# An Evening of CELEBRATION 2024



### HONORING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF FOSTER YOUTH

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors • Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

JUNE 25, 2024 AT THE MUSIC CENTER'S WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

### Dear Graduates, Friends, and Supporters:

Welcome to Celebration '24! The Class of 2024 represents the most dedicated students Los Angeles County has to offer. These graduates have faced numerous challenges in their lives, overcoming obstacles through personal resilience, grace and a commitment to persevere. Each student here tonight has embarked on a journey to become something more—a better version of themselves, making a conscious choice to strive for excellence. 2024 marks the 36th year that Celebration has honored Los Angeles County foster youth who have achieved academic excellence. Tonight, we commend an impressive group of 155 individuals as they pursue the next stage of their academic careers at colleges, universities, and vocational schools throughout the country. Thank you for always providing the invaluable support that has brought them to this significant milestone.

Graduates, all of the individuals gathered here tonight celebrate your drive to excel and honor you as you continue on your path to success! As you transition from one chapter in your life to the next, remember that you possess the ability and strength that will help you achieve greatness and triumph. Thousands of Celebration graduates before you have proven that success is attainable through hard work and determination. Now it's your time to shine in the next phase of your academic careers. We encourage each of you to reach out to mentors, peers, teachers, and those community partners and organizations involved in Celebration '24, who stand ready to support and guide you as you continue to grow.

Our scholarship donors have given generously allowing you to take that next step. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all the Celebration '24 donors and special friends for making this Celebration possible. Know that we believe in you and continue to be inspired by your successes and unlimited potential.

### **CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2024!**



### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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### LINDSEY P. HORVATH

CHAIR, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THIRD DISTRICT

June 27, 2024

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual "Celebration Honoring the Academic Achievements of Foster Youth" hosted by the Department of Children and Family Services and Youth Development Services Division Independent Living Program.

Tonight, we celebrate the class of 2024, 169 young people who have shown tremendous resilience, commitment, and perseverance to arrive at this moment. Graduating high school is one of life's big milestones. I hope that tonight, you all get to take a moment to let this accomplishment sink in and recognize all the hard work you have done to get here. You have overcome obstacles, stepped up to challenges, and ensured that you completed your high school education. You are all incredibly strong and powerful. I am confident you have all the necessary talents, determination, and drive to make all of your dreams come true.

I am proud to congratulate all our graduates on their significant accomplishments, and wish you continued success in all your future endeavors. Please know that LA County is here to continue to support you as you take the next steps in your journey.

Congratulations again and best wishes!

Sincerely,

Lindsey/P. Horvath Los Angeles County Supervisor Third District



EAST SAN FERNANDO VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE

7555 Van Nuys Boulevard, Suite 1 Van Nuys, CA 91405 WEST VALLEY/MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES DISTRICT OFFICE 26600 Agoura Road, Suite 100 Calabasas, CA 91302

METRO WEST LA DISTRICT OFFICE 6464 West Sunset Boulevard, Suite 710 Los Angeles, CA 90028

Evening Program

WELCOME

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

**CHRIS SCHAUBLE** 

**CO-ANCHOR, KTLA 5 MORNING NEWS** 

**OPENING REMARKS** 

LINDSEY P. HORVATH

CHAIR,

LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, THIRD DISTRICT

**CONGRATULATORY REMARKS** 

**CYNTHIA MC COY MILLER** 

SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR,

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

PERFORMANCES

SPOKEN WORD - MASON GRANGER LIVE MUSIC - ENCORE (LED BY KEVIN DAVIS) LIVE MUSIC - KENYON DIXON (2X GRAMMY NOMINEE)

> ALUMNI SPEAKERS MAGGIE LIN & CHRISTIAN DAVID GREEN

> > **CONGRATULATORY VIDEO**

SPECIAL GUEST

CLOSING REMARKS

**ANNOUNCEMENTS OF GRADUATES** 

# MASTER OF CEREMONIES CHRIS SCHAUBLE

CO-ANCHOR Channel 5 News

### Chris Schauble

is the co-anchor of KTLA 5 Morning News from 4:00 am to 7:00 am on weekdays. Chris is passionate about his work, family, and fitness. Schauble holds a Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Journalism from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. In addition to his work as a journalist, Chris has been an instructor for Speech Communications and Media Research Analysis at Miles College in Birmingham, Alabama and was a guest Instructor at Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida.

