! My name is Katherine Dinh and I am part of SCCO's Class of 2026. I am so excited to meet all of you and before we do, I would love to share a little bit about myself. I graduated from UCR in 2021 with a major in Biology and have lived most (if not all) of my life here in sunny Southern California. Outside of my studies, I enjoy baking, watching kdramas and anime, bullet journaling, playing video games, going on spontaneous trips to Disneyland, and impromptu junk food trips with friends and family.

Graduate school is definitely not an easy feat and will come with challenges, but know that here at MBKU we are here to bring support and encouragement to power through the good and bad times. My biggest advice to you during your time here is to invest time in yourself to nurture the delicate study-life balance in graduate school. You will experience stories of a lifetime and meet the greatest support team of friends, colleagues, partners, and a new family here at MBKU. Congratulations class of 2027 on embarking on a journey to the next step of your careers and I am so excited to meet you all soon!



Elizabeth Fletes

Hello friends! Welcome to MBKU - we are so happy you're here! My name is Elizabeth Fletes and I am a part of the SCCO Class of 2026. I was born and raised in Riverside, and went to UC Riverside for my undergraduate degree in Biology (can you tell I love Riverside). When I am not at a coffee shop studying, you can find me at the yoga studio, going on long walks with my dog, painting my nails, or hanging out with my friends. If I'm not doing any of those, I'm likely binge watching The Office, Friends, or Gilmore Girls for the hundredth time. I am a big coffee shop gal, so if you ever need recommendations let me know!

My biggest advice to you as you start your Optometry school journey is to surround yourself with people that make you happy! Optometry school can be overwhelming and challenging at times, so finding a support system that will be there for you when things get tough is so important (i.e. family, friends, faculty, classmates, or even your pets). Also, MBKU has a lot of resources to help you during your academic journey - be sure to use them! Don't be afraid to ask for help. I know it can be overwhelming to do so, but everyone at MBKU is there to help you succeed. I hope you enjoy your time here as much as I have! I truly can't wait to meet you in the fall! Congratulations, Class of 2027!

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Irene Garcia

YAY! Congratulations and welcome to MBKU!!! My name is Irene Garcia, and I am a part of SCCO's Class of 2026. I also go by Ren too! I was born in Oakland, California but grew up in San Lorenzo. I graduated from UC Irvine in 2020 with a degree in biological sciences, so it feels nice to be back in Orange County! In my free time, I enjoy hitting the gym, grabbing food or drinks with friends, watching

anime, sleeping, and playing board games (I recently learned that I have been playing Monopoly incorrectly my whole life).

My advice for you is to not be too hard on yourself. I cannot explain it myself, but graduate school has been a completely different playing field for me in comparison to undergrad. If I had a dollar for every time I felt imposter syndrome, I would be a billionaire by now. If you fail an exam or proficiency, it is completely valid to feel like it is the end of the world or feel as if you do not belong here, but I promise that you are not alone. MBKU offers a great variety of resources along with an amazing faculty to support you as you power through this next chapter of your life. I can guarantee that there will be tough times, but you can also create some of the best, unforgettable memories along the way. It can be scary navigating graduate school on your own, so please never hesitate to reach out. Congratulations again, and I wish you the best of luck. If you see me on campus, ask me what my favorite Spongebob meme is... any one of my classmates can tell you how much I use them as I do my secretary duties. Looking forward to meeting everyone!!

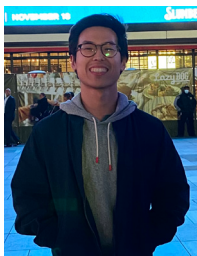


Hana Goto

Congratulations, and welcome to the MBKU family! My name is Hana, and I am a second-year optometry student at SCCO (Woo! Class of 2026!). I grew up in Placentia, CA, a city neighboring to Fullerton. I graduated from UC Riverside in 2021 with a degree in biology. When I'm not studying or practicing skills, I love spending time with family, friends, and especially with my golden retriever puppy, Benson.

The rest of my free time goes to binge-watching television shows/ K-dramas, playing basketball (although I'm practically retired), or running half-marathons.

