

# Campus Times

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## COMMENCEMENT 2026



INSIDE  
THIS CT

COMMENCEMENT  
SCHEDULE  
PAGE 2

THANK YOU CT  
SENIORS  
PAGE 3

BECOMING SENIOR  
WEEK  
PAGE 4 CAMPUS

COMMENCEMENT  
SPEAKER  
PAGE 5 CAMPUS

# COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES

**UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**  
FRIDAY, MAY 15, 8:45 A.M.  
FAUVER STADIUM AT THE BRIAN F. PRINCE ATHLETIC COMPLEX

**EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
FRIDAY, MAY 15, 6:00 P.M.  
KODAK HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY GRADUATION CEREMONY: MASTER'S AND ADVANCED CERTIFICATE**  
SATURDAY, MAY 16, 4:00 P.M.  
KILBOURN HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**DOCTORAL GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2:00 P.M.  
KODAK HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY (MD) GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
SATURDAY, MAY 16, 12:00 P.M.  
KODAK HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**SIMON BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY (ALL DEGREES)**  
SUNDAY, MAY 17, 10:00 A.M.  
KODAK HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**SCHOOL OF NURSING GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
SATURDAY, MAY 16, 9:00 A.M.  
KODAK HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**WARNER SCHOOL OF EDUCATION GRADUATION CEREMONY**  
SATURDAY, MAY 16, 3:00 P.M.  
KODAK HALL, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

# COLLEGE DIPLOMA CEREMONIES

## SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES

| DEPARTMENT                                    | LOCATION                                            | TIME (SATURDAY, MAY 16) |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| American Sign Language                        | Richard Feldman Ballroom (C,D), Douglass Commons    | 10:00 a.m.              |
| Anthropology                                  | Wegmans Hall, Room 1400                             | 11:00 a.m.              |
| Art and Art History                           | Memorial Art Gallery                                | 12:00 p.m.              |
| Biology                                       | Larry and Cindy Bloch Alumni and Advancement Center | 1:30 p.m.               |
| Biology: Biochemistry Program                 | Class of '62 Auditorium, Kornberg Research Building | 10:00 a.m.              |
| Biology: Microbiology Program                 | Class of '62 Auditorium, Kornberg Research Building | 1:00 p.m.               |
| Biology: Neuroscience Program                 | Sanctuary, Interfaith Chapel                        | 9:00 a.m.               |
| Black Studies — Frederick Douglass Institute  | Hawkins-Carlson Room, Rush Rhees Library            | 11:00 a.m.              |
| Brain and Cognitive Sciences                  | Sanctuary, Interfaith Chapel                        | 11:00 a.m.              |
| Business                                      | Larry and Cindy Bloch Alumni and Advancement Center | 9:00 a.m.               |
| Chemistry                                     | Richard Feldman Ballroom (A,B), Douglass Commons    | 11:00 a.m.              |
| Dance and Movement                            | Sloan Performing Arts Center                        | 11:00 a.m.              |
| Data Science                                  | Hubbell Auditorium, Hutchison Hall                  | 12:00 p.m.              |
| Digital Media Studies                         | Richard Feldman Ballroom (A,B), Douglass Commons    | 9:00 a.m.               |
| Earth and Environmental Sciences              | Hoyt Auditorium, Hoyt Hall                          | 10:00 a.m.              |
| Economics                                     | Strong Auditorium                                   | 1:00 p.m.               |
| English                                       | Richard Feldman Ballroom (C,D), Douglass Commons    | 2:00 p.m.               |
| Film and Media Studies                        | Hawkins-Carlson Room, Rush Rhees Library            | 9:00 a.m.               |
| Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies        | Sloan Performing Arts Center                        | 1:00 p.m.               |
| History                                       | Richard Feldman Ballroom (A,B), Douglass Commons    | 3:00 p.m.               |
| Linguistics                                   | Hoyt Auditorium, Hoyt Hall                          | 12:00 p.m.              |
| Mathematics and Statistics                    | Larry and Cindy Bloch Alumni and Advancement Center | 11:15 a.m.              |
| Modern Languages and Cultures                 | Richard Feldman Ballroom (A,B), Douglass Commons    | 1:00 p.m.               |
| Multidisciplinary Studies                     | Hawkins-Carlson Room, Rush Rhees Library            | 3:00 p.m.               |
| Music                                         | Sloan Performing Arts Center                        | 9:00 a.m.               |
| Philosophy                                    | Sloan Performing Arts Center                        | 3:00 p.m.               |
| Physics and Astronomy                         | Hoyt Auditorium, Hoyt Hall                          | 2:00 p.m.               |
| Political Science and International Relations | Strong Auditorium                                   | 11:00 a.m.              |
| Psychology                                    | Strong Auditorium                                   | 3:00 p.m.               |
| Public Health-Related Programs                | Strong Auditorium                                   | 9:00 a.m.               |
| Religion and Classics                         | Wegmans Hall, Room 1400                             | 1:00 p.m.               |

