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College of the Desert Invites Class of 2026 to Celebrate at GradFest

PALM DESERT, Calif. – Excitement is building across the College of the Desert (COD) campus as the Class of 2026 prepares to cross the finish line. Ahead of the big day, the college is inviting graduating students to attend GradFest on Thursday, April 23, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Palm Desert Campus Gymnasium.

GradFest 2026 offers graduates more than just registration for commencement. The event will be graduating students' convenient "one-stop shop" for all commencement requirements. Students who have been cleared for graduation can use this event to:

- Register for commencement
- Pick up their commencement tickets for family and friends
- Submit the pronunciation of their name for the commencement ceremony
- Pick up regalia
- Take professional graduation photos

Additionally, there will be a photo booth with a professional photographer taking graduation photos, a cap decorating station, and representatives from local four-year colleges and universities. Light refreshments will be available for all participants.

"GradFest gives our students the chance to slow down for a moment and recognize the tremendous amount of work they have put into achieving their goals," stated Dr. Maria Ayon, Dean of Enrollment Services. "We are so proud of the Class of 2026 and look forward to celebrating everything they have achieved."

The COD Commencement Ceremony for the Class of 2026 will take place on May 18, 2026, at Acrisure Arena. Details regarding the specifics of the ceremony will be provided to the graduating class in advance of the commencement ceremony.

Students who have questions about graduation requirements, commencement participation, or academic planning can reach out to Admissions and Records and/or check back at <https://www.collegeofthedesert.edu/commencement/default.php> for additional information.

About College of the Desert

College of the Desert serves more than 20,000 students across five campuses in Palm Desert, Indio, Mecca/Thermal, Desert Hot Springs, and Palm Springs. Founded in 1958 and opened in 1962, College of the Desert is governed by the Desert Community College District Board of Trustees. Through the pLEDGE program, the college offers eligible students two years of tuition-free education, removing financial barriers and expanding access to higher education in the community. College of the Desert provides the Coachella Valley with affordable degrees, certificates, and transfer pathways, offering in-demand programs that prepare workforce leaders and strengthen the local economy.