My advice to anyone entering graduate school is to come open-minded and ready to adapt. Being open-minded leads to opportunities and unexpected discoveries about your full potential. Of course, the road to your best self can be bumpy. But you can adapt to anything with the help and support from classmates, peers, and faculty. The bottom line, when you are your best self, that means you can provide the best care for your future patients. I'm so happy you're here and SUPER excited for you as you embark on this new chapter in life. Good luck with your first year in graduate school!



Joshua Joo

Hey SCCO class of 2027! I'm Josh. I was born and raised on Oahu, Hawaii and I graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a Biology degree. In my free time, I enjoy going to the gym, playing video games, and getting drinks with friends. I've also gone to basketball games since moving to California so that's something I really enjoy whenever I get the chance. Personally, this

past year has been one of the most challenging times of my life yet also

the most rewarding. Optometry school isn't easy, but your peers make it all worth it. That's what I love about SCCO; everyone cares for one another and supports each other. You'll make lifelong friends here, so don't forget to make time for yourselves to do fun activities whenever you can.



Amy Le

Welcome to MBKU first years! My name is Amy and I am part of SCCO's class of 2026. I grew up in San Diego, California and went to UC Berkeley for my degree in Integrative Biology. Outside of studying I enjoy going to the gym, rock climbing, cooking and doing anything outdoorsy!

My advice to you is to remember that everyone is also transitioning to grad school so don't be afraid to reach out to people to hangout or to grab a bite to eat. I've made some of my closest friends by DMing them on instagram and stepping out of my comfort zone. It may seem as though everyone has their life together and already has their own friend groups but that is probably not the case! They most likely are just as nervous as you are, so reaching out will help you create new friendships and find your people. Many others have also mentioned this, but don't forget to relax and do things that will give you a break from school and studying. Grad school is no joke, but allowing yourself a break to recuperate is just as important as doing well in class. Once again, congratulations for making it this far! I can't wait to meet all of you this fall!



Justin Lee

HELLO!!! Congratulations on starting your optometric journey!! My name is Justin Lee and I am part of SCCO's class of 2026. I grew up in San Bernardino, California and I graduated UCR in 2021 with a degree in Biology. I enjoy building computers and keyboards so if you ever want to nerd out about keyboards, I'm your guy.

My advice to the next incoming class is to stop and enjoy the milestones. School can often be pretty busy and zip right by you. Stop and smell the roses every once in a while! Taking a break and looking back on what you accomplished is extremely fulfilling! If you ever see me on campus and have any questions, please reach out to me! I love connecting and giving advice to everyone! Congratulations again on joining the next MBKU class!!



Wayland Leung

Welcome to MBKU Class of 2027! Congratulations on your acceptance and starting your optometric journey at SCCO. My name is Wayland Leung and I am part of the OD class of 2026. I was born and raised in San Francisco, California and graduated from UCLA in 2021 with a degree in Biology. I am excited to be your peer advisor for the upcoming school year. In my free time I like to go play

basketball, explore new restaurants and food spots, and go out with friends. There are going to be many new challenges that may come your way but the support system here at SCCO is unmatched. The upperclassmen and teachers are always willing to take time to help you all out. Graduate school can get very busy, but there is time to go out and do fun things with your classmates and friends. I think the biggest thing I learned from my first year is finding the right balance of academics and social life. It

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can be overwhelming if you do not give yourself time to relax and have fun. Congratulations once again and I look forward to meeting you all at orientation and throughout the school year!



Kajol Jewan

Congratulations and welcome to MBKU!! My name is Kajol and I am a part of the SCCO Class of 2026. I grew up in Moorpark, CA and I graduated from UC Santa Barbara in 2021 with a degree in Cell and Developmental Biology and a minor in Classics. I took a gap year before applying and I worked as an ophthalmic technician. It was definitely a rewarding experience and wanted this time to prepare for optometry school. However, I was also nervous about coming to SCCO because I had taken a gap year and been out of the school for a while. Whether you are coming here right after undergrad, take a couple of gap years, or even switching career paths, everyone is meant to be here and we all have shared goals. At first, it may feel hard to adjust because we all come from different backgrounds, but we are here for you and it's okay to go at your own pace.