## HAJIM SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING & APPLIED SCIENCES

| DEPARTMENT                                                        | LOCATION                                            | TIME (SATURDAY, MAY 16) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Biomedical Engineering                                            | Sanctuary, Interfaith Chapel                        | 1:00 p.m.               |
| Chemical and Sustainability Engineering                           | Richard Feldman Ballroom (C,D), Douglass Commons    | 12:00 p.m.              |
| Computer Science                                                  | Larry and Cindy Bloch Alumni and Advancement Center | 3:45 p.m.               |
| Electrical and Computer Engineering & Audio and Music Engineering | Hubbell Auditorium, Hutchison Hall                  | 2:00 p.m.               |
| Mechanical Engineering                                            | Hubbell Auditorium, Hutchison Hall                  | 10:00 a.m.              |
| Multidisciplinary Studies                                         | Hawkins-Carlson Room, Rush Rhees Library            | 1:00 p.m.               |
| Optics and Optical Engineering                                    | Sanctuary, Interfaith Chapel                        | 3:00 p.m.               |
| Data Science                                                      | Hubbell Auditorium, Hutchison Hall                  | 12:00 p.m.              |
| Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC)                     | Dryden Theater, George Eastman House                | 4:00 p.m.               |

Front Page Photo Taken By  
News Editor Teddy Almond

Image Description:  
Aya Nakamure, a student in the Simon Business School, celebrates on Eastman Quad prior to her graduation.

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# Congratulations, CT Seniors! You Did It!

|                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>FRANKIE BRERETON</b><br>OPINIONS EDITOR                             | Who could have seen Opinions Editor Frankie Brereton coming? Traveling to URochester from England as an exchange student for the 2025-26 school year, Frankie immediately became an essential part of this publication — we don’t know what we would have done without him. From making sure the Spotify queue was never empty on our production days, to trying (and failing) to slip his Britishisms past our editors, Frankie made production fun. “Whilst” we’ll miss him a lot, we wish him the best as he finishes his degree in Southampton!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>AUDREY BROSSETTE</b><br>COPY CHIEF                                  | Her senior fall, Audrey Brossette served as an excellent copy chief, editing articles diligently and cultivating a welcoming atmosphere in the office. She always had an answer for any question — even the most nitpicky, inconsequential, “just out of curiosity” ones. She trained copy staff and her successor well, and was just lovely to work with and hang out with in the office. All the best to Audrey.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>HELENA FENG</b><br>OPINIONS EDITOR<br>MANAGING EDITOR               | Starting out as Opinions Editor her sophomore year, and then moving up to become an exceptional Managing Editor, Helena Feng has been a devoted part of the <i>CT</i> through all her time with us. Her composure and precision speak to her work ethic. She was also reliable, thoughtful, and ensured every writer succeeded in every stage of their writing process. Working with Helena was a treat and we will miss spotting her studying at Starbucks! Congratulations to Helena on graduating from your friends at <i>CT</i> , we know she will excel whatever she pursues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>KATIE JARVIS</b><br>COPY CHIEF                                      | Katie Jarvis knows everything. Beginning as Copy Chief her senior spring and serving a full term through her Take 5 fall, Katie was more a Copy king than any sort of editor. She joked about it, but we fully believe she slept with that AP stylebook under her pillow to learn by osmosis. She trained an army of copy staff, and would stay late every print production to answer any last-minute queries. Katie has left a mark on our organization, and it’s not just from how amazing the replacement she found is, or how many corrections she saved us from having to print, or the articles that she’s been writing and copyediting since 2021, but in the fact that her rabbit has since become our mascot/overlord. We miss you already Katie (somehow more than we miss Daisy) and we hope to keep seeing you around Rochester! |
| <b>MARY JERRED</b><br>ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR                             | From drawing breathtaking watercolor illustrations to the most fascinating sketches, Mary Jerred never failed to bring her best to the office every week. She started in her sophomore spring as a contributing illustrator, but quickly took on the role of Illustrations Editor the following semester, often having to draw over ten illustrations in one day. Mary not only thrived in the office, she excelled academically and will be attending Wayne State University for her Ph.D. in Biology. Congratulations Mary, we are excited to see what you will do next!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>COLIN JONES</b><br>CULTURE EDITOR                                   | Coming into the <i>CT</i> in the Fall of 2023 as a staff writer for Culture, Colin Jones already had a strong reputation around the office when he became a Culture Editor the next spring. Colin not only brought flowing commentary on music of all shades, but also branched into humor in print and in the office too. Congratulations to Colin on continuing his education by pursuing a master’s degree here at URochester to pursue his love of writing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>EVA NAIK</b><br>OPINIONS EDITOR                                     | One of the first people you would look for in the office, Eva Naik has been a welcoming and hilarious presence in the <i>CT</i> for as long as she has been a part of it. We still don’t know how she managed to thoroughly edit the plethora of Opinions articles every week while still effectively supporting every writer to pass through her section. If you want to hear enticing stories of <i>CT</i> war, victory and conquest, Eva would be the person to go to. Along with Opinions Editor, she was also President of Writing Fellows and a Studio Arts major. Yes, not only can the girl write and advise, she can paint! We will miss our multitalented queen when she graduates on Saturday!                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>NATALIE OPDAHL</b><br>NEWS EDITOR<br>EDITOR-IN-CHIEF                | Serving as our Editor-in-Chief in Fall 2025, Natalie Opdahl contributed more than we can say to making each issue of the <i>CT</i> a reality. From her support of writers in her role as News Editor, to the advice she has given all of us as Senior Staff, we wouldn’t have known what to do without her leadership. We’re going to miss her music taste, always-well-written articles, and extraordinarily effective editing style very much.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>SHERENE YANG</b><br>OPINIONS EDITOR<br>MANAGING EDITOR<br>PUBLISHER | Whether it be as Opinions Editor, Managing Editor, <i>CT</i> Publisher, or by helping our Presentations Chief Lauren Bigley during hectic print weeks, Sherene Yang has worked behind the scenes of many of the <i>CT</i> ’s successes over the last few years. Even in her senior spring, Sherene has always been just a text away, ready and willing to help us with anything. Her commitment to the <i>CT</i> is admirable: We could not have come to where we are without her. We wish her the best of luck on her future endeavors!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>TO OUR GRADUATING<br/>STAFF WRITERS AND<br/>ILLUSTRATORS</b>        | Caden Dillon, Hudson Ginocchio, Riley Howe, and Joshua Schiavi, thank you so much for everything you have done! From comics, to illustrations, to articles, we really appreciate the time you have chosen to spend with us here at the <i>CT</i> and wish you the best of luck!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