He is an active member of the National Association of Black Journalists and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. During his 15 years working in Los Angeles, Chris has earned multiple awards including five Emmy awards and six Golden Microphones. As an adoptee himself, Chris has dedicated much of his free time to helping needy children. He has been recognized by the City of Los Angeles and the State of California multiple times for his ongoing community service. Chris, his wife and their two sets of twin girls live in the Los Angeles area.





Spoken Word

MASON GRANGER

Live Music

ENCORE (Led by Kevin Davis)

KENYON DIXON

(2X Grammy Nominee)

# MASON GRANGER



Originally from Philadelphia PA, Mason Granger is a spoken word artist who has captivated audiences at home and abroad with his deft language and uniquely engaging poetry performances for over 20 years. His nuanced-yet-accessible style is not only a reflection of his drive to distill the complexities of the world around us for the education, entertainment, and inderstanding of audiences of all ages and ilks, but also simply a reflection of how he carries himself day to day.

Mason began creative writing at Rutgers University in New Brunswick NJ, performing regularly at the student-led poetry open mic, Verbal Mayhem. After a couple years, he took over weekly hosting duties of the open mic, nurturing and helping to grow the spoken word community at Rutgers into the institution it is today (Verbal Mayhem recently celebrated its 25th anniversary on campus in 2024).

Now as a Los Angeles resident and Deputy Director of the youth literacy non-profit organization Get Lit–Words Ignite, Mason continues to pursue creative projects while helping to shape the future of spoken word poetry education in California and beyond. He lives with his beautiful partner, together spending their time thinking of names for their future dog(s)

# LIVE MUSIC



## LED BY KEVIN DAVIS

LOS ANGELES NATIVE & 2X GRAMMY-NOMINATED ARTIST KENYON DIXON, KNOWN FOR CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS WITH MUSIC LEGENDS LIKE JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, JILL SCOTT, KIRK FRANKLIN, TYRESE AND MORE. HAVING ALSO BUILT A SUCCESSFUL SOLO CAREER, IN 2022 HE HEADLINED HIS FIRST PREDOMINATELY SOLD OUT AND HIGHLY ANTICIPATED US + INTERNATIONAL TOUR AND MOST RECENTLY RECEIVED HIS FIRST SOLO GRAMMY NOMINATION, INDEPENDENTLY, FOR HIS SONG "LUCKY" IN THE BEST TRADITIONAL R&B CATEGORY. THE RECORD SERVED AS A STANDOUT SINGLE FROM HIS LATEST ITUNES R&B CHARTS TOP 5 DEBUTING OFFERING "THE R&B YOU LOVE" WHICH DIXON IS CURRENTLY TOURING IN SUPPORT OF.

Alumni Speakers

### CHRISTIAN GREEN

Professor, Author,

and Motivational Speaker

MAGGIE LIN

Executive Director,

Foster Nation

### Alumnus Speaker Christian Green

Professor, Author, and Motivational Speaker

### **About Me**

Born in a prison cell to an incarcerated mother and a father unknown, Christian D. Green has overcome many obstacles rare, atypical, and uncommon to others.

Christian David Green is a first generation, former foster youth, non-traditional graduate from the Antelope Valley, specifically Lancaster, California. Christian graduated spring 2016 from UCLA with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology with a minor in African American Studies. And then Graduated with M.A. in African American Studies spring 2018 from UCLA. He currently serves as a national ambassador on the U.S. Truth Racial Healing and Transformation Coalition (US TRHT), serves as the Policy and Advocacy Director for Sanctuary of Hope that serves our TAY (Transitional Age Youth) Population, and as of Fall 2023 Christian has been hired on as the First African American Studies Professor at West LA Community College where he is building out the curriculum and the department. In 2018, he also released his first book - Uncovering Your Worth: From Legal Custody to UCLA which has allowed Christian to speak all over the nation about his own adventure within the child welfare system.





### **About Me**

Maggie Lin is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Foster Nation, a nonprofit that supports and empowers foster youth aging out of the system to become self-sufficient. Upon immigrating to the US from Taiwan, she ended up in the Los Angeles County foster care system for nearly a decade with her sister, moving through 6 different placements before the age of 18.