My best advice is to take advantage of the first year and go out, explore SoCal, and take time for yourself. School is important, but your mental health is more important. Also, don't forget how much you have and will achieve. We are constantly moving forward to the next thing but it's okay to take a step back and remind ourselves that we made it and it's going to be all right. In my free time, I love going out for drinks, trying new restaurants, going to the beach or pool, or sometimes just doing nothing. I definitely keep up with pop culture more than I like to admit but I also really like history and museums. In the summer, my family likes to travel and this year I am looking forward to some concerts as well. I hope you all enjoy your summer and see you this fall!



Caleb Liu

Welcome to MBKU! I'm excited to meet you all. My name is Caleb Liu, and I am part of the SCCO class of 2026. I was born and raised in Rowland Heights, California and I graduated from the University of California, Riverside. My interests include being active and working out, being lazy and watching movies and shows, and enjoying the middle ground by going out with friends. I also love trying new food, playing the acoustic guitar, and recently, I've been trying to improve my ping pong skills (you'll know what I mean when you're on campus).

Speaking about campus, I'm so glad you'll be part of the MBKU family. We pride ourselves in our solid and amazing support system, with peers, upperclassmen, and faculty who have your back—and trust me, it's real. I encourage you to get involved in school and participate in what the school has to offer. I believe it's the best way to maximize your experience and enjoy your journey here in grad school. Though you may encounter challenges down the road, you'll soon discover the blessing of being a student here at SCCO, and before you know it, you'll reap the reward of becoming an excellent doctor. I'm excited to share the next few years with you, and I can't wait to meet you all!



Vincent Ma

Hello Class of 2027! Congratulations on making it to graduate school and welcome to MBKU! My name is Vincent Ma, and I am a part of the OD class of 2026. I grew up in the Imperial Valley and graduated in 2020 from Cal Poly Pomona where I majored in General Biology. In my free time I like to go to the gym, play/watch basketball, fish, and try new foods. I'm also a huge fan of Marvel/DC so you'll likely see me at the opening weekend screenings for those movies.

My advice for your first year is to have fun, but be efficient with your time. The pace of school picks up with each quarter so work on your time management skills so that you are able to have time to do other things outside of school. Also try not to overwork yourself the first two quarters since these two quarters are relatively light to allow you to get to know your classmates better and make friends. The lighter (relatively speaking) schedule also lets you refine and adjust your studying methods before the pace picks up in your third quarter. I highly suggest that you use the free time in your first two quarters wisely so that you are better positioned for when your class load becomes super heavy. Overall, don't forget to have fun and pace yourself during your journey through grad school. There will be lots of ups and downs, but MBKU is a supportive environment, so we will get through this together. You only get to go through optometry school once, so make the most out of it.



Ashley Macabasco

Hello Class of 2027! Congratulations! I'm so proud of you all! My name is Ashley and I am in the SCCO class of 2026. I grew up in San Dimas, California and currently commute from there right now (commuters let me know if you have any questions!). I graduated from UCLA in 2021 with a degree in biology and took a gap year before coming to SCCO. I love to travel, go to concerts and crochet whenever I have free time. I also love to get food with friends and hang out with my dogs at home.

Some advice that I was given when I started grad school was to take advantage of fall quarter! Of course, take the time to situate yourself in your new environment and make friends... and then go explore! Fall quarter will be when your workload is the lightest, though it may not seem like it at the time; if you find yourself itching to get out of the house, do it! You won't regret it. Grad school can be very challenging and stressful so don't forget to make time for yourself. Plus, you have a whole community now to help you out. Never be afraid to reach out and ask for help because there is an endless amount of people who are more than willing to give you a hand. I am so excited to meet you all! Have the best summer ever and see you soon!