Thank you to all the graduating staff members and contributors that worked with the *CT* during their time at URochester. We wish you the best of luck as you continue forward with your journey!

# CAMPUS

## Becoming Senior Week: A Century of Graduation Traditions at URochester

BY HANNAH SMITH  
FEATURES EDITOR

URochester's annual Senior Week always features a full lineup of celebrations for the graduates leading up to Commencement. The Class of 2026 will have the chance to travel to local favorites — including the Rochester Lilac Festival, the Memorial Art Gallery, Deer Run Winery, and a Rochester Red Wings game — and enjoy on-campus events such as the Picnic with the President, Trivia Night, Rush Rhees Library Tower Tours, the New Alumni Welcome on Wilson Quad, and more. The contemporary week-long fun is deeply embedded in the history of URochester culture, even though Senior Week and Commencement traditions have changed dramatically over time.

To check out some of those changes, I visited the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections in Rush Rhees Library to speak with Melissa Mead, the John M. and Barbara Keil University Archivist and Rochester Collections Librarian, about how Senior and Commencement Week traditions have evolved since the University's 1850 charter. Together, we explored archival programs, photographs, letters, and other University ephemera that trace the history of URochester's graduation rituals, revealing how the University's identity has shifted in the last century.

Special Collections has preserved Commencement programs and week-of schedules dating back to 1860, offering a clear record of how URochester's graduation culture has evolved. Long before today's Senior Week of winery trips, tower tours, and citywide outings, celebrations were far more formal, condensed, and institutionally focused. Programs from the 1920s depict carefully structured weekends of ceremonies, alumni reunions, religious observances, concerts, receptions, athletic events, and other class rituals, framing Commencement as both an academic milestone and a major social occasion for the University community.

A 1924 Commencement program, for example, outlined events running from Thursday, June 12 through Monday, June 16. Festivities included an Eastman School of Music concert in Kilbourn Hall, fraternity baseball games, class reunions, baccalaureate services held by then-University President Benjamin Rush Rhees, and

Commencement exercises held at the Eastman Theatre. Alumni receptions and dinners at the Memorial Art Gallery further emphasized the central role alumni culture played in URochester's early Commencement traditions.

These early celebrations also reflected a university in transition. During the 1920s, the developing River Campus was commonly referred to as "Oak Hill," named after the former Oak Hill Country Club property that the University purchased in 1922 as it prepared to relocate the College for Men from Prince Street. Archival Alumni Day materials from this period portray Commencement Weekend not only as a graduation ceremony, but as a broader institutional celebration tied to the University's evolving campus identity, alumni culture, and expansion into what would eventually become today's River Campus.