Maggie received her B.A. in Philosophy from Dartmouth College in 2011. She has lived overseas in Indiaand Mongolia, working for the Chairman of the IPCC (United Nations) and Nobel Laureate, Dr. Rajendra Pachauri; software technology company fighting counterfeit drugs in India and Southeast Asia, and other social impact startups. An introduction to the Pritzker Foster Care Initiative inspired her to dedicate her professional career to making an impact on those still affected by the foster care system.

Maggie has been featured in The Today Show, Los Angeles Times, KXN Hero of the Week, Fox 11 Los Angeles, Good Day LA, Foster Change, and other podcasts and interviews. She currently resides in Austin, TX.







### TIFFANY HADDISH

### Philanthropist, Actor, and Comedienne

# Tiffany Haddish

Emmy & Grammy award winner Tiffany Haddish has established herself as one of the most sought-after comedic actresses and performers worldwide. Haddish can most recently be seen reprising her role as Detective Danner in the second season of AppleTV's critically acclaimed murder mystery series The Afterparty, in Disney's Haunted Mansion, MGM's Landscape With Invisible Hand, an adaption of MT Anderson's futuristic sci-fi novel, and Back on the Strip. Prior to this, she starred in Lionsgate's The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent opposite Nicholas Cage and Universal's Easter Sunday. Haddish also voiced the role of Tuca in Adult Swim's Tuca & Bertie and the role of Aisha in Hulu's Solar Opposites. Other recent projects include: starring opposite Oscar Isaac in the critically acclaimed Paul Schrader film The Card Counter, On the Count of Three, alongside Jerrod Carmichael and Netflix's critically acclaimed Bad Trip, starring alongside Eric Andre and Lil Rel Howery. Haddish's projects in development include Down Undercover, Mystery Girl, Homecoming Queen and The Untitled Flo Jo Biopic.

Haddish is perhaps best known for her breakout role in the smash comedy Girls Trip, where she starred as the scene-stealing "Dina" alongside Jada Pinkett Smith, Queen Latifah, and Regina Hall. Her other film and television work include Here Today, Like A Boss, The Kitchen, Between Two Ferns: The Movie, The Spongebob Squarepants Movie: Sponge on the Run, The Secret Life of Pets 2, The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part, The Angry Birds Movie 2, Night School, Nobody's Fool, The Oath, hosting both Kids Say the Darndest Things and TBS' Friday Night Vibes, Self-Made: Inspired by the Life of Madam CJ Walker, The Last O.G. and The Carmichael Show. Haddish also served as host and executive producer of the Emmy-nominated Netflix stand-up comedy series Tiffany Haddish Presents: They Ready. The series of half-hour comedy specials featuring her friends and long-time comedic collaborators ran for two seasons

Her Emmy-nominated and Grammy-winning comedy special, Tiffany Haddish: Black Mitzvah, debuted on Netflix in December 2019. Haddish became the second black woman ever to win a Grammy for Outstanding Comedy Album and the first since Whoopi Goldberg won in 1986. Her first stand-up special, Tiffany Haddish: She Ready! From the Hood to Hollywood was released on Showtime in August 2017. Just three months after the special's release, Haddish made history by becoming the first black female stand-up comedian to host Saturday Night Live, which earned her the 2018 Emmy Award for "Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series." In June 2018, Haddish took the reins as the host of the MTV Movie and TV Awards, a role that earned her critical acclaim and significant ratings boost for MTV..

# **TIFFANY HADDISH**



Haddish's first book, a memoir called The Last Black Unicorn, was released in 2018. The book made the New York Times Best Sellers List, and the companion audiobook, narrated by Haddish, was nominated for a 2019 Grammy Award for "Spoken Word Album." In 2022 Haddish released her debut picture book Layla, The Last Black Unicorn.

Haddish's journey and life experiences have inspired her comedy and sense of humor both on and off the stage. She has been very candid about her experiences growing up in foster care in South Central Los Angeles. Her excessive talking and imaginary friends prompted her flustered social worker to steer her into stand-up comedy. She enrolled in the Laugh Factory's Comedy Camp, a place for at-risk and underprivileged children to transform negative energy into something positive. The experience was just the beginning of her comedy career. Haddish recently founded The She Ready Foundation to help and support foster kids in need. In 2021 The She Ready Foundation launched an Internship Program with Ready To Succeed for foster youth in the SoCal area.