Marian Malig

Welcome to MBKU, Class of 2027! My name is Marian Malig, and I'm part of the Class of 2026. I was born in Saudi Arabia, but I grew up here in SoCal in Riverside, California. I graduated from UC Irvine with a B.S. in Public Health Science. You can usually find me in the library studying or in the student union playing ping-pong and drinking boba. In my free time, I enjoy playing volleyball, learning to play the guitar, watching anime, or hanging out with friends at local food places. My first year at MBKU was such a memorable experience that allowed me to grow as a person and as a future clinician, thanks to the supportive professors and

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the friendships I've made along the way. Optometry school can seem a little daunting with how fast-paced the curriculum is, but I recommend prioritizing taking care of yourself and your mental health. Before things start going full-speed, try to find ways to destress and surround yourself with a good support system to keep yourself grounded and prevent burnout. For my fellow commuters out there, I recommend finding places on campus where you can study efficiently or find peers to practice your clinical skills with while waiting for traffic to die down. My last pieces of advice are to enjoy your first year, get to know your peers, reach out to the upperclassmen, find study methods that work for you, get involved on campus, and step outside of your comfort zone! Congrats on starting this new chapter in your life, and I hope you make many amazing memories as a part of the MBKU family!



Eddie Simhairy

Welcome, Class of 2027!!! WOOHOOO, I am so excited to welcome you all to MBKU. My name is Eddie Simhairy, and I am a part of SCCO class of 2026. I was born in Baghdad, Iraq, and moved to San Diego, California, in 2009 (at nine years old). So I spent half my life in the Middle East and half in the United States. I got my B.S. in Chemistry from Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. My

favorite things to do include: cooking with friends, singing, writing music, hanging out, playing board games, grabbing drinks, and dancing.

I am stoked to see all of you enter MBKU and start your beautiful journey here! My favorite thing about MBKU is the supportive and interactive environment. The students, faculty, and staff are amazing and truly help you create a sense of family on campus. I am blessed to have peers that strive to help everyone succeed and uplift me in every way possible. My advice to you is to make the best out of your first year here. Your educational journey is essential, but make sure to make time for yourselves and get to know your peers. You will be together for four years, so this is the time to establish those connections. Also, don't be afraid to reach out to faculty and staff and get to know them; they are the most amazing people you will get to know. For now, enjoy your summer, and please reach out to me if you have any questions. Congratulations on making it to the Class of 2027, and I can't wait to meet you all in the fall.



Nari Sin

Congratulations future SCCO first years!! I'm so proud of you for making it! My name is Nari and I'm part of the OD Class of 2026. (gophoraptors!) I grew up in the valley area of SoCal and I went to UCLA as a bio major. I took 2 gap years before coming back to grad school and I'm a first generation college student so if you ever want to chat about that I'm always available! In my free time, I enjoy

spending time with family and friends, playing video games, binge-watching a good show, and journaling. My biggest advice would be to find a balance between school and life outside of school. It seems like common sense, but really take time to relax and do things that you love to do despite your busy class schedule. Also make lots of friends in your class and help each other because we're all working towards the same goal! A little kindness and positivity goes a long way. Optometry school can definitely get busy and overwhelming at times but the support from your class and faculty make it a joyful time as well. Just take a deep breath, reach out for support, and know that everything will be fine!! Excited to meet all of you!



Anna Tran

Hello everyone and welcome to MBKU! My name is Anna Tran and I am part of SCCO class of 2026. Originally I am from Seattle, WA, and attended Seattle University for my undergrad. Outside of studying, I enjoy playing video games on my PC, fish keeping, and spending quality time with friends.

My advice to you is to take everything one step at a time. I know approaching graduate school can be a bit nerve-racking, but just know that everyone here wants to see you succeed and is here for support when you need it. You have plenty of time during your first year to learn about yourself, and your study habits, as well as give you lots of opportunities to get involved on campus and have fun with your future friends and colleagues. I am so excited to meet you all and please do reach out if you have any questions about school, moving out of state for the first time, or even to say hi! See you guys in the fall!



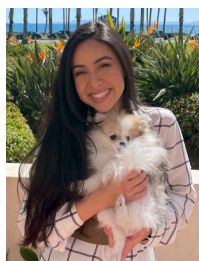
Tammy Van

Welcome to the family, Class of 2027! :) My name is Tammy and I am part of the SCCO Class of 2026. I was born and raised in Long Beach, California and graduated from University of California, Irvine (UCI) with a major in Biological Sciences. In my free time, I enjoy building mechanical keyboards, exploring coffee and boba shops, and going on hikes! My favorite study spots on campus would

have to be the outside study rooms in building A, the quiet area inside the library, or Low Student Union. If I'm not studying on campus, you can find me at nearby coffee shops! Transitioning to graduate school can have its difficulties but the supportiveness from your classmates and faculty members turns your hard days into good days. We are here for you with open arms, please do not hesitate to reach out :)