***'In this way, Senior Week has become both a capstone and a cultural snapshot.'***

Archival records from early commencement weekends reveal the evolving culture and identity of URochester, while also highlighting the divisions that marked student life in the early twentieth century. Gender played a role in shaping graduation traditions, as the University's historical separation of male and female students often influenced Commencement rituals and social celebrations, especially during the early to mid-twentieth century.

URochester officially admitted its first class of women — which included 33 students — in 1900, a milestone achieved in large part through the efforts of Susan B. Anthony and other advocates for women's higher education. Yet even after coeducation formally began, many commencement traditions continued to distinguish between male and female students through separate programming, organizations, and social customs.

Programs from the 1920s and 1950s depict a graduation culture heavily shaped by fraternity and sorority life, alumni and alumnae associations, and the University's division between the College for Men and the College for Women. The 1925 Commencement Weekend program, for example, included separate Alumni and Alumnae Commencement Dinners held on Monday following the Commencement Ceremo-

ny. Other events throughout the period included fraternity baseball games, sorority reunions, and alumni programming. By 1950, Commencement schedules also featured formally titled joint events such as the "Alumni-Alumnae Commencement Dance" and "Alumni-Alumnae Centennial Dinner," reflecting both greater integration within Commencement celebrations and the continued institutional distinction between male and female student communities.

That same year, the University commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of women's admission with a "50th Anniversary Luncheon for College for Women," further underscoring how gender continued to shape graduation culture well into the mid-twentieth century. As University culture evolved, these mid-twentieth-century traditions began to mirror broader changes unfolding across American higher education, as institutions gradually moved away from rigidly gendered student structures toward a more integrated campus life.

By the latter half of the twentieth century, shifts in campus culture were also reflected in a more standardized Commencement structure. The 1976 program — running from Friday, May 7 through Sunday, May 9 — followed the now-familiar rhythm of Class Day, rehearsal, and the Sunday ceremony, with diploma and departmental events afterward. Nearly three decades later, a 2005 *Campus Times* Commencement issue showed a similar three-day format, but with the weekend beginning to incorporate activities that resemble today's Senior Week. These included Rush Rhees Tower Tours, a trip to the Lilac Festival, an international student reception, and even a "senior gift fund" initiative that echoes the modern Senior Donor Celebration. These additions marked a shift toward a more expansive, experience-focused lead-up to Commencement, setting the stage for the fully-branded Senior Week.

In the years that followed, these early additions gradually unified the more expansive celebration students now recognize as "Senior Week." The structure of Commencement itself had long been compact — 1976 programs, for example, showed the main ceremony and all departmental diploma ceremonies occurring on the same day — so the shift toward a longer, more varied lead-up emerged not



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URochester graduates applaud during the 1982 Commencement ceremony.

from changes to Commencement but from the growing desire to create shared senior experiences. This evolution became even more visible during the COVID-19 era, when what grew to a traditional seven-to-eight-day Senior Week was shortened, prompting the Class of 2022 Council to adopt a model of "intentional programming." They curated high-demand events such as canoeing and kayaking, Day at the Vineyard, Library Tower Tours, and trips to the Seneca Park Zoo to ensure the week still felt meaningful and communal. URochester's Commencement Weekend, which began as a single-day ceremony and expanded into a multi-day celebration well before 2020, thus continued to evolve into the student-driven Senior Week known today, with the Class of 2022 marking a clear turning point into its modern form.

As Senior Week has settled into a more intentional, student-centered format, each graduating class has continued to shape the tradition in its own way. Now that the Class of 2026 has reached its final spring on campus, this week has become a fully-developed, multi-day celebration — one that has blended long-standing favorites with newer traditions that reflect the character and priorities of this year's class.

***'As Senior Week has settled into a more intentional, student-centered format, each graduating class has continued to shape the tradition in its own way.'***

The 2026 program offers a full week of events that blend Rochester-specific outings, campus gatherings, and milestone celebrations marking the transition from student to alum. Alongside longstanding

favorites like the Lilac Festival trip and Tower Tours, the schedule features more recent additions such as the Clubhouse Fun Center, Paintball, Radio Social, and Beerfest. Together, these activities show how Senior Week has become both a capstone experience and a reflection of the University's evolving student culture.

***'Senior Week has become ... a reflection of the University's evolving student culture.'***

Across more than a century of Commencement Week traditions, URochester's celebrations have steadily evolved from a single ceremony-centered day to a weekend, and eventually to a weeklong series of experiences that reflect the changing character of student life. What began as a tightly structured academic ritual gradually opened into a broader celebration of community, place, and transition — first through scattered additions like Class Day and festival outings, and later through the more intentional, student-driven programming that defines Senior Week today.

The Class of 2026 schedule makes this evolution unmistakably clear. Its blend of long-standing traditions with newer, more recreational offerings reveals a senior experience shaped as much by shared joy and local exploration as by formal milestones. In this way, Senior Week has become both a capstone and a cultural snapshot: a reflection of how Rochester students build community, honor their time on campus, and mark the threshold between undergraduate life and the life beyond.

