



UNIVERSITY  
CONVOCATION  
AND THE  
INVESTITURE  
OF  
BERENECEA JOHNSON EANES, Ph.D.  
*As the Ninth President of  
California State University, Los Angeles*

Monday, August 18, 2025  
The Harriet and Charles Luckman Fine Arts Complex

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**We Are LA:**  
*Empowering Dreams,  
Transforming Lives*

# MESSAGE FROM BERENECEA JOHNSON EANES, Ph.D.



As we begin a new academic year and gather for University Convocation and Investiture, we are not simply marking time — we are making history. This is a moment of purpose. A season of promise. A call to move forward together with boldness, clarity, and compassion.

**We Are LA: Empowering Dreams and Transforming Lives** is not only a theme — it is a declaration of who we are and what we are capable of becoming. It is the collective heartbeat of Cal State LA, echoing through generations of students who dared to dream, families who sacrificed to make those dreams possible, and faculty and staff who rise each day to open doors and remove barriers.

We are not here to replicate the past.  
We are here to reimagine the future.

This University stands tall because of the people who believe in its mission and live it out in classrooms, offices, residence halls, resource centers, and research labs. We are rooted in equity, justice, and service. We lift each other as we climb. And we meet this moment with the unwavering belief that higher education can — and must — be a vehicle for liberation and transformation.

We will create belonging with bold intention, courageous design, and the unwavering belief that every person deserves to be seen, heard, and valued. We will lead with integrity and innovate with vision. We will celebrate the power of our diversity and the beauty of our shared vision.

To our *faculty*: Thank you for being the architects of possibility — designing blueprints for brilliance, igniting minds, and shaping futures that have yet to be imagined.

To our *staff*: Thank you for being the soul and steady rhythm of this campus — the unseen force that moves us forward with care, resilience, and grace.

To our *students*: Thank you for entrusting us with your dreams — the most sacred gift of all. You are the reason we rise each day with purpose, passion, and urgency.

To our *alumni* and partners: Thank you for walking alongside us — not as bystanders, but as co-creators of legacy, lighting the path with your wisdom, advocacy, and unwavering belief in what we can become.

The Investiture is not just a celebration of a presidency — it is a celebration of a community. I hope you will join me, not only in attendance, but in spirit, as we begin this chapter together. What we build now will echo far beyond our time here. Let's make it count.

With pride, hope, and gratitude for the journey ahead,

*Berenecea Johnson Eanes, Ph.D.*  
*California State University, Los Angeles*



## WELCOME TO A NEW BEGINNING!

California State University, Los Angeles marks a historic occasion during the annual University Convocation: The Investiture of Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes as the University's ninth president and the first woman to serve in this distinguished role.

This year's Convocation and Investiture will also serve as the official launch of the new academic year. Building from the president's theme of *We Are LA: Empowering Dreams, Transforming Lives*, the program will honor outstanding students, faculty, and staff, alongside our close and enduring relationship with our many communities.

## WHAT IS UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION?

University Convocation is a tradition at Cal State LA, began in 2013, that serves to launch a new academic year. Universities have held convocations since the Middle Ages in order to welcome students into the community of scholars who will teach them. Literally meaning "*calling together*," Convocation assembles the entire University community.

## WHAT IS A PRESIDENTIAL INVESTITURE?

Investiture sits alongside Commencement and Convocation in marking the rituals of beginnings, endings, and transitions in higher education. The ceremonial component is the bestowing of the authority, responsibility, and symbols of the presidency. As we embark on this next chapter for Cal State LA, it is an opportunity to find ways in which a change in direction and leadership empowers us all.



# ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1947, California State University, Los Angeles is dedicated to empowering dreams and transforming lives through celebrated academic programs in the College of Arts and Letters, College of Business and Economics, College of Education, College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology, College of Ethnic Studies, Rongxiang Xu College of Health and Human Services, and College of Natural and Social Sciences.

As the premier comprehensive public university in the heart of Los Angeles, Cal State LA stands at the pinnacle of upward mobility—ranked No. 1 in the state and nation. Our faculty and staff proudly serve more than 22,000 remarkably diverse students and more than 270,000 alumni who reflect the present and future of Los Angeles and our global communities. In who we are and whom we serve: We are LA!

# UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

1 <sup>ST</sup> 1947-49: P. VICTOR PETERSON	4 <sup>TH</sup> 1963-66: FRANKLYN ARTHUR JOHNSON	7 <sup>TH</sup> 2013-2023: WILLIAM A. COVINO
2 <sup>ND</sup> 1949-62: HOWARD S. McDONALD	5 <sup>TH</sup> 1966-79: JOHN E. GREENLEE	8 <sup>TH</sup> 2023-2024: LEROY M. MORISHITA
3 <sup>RD</sup> 1962-63: ALBERT D. GRAVES	6 <sup>TH</sup> 1979-2013: JAMES M. ROSSER	9 <sup>TH</sup> 2024-PRESENT: BERENECEA JOHNSON EANES



## THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALLION

The President's Medallion symbolizes the responsibility of the Office of the President and the obligation to promote and maintain the values represented by the institution. In 2025, a newly designed medallion will be bestowed on Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes to commemorate a new chapter at Cal State LA. The medallion, forged in antique gold with black enamel, reflects the University colors and replicates the University Seal. The president's name is engraved on a single banner linking the two sides of the chain. The chain includes pearls that symbolize health, wisdom, and grace.