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School of Physician Assistant Studies



Evelyn Barboza

Hello friends, my name is Evelyn and I'm very excited to meet you soon and help you along your PA school journey. Let me share a little bit about myself. I am originally from Temecula, CA (the lesser known wine country). I completed my undergraduate degree in Psychology from UCLA (8 clap anyone?) and graduated in 2019. Few PA students major in Psychology, but I learned so

much about why people behave in certain ways and grew to understand humanity at a greater depth, allowing for empathetic growth. Through my undergraduate research experience, I was able to conduct studies using an MRI machine. It was super unique and the reason I am now MRI Safety Handling certified. Before attending MBKU, I was a medical assistant for an OBGYN and loved it! I also briefly worked as an ABA therapist and worked mostly with kindergarten age children. Some of my favorite hobbies include working out, cooking, catching up with loved ones, going to concerts, and hanging out with my best friend. My best friend is blonde, walks on all four legs, and always finds a ball at your local park... that's right, he's a golden retriever. I love taking my 3 year old pup on long walks, hikes, to the beach, to the desert, to Big Bear... literally anywhere I can. I enjoy cooking Mexican food and am always open to trying new recipes if anyone has any suggestions. Adjusting to PA school isn't easy, but it's doable, trust me. If you need any advice on fitting the gym or physical activity into your schedule, don't be afraid to ask, I have a couple suggestions. See you all soon!



Lauren DeWiggins

Congratulations and welcome to MBKU! My name is Lauren DeWiggins and I am part of the School of PA Studies class of 2024. I grew up in Corona, then headed to San Diego to receive my undergraduate degree in Kinesiology at San Diego State University – Go Aztecs! I enjoy working out, cooking, being outdoors, and being a dog mom to my girl Callie.

One piece of advice when starting school – keep doing activities outside of school that you enjoy! I cannot stress enough how important it is to prioritize yourself and your hobbies while in graduate school. School will be an adjustment and can be challenging at times, but enjoy the process and be present. Remember that you were chosen to be here for a reason, and by the end of the program you will be an amazing and competent clinician! Be proud of that. The students, peer advisors, and faculty at MBKU are all so welcoming and supportive. Everyone wants you to succeed, so don't be afraid to ask for help and lean on each other. We are all in this together! I am so proud of you all and cannot wait to see the success you bring to this campus – enjoy your summer and I am so excited to meet you in the fall!



Monica Farinelli

Hi everyone, congrats on your acceptance and welcome! My name is Monica and I'm in SPAS class of 2024. I grew up in Carlsbad, CA and still live there part-time with my husband and our pup. I'm the youngest of 5 so I have a big ol' family that I spend lots of my free time with, especially my nieces and nephews who I adore. I went to UC Santa Barbara where I graduated with a degree

in biology. After college, I gained my healthcare experience working as an embryologist in an IVF lab (aka making babies). I love traveling, camping, reading, and watching good shows (yes, still while in PA school!). I grew up dancing on a competitive hip-hop team and love all kinds of music. I try to attend as many concerts and music festivals as possible (yes, still while in PA school!).

My experience at MBKU has been so fun, challenging, and extremely rewarding! Adapting to life in PA school is different for everyone and challenging for all, but always, always, always prioritize time for yourself, your loved ones, your hobbies—whatever brings you joy! Just because you'll be studying all the time doesn't mean that your life must be put on hold. Your advisors are here for you if (and when) you're feeling overwhelmed to offer support, advice, tips & tricks. I'm so excited for you all and am beyond honored to be a lil part of your journey!



