



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **241 graduates earn degrees from University of Guam**

The University of Guam conferred degrees today to 241 graduates at its Fanuchånan Commencement Ceremony. Among the degree recipients were the first-ever civil engineering graduates to have been educated on island.

“I can feel the enthusiasm for this on-campus commencement, and I’d like to say a special thanks to all the people who have made this event possible,” said UOG President Thomas W. Krise in his remarks. “[...] I thank our graduates for learning with us, for challenging us to think in new and different ways, and for your commitment to making the world a better place for all of us and for those who come after us.”

The ceremony – the first held at the Calvo Field House since December 2019 due to the pandemic – took place in three separate ceremonies to allow for social distancing.

The first ceremony awarded 30 degrees under the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, 27 degrees under the College of Natural and Applied Sciences, and 12 degrees under the School of Engineering. The second ceremony awarded 65 degrees under the School of Education and 12 degrees under the School of Health. And the third ceremony awarded 95 degrees under the School of Business and Public Administration.

Of the 176 bachelor’s degrees conferred, the highest numbers were in business administration with 43 degrees and criminal justice with 17 degrees.

Of the 65 master’s degrees conferred, more than half were under the School of Education, primarily Master of Education degrees specializing in reading, Master of Arts

in Counseling degrees, and Master of Arts in Teaching, while one-quarter were Master of Public Administration graduates.

**Commencement speaker: ‘I did not inherit wealth, land, or business’**

Delivering the commencement address by video from California was Diosdado P. “Dado” Banatao, an engineer as well as a self-made entrepreneur and venture capitalist who has come to be known as a visionary within Silicon Valley, the global center for high-tech innovations.

Banatao has ties to Guam through his father, Salvador, who worked overseas in Guam from the Philippines when Banatao was a child.

Banatao is credited with developing several semiconductor technologies, including the first graphics accelerator chip and the local bus concept that continue to be foundation technologies in every personal computer today.

“My innovations for the PC made personal computers smaller, more powerful, and less expensive. [...] My goal, always — to make people's lives better [...],” he said.

He shared his life story — from being the son of a rice farmer and a homemaker in the Philippines, where he walked barefoot to school, to earning his bachelor’s in electric engineering from the Mapúa Institute of Technology in the Philippines, earning his master’s in electrical engineering and computer science from Stanford University, working for Boeing and several innovative technology corporations, and ultimately founding three of his own technology startups and launching a multimillion-dollar venture capital firm.

“My journey from Cagayan Valley to Silicon Valley is arguably remarkable because I did not inherit wealth, land, or business. I achieved my success through the use of my own intellectual capacity and through strong values of hard work, perseverance instilled by my parents, who live by the soil,” he said. “I can also firmly say that my accomplishments truly had a positive impact on global industries and economies.”

**Valedictorian: ‘Do not be blinded by the darkness’**

The graduates also heard from Class Valedictorian Anthony V. Reyes, who earned a bachelor’s in civil engineering and is the university’s first-ever valedictorian from the School of Engineering.

He shared how school was challenging for him, trying to fit into the standard mold for learning and later finding out he had a learning disability. He credits his progress to great teachers who didn’t see it as a disability.

“These teachers saw me not as a student with a learning disability but as a student with different learning abilities,” he said. “[...] I was a student like everyone but now filled with aspirations, hopes, and dreams.”

Reyes went on to be in the top 10 of his graduating class from Southern High School and to be the Most Distinguished Graduate in his class at Guam Community College, where he earned associate degrees in both pre-architectural drawing and civil engineering technology. He is also a first-generation college graduate in his family.

He closed by encouraging his classmates to not be afraid of the unknown.

“As individuals we have the propensity to make decisions based on things that we are familiar with and comfortable for us, thus sometimes closing doors of unexplored opportunities for fear of the unknown,” he said. “Do not be blinded by the darkness.”

### **Photos and video**

The recorded ceremony will remain viewable on UOG’s Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/UniversityofGuam](http://www.facebook.com/UniversityofGuam) and on UOG’s YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/UOGTritons](http://www.youtube.com/user/UOGTritons).

Photos of each graduate will also be available soon at [www.flickr.com/photos/uogtritons/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/uogtritons/albums).

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### **Attached:**

- Commencement booklet
- Prepared speeches for the president, valedictorian, and commencement speaker
- Photos

### **Captions:**

*2021-uog-commencement-enriquez*

Senior Vice President and Provost Anita Borja Enriquez opens the first of three ceremonies for the University of Guam Fanuchånan 2021 Commencement on Dec. 19 at the Calvo Field House.

*2021-uog-commencement-krise*

University of Guam President Thomas W. Krise during the national anthem at the opening of the Fanuchånan 2021 Commencement Ceremony on Dec. 19 at the Calvo Field House.

*2021-uog-commencement-valedictorian*

Valedictorian Anthony V. Reyes, a civil engineering major, delivers the class address at the University of Guam Fanuchånan 2021 Commencement on Dec. 19 at the Calvo Field House.

*2021-uog-commencement-valedictorian-group*

Class Valedictorian Anthony V. Reyes, a civil engineering major, center, stands with (from left) Liza J. Provido, chairperson of the Board of Regents; Thomas W. Krise, president; Anita Borja Enriquez, senior vice president and provost; and Agapito “Pete” Diaz, regent, at the University of Guam Fanuchånan 2021 Commencement on Dec. 19 at the Calvo Field House.

*2021-uog-commencement-panoramic*

Three socially distanced commencement ceremonies took place at the University of Guam’s Calvo Field House on Dec. 19 with a total of 241 graduates crossing the stage to accept their diplomas.

*2021-uog-commencement-seng*

The University of Guam’s first civil engineering graduates on commencement day, Dec. 19, outside the Calvo Field House. (From left) Jezreel Sabangan, Maegan Catahay, Victoria Lopez, Kameryn Duenas, Kayleena Blas, Jaelene Manibusan, Ashton Analista, Marc Bituin, Arden Danila, Tristan Castino, Anthony Reyes, and Giordan Kho.

*2021-uog-commencement-counseling*

(Back row, from left) Tommy Guerrero; Evander DeGuzman, both with Bachelor of Science in Health Science degrees; Denise Carlos, Master of Arts in Teaching; and (front row, from left) Maria Pablo, Edriana Buendicho, Sharlene Mercado, and Samantha Acosta, all recipients of Master of Arts in Counseling degrees.

*2021-uog-commencement-health-science*

(From left) Tommy Guerrero, Evander DeGuzman, Justin Cayading, and Karlo De Leon, all recipients of Bachelor of Science in Health Science degrees.

*Photos courtesy of the University of Guam*