## UNIVERSITY SEAL

The University Seal has as its motif the outline of California, with a sunburst indicating the location of the University within the City of Los Angeles. The open book symbolizes the educational mission of the University, with the numerals indicating the date of its founding. The original design for the seal was created by John R. Siebon. It was accepted by the Associated Students, Inc. as its official emblem in November 1949 and was adopted officially by President Howard S. McDonald and the Executive Council in April 1953. The University Seal is reserved for legal, formal, and ceremonial purposes, materials related to Commencement, diplomas, official transcripts, formal events, documents, and items from the President's Office.



## THE UNIVERSITY MACE

The University Mace is a ceremonial symbol of authority carried in academic processions. The honor of serving as Bearer of the Mace of California State University, Los Angeles, is accorded to the chair of the Academic Senate, the governing body of the faculty.

The current Mace was first presented on May 9, 2014. Reflecting the University colors, the Mace bears four gold-plated bronze University Seals with black enamel on a dark walnut headpiece. The crowning ornament depicts a gold-plated bird of paradise — the official flower of the City of Los Angeles — which symbolizes Cal State LA's dedication to "engagement, service, and the public good." The buds represent the letters, arts, and sciences. This decorative element was part of the previous Mace designed by the late Hudson Roysher, emeritus professor of art at Cal State LA.

# UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION AND INVESTITURE CEREMONY

<b>PROCESSIONAL .....</b>	<b>POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE MARCH, OP. 39</b> No. 4 in G Major, <i>Composed by Edward Elgar</i>
<b>PRESENTATION OF COLORS .....</b>	<b>CAL STATE LA/UCLA ARMY ROTC</b> Color Guard Team
<b>NATIONAL ANTHEM .....</b>	<b>PERFORMED BY BELEN DE LEON</b> NBC4 and Telemundo 52
<b>LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>CAROLYN DUNN</b> Faculty, Theatre and Dance
<b>LIBATION CEREMONY .....</b>	<b>GWENDOLYN ALEXIS</b> Friend of Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes
<b>WELCOME .....</b>	<b>JESSICA DESHAZO</b> Chair, Academic Senate Faculty, Political Science
<b>GREETINGS FROM THE PROVOST .....</b>	<b>HEATHER LATTIMER</b> Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
<b>OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR AWARDS PRESENTATION .....</b>	<b>ANUREET KAUR</b> Chair, Outstanding Professor Awards Committee Faculty, Nutrition and Food Science
<b>50 YEARS OF SERVICE PRESENTATION TO HIRAM CHANNELL .....</b>	<b>KENNETH CASTILLO</b> Staff Senator, Academic Senate
<b>STUDENT GREETING .....</b>	<b>ARWA MOHAMED HAMMAD</b> President, Associated Students, Incorporated
<b>WE ARE LA: EMPOWERING DREAMS, TRANSFORMING LIVES SPOKEN WORD .....</b>	<b>BRANDON BAKER</b> Cal State LA Student, Prison Graduation Initiative
<b>MISTRESS OF CEREMONY GREETING .....</b>	<b>BELEN DE LEON</b> Morning News Meteorologist, NBC4 and Telemundo 52
<b>JOHNSON FAMILY POEM .....</b>	<b>FAMILY MEMBER OF</b> Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes
<b>COMMUNITY CULTURAL PERFORMANCE .....</b>	<b>MARIACHI LAS MARIPOSAS</b> Garfield High School
<b>ALUMNI GREETING .....</b>	<b>LARRY ADAMSON</b> CSU Board of Trustees Member, Cal State LA Alumnus
<b>CSU BOARD OF TRUSTEE REMARKS .....</b>	<b>JACK B. CLARKE, JR.</b> Chair, CSU Board of Trustees

MUSICAL INTERLUDE .....	JILLIAN ARDELIA HARRISON-JONES Musical Director, Witherspoon Presbyterian Church MICHAEL MAXWELL, Piano Accompanist
CHANCELLOR REMARKS AND PRESENTATION OF MEDALLION .....	MILDRED GARCÍA Chancellor of California State University
INVESTITURE ADDRESS .....	BERENECEA JOHNSON EANES, PH.D. 9th President of Cal State LA
BLESSING .....	DR. WINTERBOURNE HARRISON-JONES Senior Pastor, Witherspoon Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis
UNIVERSITY HYMN .....	LENA MARANDI Cal State LA Alumna MITSUKO MORIKAWA, Piano Accompanist
CLOSING REMARKS .....	BELEN DE LEON Morning News Meteorologist, NBC4 and Telemundo 52
RECESSIONAL .....	SECOND LINE JAZZ BAND Conducted by JAMES FORD III

# UNIVERSITY HYMN

*All hail to thee, our alma mater dear!  
We sing with faith and pride thy praises far and near.  
We dedicate our lives to truth and peace and right,  
To give the world the torch of freedom's light.  
Hail, All Hail!*

– Marian Crowell Bessette, '49

## ABOUT OUR EMCEE



Belen De Leon is the weekday morning meteorologist for NBC4’s Today in LA. A member of Southern California’s Most Accurate Weather Team, she brings over 15 years of broadcast experience. She began her career in South Texas, reporting in English and Spanish, and later joined KUSA-TV in Denver. De Leon holds a Meteorology Certification from Mississippi State University and a Seal of Approval from the National Weather Association. A former Latin Billboard Award-winning singer, she now enjoys family life in Los Angeles with her husband and three children.



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