*Smith is a member of the Class of 2027.*

# Your Path Will Find You: Advice from Commencement Speaker Jeannine Shao Collins

BY MAYA BROSNICK  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In anticipation of 2026’s graduation ceremony, the *Campus Times* conducted an interview with upcoming Commencement speaker Jeannine Shao Collins ’86. Collins, who earned a bachelor’s degree in economics from URochester, currently works as the Chief Client Officer at Kargo, a multiplatform advertising and media company. She also founded Girl Starter, a reality TV show designed to help young women launch their own businesses. Commencement will take place May 15 at 8:45 a.m.

**What was your favorite part at URochester?**

Well, here’s what I’ll tell you, you know, I started out ... trying to become a biomedical engineer and that was totally the wrong path for me. But the path to learning what I should do was very important and pivotal to my life. But at the time it was a little painful because I had to figure out what I wanted

to do versus what I thought I should do based on other people’s opinions.

So that’s a big theme of what I’m going to be talking about during Commencement. And my favorite times [at URochester], I mean, I think the most important things were twofold. [Firstly], I made amazing friendships and friendships that are lifelong friends who I still talk to all the time — so that’s obviously really important. But secondly, what I did outside of the classroom with Jodi Asbury, [former URochester] Dean of Students, running student and parent orientation and interviewing students with admissions and all that type of work really prepared me for what I do professionally today. So I would say that’s pretty integral and was a lot of fun [as well].

**If you were told what you would be doing now, would you have seen it coming?**

No, no, I had no idea that what I do even existed, and nobody in my family did

[either]. I mean, if you were to say ... I was going to be in media, advertising, marketing, I [would have] had no idea. Zero.

**But you’re happy with it?**

Oh, I love it. I mean, I’ve had an incredible life, incredible career ... [I’m] so happy with how my life has ended up ... This is also a message that I’m talking about during Commencement — that I really feel like your journey and your life kind of find you, and people shouldn’t be so stressed out about figuring out their path.

It all kind of falls into place. I’m a true believer in that.

**If you could go back and change something about your time at URochester, what would it be?**

I would probably, looking back, I would tell myself that very thing. Like, “don’t worry so much about having a path, making a plan or whatnot.” Not to say that planning is bad. I don’t think planning is bad, but I would tell myself not to worry. It’s all going to

work out.

**Easier said than done.**

Yeah, I know. But when you’re in it, even the things that you think are terrible end up being important lessons that make you pivot and ... I do really believe that rejection is redirection.

Because I didn’t end up doing what I initially set out to do, I moved to New York. I ... got into advertising, marketing and media and all those decisions led to other decisions that were important. But if I hadn’t gone through the disappointment of not doing what I initially set out to do, it wouldn’t have led me to where I am today.

**What made you want to speak at Commencement?**

Well, they asked me, which was great and it’s a huge honor and I feel very fortunate about that. I think what brought me back to the University after graduation was [that] I started a company called Girl Starter, which was a television show program and a digital platform

to help female entrepreneurs.

I got involved with the AIN Center, which is the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and that brought me back to work with the University in that capacity because of my entrepreneurial endeavors. And one thing I’d say, [is] that if I [went] back and that center was available, I would definitely get involved with that because that was not a resource that was available in 1986.

**What would you want students and families to know about you before you get on stage?**

That I’ve had an incredibly satisfying personal and professional life in part because of the growth that I had at Rochester. The education and the place was more than well worth it. ... I feel like Rochester really set me on a path that I never could have anticipated. I feel [like] I’m not done yet.

*Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.*

## Graduated Early, but Not Gone Yet: What Life Looks Like for Rochester’s Early Graduates

BY SHLOKA KARI  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Graduation is a time all students anticipate — whether it be with joy or dread — because it signifies the beginning of their “real” adult lives. However, for some students, though they may be walking this May, they have technically been graduates for months — as of December. These early graduates got a unique “in-between period” of six extra months with their families before grad school, or even used the opportunity to start working full-time ahead of the game.

For graduated senior Helen Jackson, who hadn’t been able to go home for breaks

for the past two years, these last few months have been a much-needed break.

“I’m moving halfway across the country in July for my PhD program, so I probably won’t be able to come home very often after this,” she said.

Jackson’s decision to graduate early only materialized in her junior year after weighing academic and financial factors.

“I was on the fence about maybe getting another minor, but the main reason [I chose to finish in the fall] was honestly money. An extra semester is expensive, so if you can graduate early and finish everything, why not?” she said.

Ajay Macherla, another

early graduate, also found that leaving campus early provided him with a rewarding experience before starting medical school in the fall. Back home, he has been able to structure his schedule around both professional and personal interests: Macherla has been working at a dermatology clinic and conducting research, as well as regularly going to the gym and playing video games.