She currently lives in Los Angeles.

# **TIFFANY HADDISH**

# Congratulations

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### + Our Valedictorian + 4.5 GPA

Hello my name is Alejandra Galdamez and I have committed to UCI to major in criminology, law and society, which focuses on understanding crime and the many factors that interact with the law. I hope that after getting my bachelor's degree, I can get a master's in forensic psychology. I've always had a passion for law and I hope that getting to work in this field will open up many opportunities for me.



Congratulations

Alejandra Galdamez!

# SANAI WALLACE 4.3 GPA



My name is Sanai Wallace. My preferred name is Sylvian but Sylvie or Sylver are also fine. I am to be a student at CSUN in the fall majoring in Business Economics. My personal life goal is to travel all around the world and my short term goal is to join clubs at CSUN. Two of my most impressive accomplishments include travelling to Spain and being Valedictorian at my high school. One little fun fact about me is that I love to read and can read 2 books in one day. Another one is that I love superheroes, villains, and anything supernatural/mythological.



### **INTRODUCING THE CLASS OF 2024**



Aaliyah Bryant

**Alexis Sanchez** 

Andrew Gracia

Angelina Conzalez

Arianna Del Real



Adnan Khan



Aleena Ortega



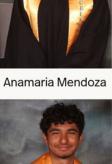
Alejandra Galdamez



Amir Williams











Antony Loessel-Meledonian Antwan Loesel-Meledonian



**Ashley Felix** 



Alyna Soto













Ashley Carrera







Ariel Beltran

Anelesa Vahan

Anthony Barycki



Ashley Medina











Angelina Roman







Ashley Hernandez



**Brian Coronel** 

**Colton Price** 

**Deanna Robles** 



Ashley Szerlip



**Bianca** Arteaga



Blue John



**Brandon Rios** 



Brianna Don



Bridget Alvarado



**Brooklyn Arnold** 



Cinthia Morales-Portillo



Darla Vasquez



**Dominic Dochelez** 



Camryn Ren Daniels



**Cissy Cisneros** 



Davida Sandoval







Christina Gonzalez



Daniela Reyna



Demaja Windom



**Christopher Gomez** 



Daqing Cao



**Destinee Salazar** 



Eli Michelena



**Emily Lesage** 



Elijah Matthews



Erica Tenner



Elizabeth Yesilversky





**Emanuel Freeman** 

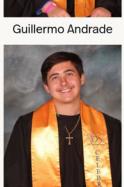


Genesis Garcia-Rizo









Isaac Johnson



Jania Llerenas





**Isabel Bustillos** 



Jannet Velasco





Ivan Mendoza



Jasmine Jackson



lan Munns



Jacian Vazquez



Jason Flores



**llene Hernandez** 



**James Watkins** 



Jayden McAdory









Jayla Burton



Jessie Castillo



Jazmin Guzman



Jimmy Silverman



Jeremiah Shaw



Jerry Castaneda









Kimora Jackson





Lesly Bejar

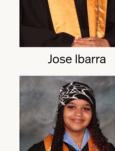














Kellie Jasmin







Josephine Lozano



Khary M. Kell Burrell









Layoni Nichols





Kacey Coulter



Ki'yel Tyler



Kayla Gonzalez



**Kristian Gutierrez** 















Levi Valiente



Marialis Guevara



Linda Gutierrez



Marissa Aguayo



Madison Argueta





Mahira Ward







Mla Moreno



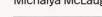
Nathon Sotelo



**Raymond Amperano** 









Nevaeh Bermudez



Reyna Shaibi





Nicholas Gray



**Richard Howard** 



Mildred Reyez



**Paris Williams** 



**Ronaldo Martinez** 



Nalleli Aldana



Patricia Flores



**Ruixin Cindy Liu** 









Sanai Wallace

Shirley Del Angel

Teodoro Lopez

Valerie Baca

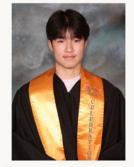
Wyatt Riffle



Sarah Jimenez



Sereanity Monson



Seung June Isaac Kwon













Valentina Gonzalez



Wilmer Henriquez

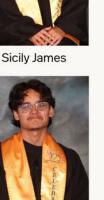


Zachery Paulson







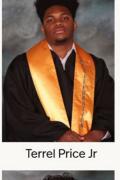








Yuvia Aldana







Yahira Cortez-Uribe



Victor Leon



Yesenia Peraza