Kylie Harnen

Hello new SPAS students! Congratulations on your acceptance to the MBKU family!! My name is Kylie Harnen and this little fluff is Leia, my 3 year-old rescue that my boyfriend and I adopted last fall. I was born and raised in the suburbs of Illinois and studied Kinesiology at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. I spent a couple years in the city of Chicago and then made my big

girl move over to Southern California and never looked back. I thoroughly enjoy the glorious weather, hikes, national parks, beach towns, and easy breezy fashion that SoCal has to offer. When I am not soaking up the sun, you will find me either enjoying a new book series with a coffee nearby or sketching in my notepad while jamming to some tunes (any Tswifties out there?). I absolutely love understanding everything there is to know about the human body and have explored its complexities through art, modeling, fitness, and now medicine! I am privileged to be the SPAS Class of 2024 president, a pre-PA mentor, and now one of your peer advisors! Although I have a lot of passions, I have had to find a new balance between being a PA student and pursuing other joys in my life.

My advice to all of you is to give yourself some grace through this transition period. It may take many months, maybe even a couple quarters, to feel like you know how to handle the content that will be thrown at you and that is very okay! Have no fear, your peer advisors are here! Believe in your grit and reach out to us at any moment you need advice, reassurance, or a motivational meme. :)



Tyler Harris

Welcome! First off, congratulations on your acceptance, and welcome to MBKU. Seriously, take a minute to celebrate your achievements! My name is Tyler Harris, and I am a member of the SPAS 2024 cohort. I was born and raised near San Luis Obispo, CA. Upon graduating high school, I served four years in the Army as a healthcare specialist or more commonly referred to as a medic. While in service, I spent time in Germany and lived in South Korea for just shy of a year. After working with some fantastic PAs during that time, I decided to separate and pursue my dream of becoming one! I graduated from Chico State in 2021 with a degree in Exercise Physiology and was accepted to MBKU the following year.

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Okay, enough about me; let's talk about you! You are about to embark on one of the most challenging yet rewarding journeys to this point in your life, and I have a couple of tips to help you get started. First, the best advice I received from a previous advisor, make time for yourself. The first few months will be hectic, but once you find your groove, your study groups, and what works for you, take time for yourself. Work out, play video games, hike, go fishing, go to the beach, do whatever makes you happy and what takes your mind away from school. Second, don't be afraid to try new study methods, even in the middle of the year. Different courses require different techniques, and the more versatile you can be, the more success you will have. Lastly, ask for help. There will be a time when you need it, and plenty of resources are available. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you!



Amairani Solis

Congratulations and welcome to MBKU! My name is Amairani Manzo Solis and I am part of the SPAS Class of 2024. I was born and raised in sunny SoCal and graduated from California State University Los Angeles (CSULA) in 2018 with a B.S. in Exercise Science. Being a first-gen Latina and pursuing higher education has come with tremendous struggles and rejections, but let me

tell ya – it makes it that much sweeter when you finally secure that seat! Aside from academics, I've always had a passion for dance. At the age of 15, I began competing and performing with a number of Latin Dance teams. I also enjoy spending quality time with family, going on walks with my 3 shih-tzu pups, trying new food, being outdoors, and binging shows. My time at MBKU so far has been filled with many enjoyable experiences – being the President of the MBKU Pre-PA Mentorship Club, hosting a Salsa dance workshop for my classmates, and building some amazing friendships.

I strongly encourage you to get involved and go into anything you do with an open-mind. Remember that at the end of the day, it is up to YOU to make the best out of your 27 month journey! As you start this new chapter of your lives – learn to lean on your classmates, faculty, and your support system. Work hard, trust the process, and give yourself some grace. When times get tough, remember how hard you have worked to get to this point! You are smart, capable, and very much deserving! I am happy to be a part of your new journey and can't wait to meet you all. Cheers to the first step in your PA career! Please don't be afraid to say hi if you ever see me around campus.



Maverick Tan

Hello and welcome to the MBKU family! My name is Maverick Tan and I am part of MBKU's School of PA studies class of 2024. And yes, Maverick like in Top Gun. I was born in the Philippines, but mostly grew up in Glendale, California. I graduated from UCLA in 2020 with a B.S. in Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology (MCDB). Some of my greatest passions are cooking, travelling, working

out, and eating delicious food! One of my goals after PA school is to travel, eat plenty of street food, and experience the unique cultures that the world has to offer.

There will be times where you will feel overwhelmed and challenged – and that's ok. Don't hesitate to reach out to your classmates, friends, and faculty. We're all here to support and help each other succeed. Again, congratulations on your acceptance to MBKU and I can't wait to meet all of you!