“I’ve been able to branch out and take advantage of opportunities near me that I probably wouldn’t have had otherwise,” Macherla said.

Though Macherla said graduating early required a lot of planning and strategic scheduling, it has resulted in

a “much more chill lifestyle overall.”

Similarly, Danielle Colelli used her extra semester to step directly into the professional world. Colelli has been working remotely for a nonprofit focused on legal education and policy advocacy. She has also used the time to travel, visiting Europe twice this semester alone.

Though graduating early has opened new doors for Colelli, there were some drawbacks to leaving campus earlier than her peers.

“Sometimes I’ll see things happening on campus — like recruitment events or other activities — and wish I could join, but I’m working instead,” she said.

Colelli also described how her graduation in December felt “uneventful.”

“You don’t really get the celebrations right away,” she said, “but coming back in May for all the senior activities — photo shoots, graduation events, senior week — makes it feel much more exciting.”

While these students technically graduated months ago, all three are coming back to Rochester for Commencement Weekend, giving them a chance to reunite with friends and celebrate alongside the rest of their class.

*Kari is a member of the Class of 2029.*

## SADACA Hosts Annual Dinner for Peace

BY SUBAAB SYED  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Student Association for the Development of Arab Cultural Awareness (SADACA) hosted their annual Dinner for Peace April 19. Unlike the last two years, where they focused on one specific country as the theme of the dinner, this year the dinner was meant to represent all the countries in the Middle East and North Africa and the struggles they are going through, from the conflict between Iran and the U.S., to the ongoing war in Gaza. President and senior Mennatallah “Mennah” Mohamed shared that this

dinner was a “time to highlight how Arab culture is so interconnected.” QR codes for donations were shared during the meal, with the money going towards the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and the New York Immigration Coalition.

The event was hosted in Feldman Ballroom, with a coffee cart by Alunn Coffee House serving Adeni tea and fruity refreshers attracting a crowd of people to one corner of the room. Dinner included an appetizer course of fattoush salad, baba ganoush, hummus, and cheese and spinach pastries, followed by the main course which

was braised lamb and rice as well as chickpea fatteh, and kunafeh as dessert.

On the other side of the ballroom was an extravagant exhibition curated by Ebtisam “Ebby” El-Sharkawy, a Palestinian-American artist. Her gallery, “Reclaiming Our Inheritance,” was a collection of traditional Palestinian thobes, books, jewelry, and photos, many of which she thrifted. The gallery served to connect her to her Palestinian roots and her family in Gaza.

Music was a recurring theme across the dinner, with an oud solo by visiting instrumentalist Nikolai Ruskin, who played in the past two

years for SADACA, followed by a music ensemble with a clarinet, violin and cello. The two first-year representatives of the eboard, Yasmin Soufan and Katherine Fahoury, also performed a beautiful vocal rendition of a Moroccan song.

The last performance featured the Sumud dabke team, which elevated the energy of the ballroom and culminated in a dance circle filling the room, something that has become tradition for the annual dinner.

In her speech to the audience, Senior Advisor of SADACA Sarah Aljitawi shared reflections and advice for fellow students

and community members. “Cultural pride is not just about [food and music],” she said, “It’s about resilience through the community.” She continued, commenting that from college, we “do not get just degrees but tools for change, to create an equitable world ... The challenges we face are global, and so are our communities.” What can we do to create that world? According to Aljitawi what we must do is show up, educate, and express solidarity.

*Syed is a member of the Class of 2027.*

OPINIONS

State of the Campus Times

BY ELENA BACHMANN  
PUBLISHER

As per tradition, “The State of the *Campus Times*” updates readers on our affairs — the Editor-in-Chief (EIC) and Publisher write this pseudo-column at the start and end of every semester to articulate the struggles and joys found through managing your local student-run newspaper. We also introduce ourselves and our projects, what we hope to achieve during our terms, and we provide progress updates regarding past management’s pursuits.

My name is Elena Bachmann, and I am a rising senior studying economics and German. I have been involved with the *Campus Times* since my freshman fall. My friends and I began as copy editors, and I had dreams of becoming a puzzler (I’ve worked on two crosswords since, not to brag) but the paper had different plans for us. In our second semester, your EIC Maya Brosnick and I were accepted into the fold as News Editors, but after a semester, I knew that the role of Business Manager would be a better fit for me. While Business Manager, I continued to write — for every section but sports — and I enjoy it, but nonetheless rather prefer the administrative side of the paper.

I am succeeding publishers who did amazing work, and I strive to expand upon their visions for the future of our organization. Serving as Business Manager under both Sherene Yang (Publisher ’25) and Micah Bettenhausen (Publisher ’24). I saw the impact the Publisher can have on the *CT*, and our campus community by extension ... and I wanted this role so badly.

