

Special guest Dr. Jill Biden to speak at Mesa Community College 2023-2024 commencement ceremony

Queen Creek Sun Times Staff
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The First Lady of the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, Ed.D., will deliver remarks as special guest speaker at Mesa Community College's (MCC) commencement ceremony on May 11, 2024. This is from last year's graduation ceremony at MCC. | Source: Mesa Community College

The First Lady of the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, Ed.D., will deliver remarks as special guest speaker at Mesa Community College's (MCC) commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 11.

As a classroom teacher for more than 30 years, Biden is a longtime advocate for higher education, particularly community colleges. While serving as First Lady, Biden has continued teaching English and writing at Northern Virginia Community College, where she has been a professor since 2009. The commencement address follows Biden's February 2023 visit to MCC where she highlighted [affordable community college programs](#), like Mesa College Promise.

More than 540 students will participate in the college's 2023-2024 graduation ceremony. Interim President Dr. Kimberly Britt will celebrate the accomplishments of more than 2,500 students who successfully met academic requirements to earn Certificates of Completion and Associate Degrees during the 2023-2024 academic year.

"We are very honored that Dr. Biden will join us to celebrate this important day for our graduates and for the college," said Britt. "Dr. Biden last visited the Southern and Dobson Campus in February 2023 with U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and Mesa Mayor John Giles to emphasize the affordability of community college programs like Mesa College Promise that offers career-connected learning opportunities that lead to well-paying jobs."

While the event is open only to graduates and their invited guests, ceremonies will be live streamed at mesacc.edu/live beginning at 9 a.m. for those who wish to view the ceremony. Event details are available at mesacc.edu/graduation/event.

Themed "A Time to Remember and a Time to Celebrate", the ceremony includes MCC student performances. Adara Knelange will sing the National Anthem and pre- and post-event entertainment will be provided by MCC Disc Jockey Techniques students.

Other honored guest speakers include [MCC alumna Lorena Austin](#), a member of the Arizona House of Representatives from the 9th District, and Governing Board President Susan Bitter Smith and Chancellor Dr. Steven R. Gonzales from the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). [Noemi Panza](#), a first-generation college student from Italy, is the 2023-2024 Class Honors Speaker.

Every student has an important story to tell about the path leading to this milestone event in their lives. Several graduate candidates from all walks of life share details of their personal experiences at mesacc.edu/graduation/graduation-success-stories to inspire others.

"Our faculty and staff congratulate these students who have reached this significant milestone in their lives, many of whom began their academic journey amid the pandemic," said Britt. "They should take tremendous pride in the courage it took to accomplish their goals."

The MCCCD serves approximately 140,000 students annually, making it one of the largest community college districts in the nation. The district is also the largest workforce training

organization in Arizona and a vital economic engine contributing significantly to the economies of Arizona and the region.

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