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Saint Mary's is proud of alum Ali

By Sophie Braccini

After the former Saint Mary's student Mahershala Ali won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor for his role in the Oscar-winning movie "Moonlight," the college's social media sites started crackling with messages congratulating the actor.

"Congrats" messages appeared everywhere, from Facebook to Instagram. Ali had been the commencement speaker at the Moraga college last year, and the online community on Feb. 26 continued echoing how the man had been incredibly humble, grateful, and kind.

Ali graduated from Saint Mary's in 1996 with a degree in communications. He made his theater debut with the California Shakespeare Theatre, having obtained an apprenticeship there after graduation. His movie career took off in 2008 with a role in "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button." In "Moonlight" he played Juan, a drug dealer with a big heart, who takes Chiron, the main character, under his wing during his childhood.

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[back](#)

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