December 2017 Commencement at Michigan State University will include 340 graduates - 275 undergraduates, 33 master's and 31 PhDs - of the College of Engineering this weekend.

One of them is Valbona Vulaj, who will graduate with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

"MSU Engineering has been challenging yet so rewarding," she said. "Without all the resources from the college, especially The Center for Spartan Engineering, my college experience would have been so much different."

Originally from Troy, Michigan, Vulaj said her MSU activities helped to mold the role she sees for herself in the future. She served as treasurer of Wonders Hall student government in 2014-15 and was the 2017 Class Representative during 2015-16 for MSU's undergraduate student government.

Much of her MSU student life was tied to The Center for Spartan Engineering, where she has been a Career Peer since August 2016. She was also a mentor on the spring break corporate tour in 2017 and for the past three summers has been a student leader in Detroit Semester, an MSU initiative to attract engineering students to the social and employment opportunities in Southeast Michigan.

Vulaj will travel abroad for a month following graduation. In late January, she will begin a rotational program with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), where she interned. She will be based out of the Chrysler Tech Center in Auburn Hills,
but will use her time in the rotational program to explore FCA options in Detroit, Toledo, Belvidere and Brampton, Ontario.

“Each of these activities allowed me to bring my own ideas to MSU. I was able to use them as a way to leave my mark here at MSU,” she said. “All of these resources helped shape my academic success but more importantly helped shape my career desires and aspirations. All of my career success I owe to my MSU family,” she added.

**More on Saturday’s Engineering Commencement –**
Trey Pfeiffer, who will receive a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering, will carry the Engineering flag during Saturday’s graduation. He has accepted a job in research and development at Stryker in Portage. He is from Otsego.

**Advanced degrees** -- The Advanced Degree Commencement is Friday, Dec. 15, at 3:30 p.m. in MSU's Breslin Center. There will be 33 master's and 31 PhD candidates from the College of Engineering. The ceremony is 1 1/2 hours long. There are no admission tickets required.

**Undergraduates** -- The College of Engineering will share graduation services on Saturday, Dec. 16, at 2 p.m. in the Breslin Center with graduates from Agriculture and Natural Resources, Communication Arts and Sciences, Lyman Briggs, Natural Science, and Nursing. The commencement ceremony is two hours long. There are no admission tickets required.

Commencement ceremonies will be live streamed on the [WKAR website](http://www.wkar.org).

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*Notice to visitors* – *If you are attending any of MSU’s commencement events in the Breslin Center -- no bags or purses are allowed inside the Breslin Center for security reasons. Cameras and camcorders are premitted, though cases are prohibited. No food or beverages – including bottled water – will be allowed in Breslin, and this applies to graduates, guests and faculty. As such, Breslin will offer a limited menu of concessions for sale during the ceremonies. Additional prohibited items include noisemakers, selfie sticks, pets, signs or weapons of any form. Smoking also is prohibited at the Breslin Center. Metal detectors will be at all entrances to the facility, so please plan accordingly for processing.*

**More on MSU Commencement events –**
Two top female executives and a world-renowned physician will speak at Michigan State University’s fall commencement ceremonies on Dec. 15-16 at the Jack Breslin Student Events Center, 534 Birch Road.

MSU will honor 1,943 undergraduate degree candidates and 784 advanced degree candidates. The College of Social Science has the most undergraduates with 349.

Cynthia Pasky, founder and CEO of Strategic Staffing Solutions, or S3, will speak at the 10 a.m. Dec. 16 ceremony and
will receive an honorary doctorate of business. She will address graduates from the colleges of Arts and Letters, Broad Business, Education, Music, Social Science, Residential College in the Arts and Humanities and James Madison.

Later that day, Priya Balasubramaniam, vice president of iPhone operations at Apple Inc., will speak at 2 p.m., and will receive an honorary doctorate of engineering. She will address graduates from Agriculture and Natural Resources, Communication Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Lyman Briggs, Natural Science, and Nursing.

Balasubramaniam was instrumental in negotiating with the government and setting up production of Apple products in India. She is responsible for the organization that handles Apple’s supply chain and manufacturing for iPhones and most recently her organization played a critical role in bringing iPhone X to customers worldwide.

She quickly climbed the ranks at Apple, starting as procurement manager in 2001. Balasubramaniam launched her career after graduating from the Eli Broad College of Business MBA program. She earned her bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from Bangalore University in India.

More information on speakers and honorary degree recipients can be found on MSUToday.

Commencement ceremonies will be live streamed on the WKAR website.

Twitter users are invited to follow along using #MSUGrad17.

Related Website: MSU Today - More than 2,700 to graduate this weekend
Communications contact: Patricia Mroczek

Source URL: http://www.egr.msu.edu/news/2017/12/13/december-commencement-2017