When one thinks about *CT*’s impact on campus — our visibility — one might think of the physical paper we produce every two or three weeks, our newsstands, our corner in the Graphic Arts Suite next to the Pit, the blue baseball caps we wear, or maybe our website.

Having an online presence at [www.campustimes.org](http://www.campustimes.org) keeps us relevant and on our toes. We are continually improving and adding to our website, and it has paid off! More people have visited our website than ever before with 828,231 views this year, up from last year’s 684,558 views. We have also seen traffic from a wider variety of people, with 635,023 users over the last year, representing a 50.08% increase from 423,131 distinct users last year. In line with this,

we have run more online advertisements and tripled our online advertising capability — we can now run three ads at once!

But this does not mean we are neglecting the physical distribution of the paper. We distribute to 73 locations, have 50 newsstands, and plan to purchase three more in the fall. We also continue to mail issues to those who sign up (and are willing to donate to offset shipping costs) — and if you don’t want to pay, you can always view print PDFs on our website, where we have print archives going back to 2012.

Another way for alums to consume *CT* content is through our newsletter, *The Buzz*. After years in the works, this March we sent out our first issue of what we plan to be semesterly updates.

We love our readers, but even more so, we at the *CT* are always looking for new contributors. Diversity of opinion is important to us — we want to represent varying viewpoints and voices — and we appreciate that there is often more than one angle to a story. A newspaper needs more than just writers to run properly: We’re always looking for photographers, illustrators, and editors!

In the fall we will host an open house in order to draw potential staff, something suggested by Lou Hansen ’89, a *CT* alum who kindly led a workshop on investigative reporting in March.

But I think that part of recruitment is putting a spotlight on current elected individuals. That’s why we bought our elected staff (section editors, section chiefs, and management) navy shirts with our logo! So everyone can see them and recognize that they are affiliated with our organization. The press passes and caps weren’t enough.

Another part of recruitment is continuing to build and foster our community. From hosting social events to creating more fun merch (credits to Emily English, one of our managing editors, for the “news paper free” guy), we have done a lot of work this semester to make *CT* more welcoming and fun.

Though we always have further to go (we’re actively working on fixing problems with our website, including the broken search function), I’m proud of what we have accomplished this year, and am excited for what we have planned for next semester.

*Bachmann is a member of the Class of 2027.*

Campus Brat: On Graduation

BY KATIE JARVIS  
COLUMNIST

As graduation approaches, I’m forced to confront the fact that I am getting older. In particular, older than my dad’s students.

The first realization of my own age hit me in the months before I started college. I was helping my dad clean the small office he’d occupied in Rush Rhees longer than I’d been alive, the walls of which boasted childhood drawings that my sister and I had crayoned. Even though I was looking at my distant past, I realized I would soon be starting a new page of my future.

“Oh no. That’s weird,” I suddenly thought to myself. “I’m about to be the same age as my dad’s incoming first-years.”

The next time I really had to come to terms with my age was the summer I flew out to Bermuda to spend a couple of weeks on the Smith’s Island Archeology Project, my dad’s yearly field school. The dig didn’t leave much time for pondering. Many of my waking hours were spent digging out squares of sandy soil in the muggy July heat, and my evenings were spent socializing before turning in for the night in the bunkhouses that the project had rented from a

local summer camp.

I do, however, remember one moment to myself on one of the first nights I spent on the island. Walking back to base camp after reading on a nearby beach, I realized suddenly that, as a rising senior, I was older than most of the other students on the dig. This was especially odd for me as the last time I visited Bermuda, I couldn’t have been more than ten. Though I was ostensibly there to dig, I didn’t spend much time digging; in fact, I think my dad had to assign a student to take me down to the shores of the island to play because I was too distracting on-site. And although there were no young children on the island this time around, I realized that the student who watched me comb for sea glass was then probably younger than I am now.

As I prepare to graduate in less than a week, I’m coming to terms with the end of my brat-hood. As far as nepotism goes, I’d give it a solid four stars: Extra points for every time I crashed a history reception for free food, but I had to knock a star off for the reduced-fee piano lessons that faculty kids can take at Eastman. Turns out, those end up on your official transcript and, not to sound ungrateful, I don’t think jobs and grad

schools need to know I got a B+ in piano lessons in 2009.

But graduation also means hitting another one of those weird-feeling milestones. Due to the nature of taking a fifth year, I’ve already passed the point where I’m older than most of the undergrads on campus. I also recently had the uncomfortable realization that I’m now older than a few of the incoming history graduate students. I’m not entirely sure how to feel about that one.

Is there a greater message to this story? Probably not. I don’t think that “feeling a little bit weird” is a reason for faculty children and their parents to move away instead of choosing to stay at a familiar university. But I think it’s one of those little things you might not notice if you’re not a campus brat yourself. Those little observations are part of why I started this column in the first place. And I think there’s still a lot of those topics that I never got around to covering. I don’t know any other brats at *CT* at the moment, but perhaps this column will get picked up by someone else one day. I think I’d like that very much.