Valerie Diaz













Zarreon Carter

### Graduates Not Pictured Abigail Opeyemi Bianca Nichols Deron Crawford Markell Thompson

### **FRIENDS FOREVER - BY VITAMIN C**

AND SO WE TALKED ALL NIGHT ABOUT THE REST OF OUR LIVES WHERE WE'RE GONNA BE WHEN WE **TURN 25** I KEEP THINKING TIMES WILL NEVER CHANGE **KEEP ON THINKING THINGS WILL** ALWAYS BE THE SAME (SAME) BUT WHEN WE LEAVE THIS YEAR, WE WON'T BE COMING BACK NO MORE HANGING OUT 'CAUSE WE'RE **ON A DIFFERENT TRACK** AND IF YOU GOT SOMETHING THAT YOU NEED TO SAY YOU BETTER SAY IT RIGHT NOW 'CAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE ANOTHER DAY 'CAUSE WE'RE MOVING ON, AND WE **CAN'T SLOW** THESE MEMORIES ARE PLAYING

LIKE A FILM WITHOUT SOUND AND I KEEP THINKING OF THAT NIGHT IN JUNE I DIDN'T KNOW MUCH OF LOVE, BUT IT CAME TOO SOON (TOO SOON) AND THERE WAS ME AND YOU, AND THEN IT GOT REAL BLUE STAY AT HOME TALKIN' ON THE TELEPHONE AND WE WOULD GET SO EXCITED, AND WE'D GET SO SCARED LAUGHING AT OURSELVES THINKING LIFE'S NOT FAIR AND THIS IS HOW IT FEELS AS WE GO ON, WE REMEMBER ALL THE TIMES WE HAD TOGETHER AND AS OUR LIVES CHANGE, COME WHATEVER WE WILL STILL BE

### FRIENDS FOREVER

### **THANK YOU!**

Thank you to all the Celebration 2024 Scholarship Donors who made it possible to support the future academic pursuits of tonight's graduates.

Doctorate- \$100,000+ Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

> Masters- \$10,000+ Foster Care Counts

Bachelors- \$7,500+ Connecting a Caring Community\*\*\* Los Angeles African American Employees Association

### Associates- \$1,500+ Foster Care Project Terriel Cox Memorial Scholarship

\*\*\*Connecting a Caring Community partners- Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Los Angeles, Emerson Wahl So Good Scholarship Fund, Kellie and Jeff Singer and Family, The Lopata Family (in memory of Carolyn Reynaud-Eglash), Keri Gillespie (in memory of Peyton Virgil Cowart) and Nationwide Medical, Inc.

### HAIR AND MAKEUP ARTISTS

Elena Arroy, Tyuen Thranh-Tran, Marina Galstyan, Rocket Minjizzle Eugene Conde, Rashima Wilson, Aracely "Sally" Reyes, Dominique Henson Alexa Green, Jose Zamora, Kim Berry, Chanice Williams Anastasia "Asia" Park, Mirta Anguiano, Tee Johnson, Monica Caldera Ta'Shanna Garrett, Jenifer Cormack, Sky Onyx, Sheenira Frye

### THE MUSIC CENTER'S WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL HOUSE STAFF

Sergio Quintanar, Master Carpenter Marcus Conroy, Master Electrician Charlie Miledi, Master of Properties Kevin Wapner, Master Audio

Sharon F. Stewart, Director, Scheduling & Event Marisol M Garcia, Scheduling & Lease Events Administrator Colin Perkins, Lease Events Manager Jason Clark, Director of Production Katie Miller, Production Manager Lisa Quang, Production Coordinator Spencer Saccoman, Project Production Manager

Greg Flusty, House Manager Jose Garibaldi, Courtney Rabena, Jose Rivas and Adrian Romero, Head Ushers

The stage crew, wardrobe crew, makeup artists, hair stylists, and box office staff are represented by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States of America and Canada, AFL-CIO, CKC, Local Numbers 33, 768, 706 and 857, respectively.

The House Managers employed by the Music Center are represented by the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers.

Thank you to all the other individuals and organizations who donated their time, energy, and resources after this program was created.

Thank you to the following individuals and Organizations that have made significant contributions to Celebration '24.

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### LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES Brandon T. Nichols, Director

### LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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