

*University of Southern California  
Valedictorian Asna Tabassum  
gets standing ovation at  
alternative graduation ceremony*

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Los Angeles, May 10 (RHC)-- The University of Southern California (USC) hosted its alternative graduation event Thursday evening after calling off its mainstage ceremony. USC announced it was not holding its typical commencement ceremony this year amid a national backlash for canceling valedictorian Asna Tabassum's speech after she was subjected to an online hate campaign for expressing solidarity with Palestine.

Asna Tabassum's fellow graduates erupted into cheers and with a standing ovation as she was acknowledged at Thursday's graduation.

The announcer at the ceremony said: "Asna will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in biomedical engineering, molecular and cellular engineering and a minor in resistance to genocide. You may not know this, but Asna is USC's 2024 valedictorian."

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