

SPOTLIGHT ON UC MERCED



UC Merced opened in September 2005 as the newest campus in the UC system and the first American research university of the 21st century. Four years later, in 2009, former First Lady Michelle Obama gave the commencement address for the University's first full graduating class.

- The physical capacity of the Merced campus is expected to double by the year 2020. In fact, the campus won an international [Gold Award for social infrastructure](#) for its 2020 Project.
- U.S. News & World Report [ranked UC Merced No. 1 in the nation](#) for financial aid given to first year students in its 2017 Best Colleges rankings.
- UC Merced is [ranked in the top 10](#) in “Best Bang for the Buck Western Colleges” in Washington Monthly’s 2017 College Rankings. Merced also was named No. 3 in the U.S. for graduating Pell Grant recipients at higher-than-predicted rates.
- Merced is the most ethnically and culturally diverse UC campus, and was ranked the 12th most diverse campus out of 1,700 U.S. institutions by BestColleges.com.
- A 2010 UC Merced graduate got a taste of public office while participating in the UCDC program; he’s now serving as [the director of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs in the Washington, D.C., Mayor’s Office](#).
- The [Yosemite Leadership Program](#) is part of an effort between UC Merced and the National Park Service to train students to proactively address environmental challenges of the 21st century.
- UC Merced helps facilitate transformational learning to increase student leadership on campus and beyond at the annual [Leadership Conference](#).
- A UC Merced transfer student eager to revive robotics on campus wound up competing in the [NASA Swarmathon](#) at Cape Canaveral in 2017.
- Construction on Merced’s [Downtown Campus Center](#), designed to further develop campus ties with the Merced community, is scheduled to be completed in early 2018.
- UC Merced [earned 95 out of a possible 99 points](#) in the Princeton Review’s Guide to 375 Green Colleges in 2017.