*Jarvis is a member of the Class of 2026 (T5).*

Campus Times

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It is our policy to correct all erroneous information as quickly as possible. If you believe you have a correction, please email [CT\\_editor@u.rochester.edu](mailto:CT_editor@u.rochester.edu).

Editor’s note: We misattributed the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown by officer Darren Wilson as occurring in Ferguson, Minnesota, rather than Ferguson, Missouri in the April 22 print.

# Congratulations

★ TO THE WINNERS OF THE ★  
2025 - 2026 University of Rochester  
★ *Rockys Student Life Awards*



**Olawumi Olaniyan**  
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**Emma VanLuven**  
Award for Athletic Leadership



**Danica Kim**  
Award for Campus Contributions (Juniors Only)



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**Fanta Sidime**  
Award for First-Year Leadership (First-Year Students Only)



**Khia Williams**  
Award for Outstanding Fraternity and Sorority Leadership



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**Alyssa Cisneros**  
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**Caroline 'Cat' Crawford**  
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**New Music Collective**  
Award for Excellence in Programming



**Makers**  
Outstanding Student Organization Award



# HUMOR

## Operation Hillside Forever

BY EVA NAIK  
SENIOR STAFF

BY MAYA BROSNICK  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Who am I without Hillside? This question has been plaguing my friend Eva for the last few weeks, as it became ever clearer that she was going to complete her senior thesis and graduate.

Walking out of Gleason on our way home from work over the last few weeks, I have caught her looking over yonder with a tear in her eye. As I followed her gaze past the glorious, gated Library Lot and the majestic silhouette of UHS, I realized that she was looking to the place where our dreams and hopes reside: Hillside.

*‘I realized that she was looking to the place where our dreams and hopes reside: Hillside.’*

While making our customary Friday stop, scrambling to buy as much elusive mango mochi as we could, I came to a jarring realization: What was Eva going to do once she lost access to Hillside? Eva is graduating, and I’m not — a world in which Eva and I don’t go to the Hillside after our shift or after a hangout is not one I could bear to imagine.

For the past few years, the pattern has been the same:

Need a meal? Hillside.  
Need a snack? Hillside.  
Want a sweet treat? Hillside.  
Need a sweet treat? Hillside.  
Sad? Happy? Angry? Frustrated? Tired? Hopeful? Excited? Bored? Busy? Hillside. Hillside. Hillside.



EVA NAIK / SENIOR STAFF

Hillside. Hillside. Hillside. Hillside. Hillside. Hillside.

I mean, Wednesday and Friday have always been Hillside days. But the occasional (I mean, recurring — who are we kidding here) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday trips sparked joy and light into the dull Rochester winter like a beacon of hope (anyone else see that hail May 5?).

Come next week, Eva will lose access to the source of our fix for good. Graduation means no more declining, which means the doors of Hillside will be closed to her forevermore (as she, like everyone, would rather trek out to Wegmans than spend real money at Hillside). I knew she was scared to have to be a slightly more fully func-

tioning adult, and to not be able to use fake-ish money to buy groceries at a price so inflated it’s guaranteed to send any visiting parent into a coma.

*“That’s going too far. Shouldn’t you ask her first?” It’s a good question, but no, obviously not.’*

I’ve noticed Eva has been sad and stressed out about the loss for weeks, so I wanted to fix the problem for her. I thought about how to do it for a long time before it became clear that there was really only one solution — she had to fail a class. “But wait,” you might say. “That’s going too far. Shouldn’t you ask her first?” It’s a good question, but no, obviously not. This

was my gift to her, my burden to bear. I knew what I had to do.

*‘Although I believed in my friendship with Eva, I believed in truth and justice more.’*

And so I did. On Wednesday, after her art thesis exhibition had officially opened, I went up to her professor. I had tears in my eyes, my hands were shaking, I had to make this look real. I told him who I was, and that, although I believed in my friendship with Eva, I believed in truth and justice more. He seemed concerned, so I quickly got to the point, telling him of my suspicion, nay, certainty that Eva had used ChatGPT to finish her

art.

He didn’t believe me at first (damn your goodness Eva!) but I had planted evidence — sneakily replacing periods with em dashes, inserting Oxford commas, and as a finishing touch, adding miscellaneous fingers into every third drawing — and soon he had no choice but to take my word for it.

Eva, if you’re reading this, welcome to the Class of 2027. I did it for you; I did it for us. I would never allow you to lose Hillside, not when there was something I could do about it.

*Naik is a member of the Class of 2026.*

*Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.*

# Campus Times

## Happy Commencement to all of our readers!

We appreciate the support you have given us throughout your years at the University, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors.