Commencement ceremony celebrates a return to normalcy

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This year’s Freeman School commencement ceremony was nothing special, and according to Dean Angelo DeNisi, that’s what made it special indeed.



Kelly Buck (BSM/MACCT '10) is all smiles after receiving her diploma as Sara Biller (MACCT '10), left, and Enrique Caballero (BSM/MACCT '10), right, look on.

In his introductory remarks at this year’s ceremony, DeNisi told graduates and their families that each of his first four commencements had been extraordinary for one reason or another.

His first commencement ceremony in 2006 was the first commencement after Hurricane Katrina, which gave the event a special meaning. The following year, DeNisi awarded diplomas to the graduating MBAs who made the courageous decision to return to Tulane and New Orleans after Katrina, again adding a special meaning to the celebration. DeNisi’s third commencement ceremony stood out for his awarding of an MBA to an 81-year-old man who had begun the program in 1953, making him one of the oldest people ever to earn an MBA from Tulane. And last year’s ceremony was special because it included the awarding of the first degrees in the Freeman School's new Master of Global Management program.

“This year I thought, okay, we’ll have a *normal* graduation,” DeNisi said, “but I was wrong. Although we have no one special item to acknowledge, we celebrate the normalcy of an academic year in this, the fifth year following Katrina. More importantly, we honor you and your academic achievements. Each of us here today is proud indeed of your accomplishments, your dedication to your programs and your school, and your active participation in the revitalization and resurgence of this great city. So, yes, today is a very special day.”



Vincent Do (MBA '10), kneeling, strikes a pose for photographers. Behind him, left to right, are fellow MBA grads Andi Rahmawan, Pavan Rupanguntla, Hasan Eryilmaz, Waron Sanguanwongwan, Mei-Yu Chen, Carolina Rojas and Cesar Solorzano.

This year marked Tulane's 93rd year of conferring business degrees. At the May 15th ceremony in McAlister Auditorium, Dean DeNisi presented diplomas to more than 400 men and women from five continents, including 70 Master of Accounting graduates, 151 Master of Business Administration graduates, 131 Master of Finance graduates, 22 Master of Global Management graduates, 37 Master of Management graduates and two Doctor of Philosophy graduates.

Earlier in the day, 227 students received their Bachelor of Science in Management diplomas at the Undergraduate Diploma Ceremony in the Louisiana Superdome, which honors graduates of Tulane’s five undergraduate schools.

Chonchol Gupta (MBA '10, MGM '10), outgoing president of the Freeman School's Graduate Business Council, delivered the charge to graduates. David Arango received the BSM Award for Scholastic Achievement, which recognizes the graduating BSM student with the highest cumulative grade point average, and Karthik Mahadevan earned the Marta and Peter Bordeaux Scholastic Achievement Award, which recognizes the graduating MBA student with the highest cumulative grade point average.



Freeman School Dean Angelo DeNisi, Tulane board member John Koerner and Associate Dean Peggy Babin, left to right, watch from their seats on stage as Chonchol Gupta delivers the charge to graduates.

In addition, five Freeman School graduates—John Baber, Jeffrey Good, Corrie Gurucharri, Kendall Plain and Adam Salup—received the Tulane 34 Award, which is presented each year to 34 Tulane graduates who demonstrate outstanding academic achievement, student leadership and community service throughout their collegiate careers.

“I wish you the best in all your academic, professional, and personal endeavors,” DeNisi said at the ceremony’s conclusion. “We look forward to following your careers and watching you contribute to building a better world.”

To see additional photos from this year's commencement ceremony, visit the Freeman School's Flickr page.