My biggest advice to you as a new student is to take PA school one step at a time and set attainable short/long term goals for yourself. It is also very important to take study breaks in between! It's always ok to care of yourself.

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College of Pharmacy



Selasie De-Souza

What's up everybody, congratulations on making it to the MBKU Crew! My name is Selasie de-Souza and I am in the College of Pharmacy, Class of 2026. I'm from Los Angeles but more specifically, View Park/Baldwin Hills. I was born in Inglewood, and I have one brother who is also a pharmacist. I attended UC Merced where I majored in Biological Sciences with an emphasis in Human Biology.

During undergrad I was the president of Black Student Union and I also participated in Stem Cell Research in the Tissue Regeneration lab. When I graduated from UC Merced I moved back to LA where I started work at CVS in the Pharmacy Department. While working at CVS I also volunteered at UCLA Ronald Reagan Hospital and shadowed a Pharmacist at Cedar Sinai Hospital, in the Nuclear Pharmacy Department. Now this is a quick summary of my academic life, but outside of academics I have a few other hobbies that I am passionate about. Besides pharmacy I also enjoy going to the gym, playing basketball at least 2-3 times a week, listening to music (during undergrad I was also a professional DJ), and studying ways to invest my capital. I believe to prevent burnout in a rigorous graduate school program, you must have an equal balance of academics as well as having fun with family and friends.



Erika Ghoreishi

Congratulations and welcome to the entering class of 2027! My name is Erika, and I am a part of the College of Pharmacy class of 2026. I graduated from the University of Arizona in 2019 with a degree in Molecular & Cellular Biology. I was born and raised in South Orange County. I have a sweet little Cockapoo puppy named Kisha, but I just call her Kish. I have a huge, sweet tooth and I love food

and coffee a lot. Well, enough of me! Take a moment to appreciate and recognize all the commitment, effort, and perseverance you have shown to get to pharmacy school! You will transform in ways you never imagined in just your first quarter at MBKU. You'll make new friends, try new things, and step outside your comfort zone. For the next four years, this will be your home, and every person in it will serve as your family. You will have the privilege of working and studying with some of the top professors in your profession. My biggest piece of advice is to stay hungry for knowledge. Study carefully and diligently chase your goals. Not just as a peer advisor, but also as a friend, I'll be there for you all the time. Oh, and another thing. May you always let your faith be greater than your fear.



Richard Liou

Greetings Class of 2027 students! Congratulations on embarking towards your goals and aspirations and joining the MBKU family! We welcome you! My name is Richard Liou, and I am a current PY2 and a part of the College of Pharmacy class of 2026. If I were to put on the sorting hat at Hogwarts, I would be a Ravenclaw. I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and I went to Northern Illinois University

where I studied probability and statistics. Go Huskies!

If you've read everything so far and want to continue, the advice I would give for incoming students would be that it's okay to take breaks. It could

be anything from going on a walk, reading a book, eating at a fancy restaurant or binge watching a Netflix show. School will be challenging in many respects, but I suggest carving out wellness time and more importantly SLEEP. Another challenge if you choose to accept it is to join and explore organizations that each respective school has to offer in your first year. There are many opportunities that come from just networking and promoting yourself, so it's better to get out there. Don't be shy if you see me on campus! Say Hi!



Anthony Vu

Hello Class of 2027, welcome to MBKU College of Pharmacy! I want to congratulate you all for your acceptance! My name is Anthony and I am a part of the College of Pharmacy Class of 2026. I was born and raised in Orange County, but moved and graduated from University of the Pacific in Stockton with a degree in Biological Sciences. I started pursuing pharmacy, changed to medicine, then returned to pharmacy and found my pharmacy family here at MBKU. It's been a tumultuous journey of successes and failures, and graduate school may seem scary, but you'll find many opportunities here. As part of a small campus, you'll form tight-knit groups with classmates and faculty, with the culture here resembling a family that will support your endeavors.

My advice is learning how to manage your time so that you can work hard and play hard. Outside of school, I enjoy spending my free time hanging out with friends, watching anime, playing video games, trying new foods and visiting new places. Please feel free to reach out to me for any questions or concerns!