

CLASS OF 2020

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

DISABILITY GRADUATION

INAUGURAL VIRTUAL
CELEBRATION



IOWA



CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to the University of Iowa's inaugural Disability Graduation! Over the course of 2019-2020, it was clear that UI needed to do more to support and celebrate its students with disabilities. We were excited to have worked with a dedicated group of students and staff to plan an affinity graduation for individuals who identified as disabled or living with a disability. This graduation will join the many other community-specific graduations to allow space for and intentional focus on our students.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social gatherings, we were not able to have this momentous event in person. Thus, we worked with graduating students to compile memories and stories to commemorate their time and accomplishments at the University of Iowa. This video will be posted on our website along with the list of student awardees and profiles of our graduates. We are so proud of you!

Thank you students for your tenacity, flexibility, and grace throughout this process. A special thank you to the UI Students for Disability Advocacy & Awareness (UISDAA) and the Disability Graduation 2020 Planning Committee for your efforts to ensure we had a venue to celebrate.

In solidarity,

Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Leadership



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Congratulations graduates!

Hi--I'm Bob Burchfield. I'm an alumni of the university, class of 1972, and I'm currently a co-advisor for the University of Iowa Students for Disability Advocacy and Awareness. When I was an undergraduate, I saw only four other students with disabilities on campus, so it's a great honor to have been invited to share in this ceremony with you today.

Again, congratulations to all of you! I want to commend you for your strength, your perseverance, and your intelligence. You should celebrate and take great pride in the fact that through your own individual efforts and your hard work you reached your goal. But of course you've had the support of family, friends, and, if you were lucky, some teachers and professors along the way who are celebrating with you as well.

But I'm also thinking today of the students I met when I worked as the secretary for the university's OSH in 1979. Mike Blaser, Cayse Hayes, Cynthia Anderson, Archie Greene, Jane Kelleher, along with many others. These were the first wave of students with disabilities to attend the UI in the aftermath of federal law that prohibited schools and universities from discriminating against students with disabilities and required that these institutions provide reasonable accommodations to include them—the forerunner of the ADA.

Like you, their very presence on campus challenged the university to implement and abide by the law. Like you, their success demonstrated what swd can do given the opportunity, let alone what they might be able to do if someday actually given equal opportunities. Like you, they left their mark, both large and small, on the university. Their story is part of your story. Your story is part of their story. You're connected to them. There's a link. Just as students who attend this ceremony in the years to come will be connected to you and will be here in part because of you and what you've accomplished.

As Neil Young writes,

"In the hallways of the ages, on the road to history,
what we do now will always be with us."

Congratulations everyone.

Bob Burchfield

University of Iowa, Class of 1972

Co-advisor, UI Students for Disability Advocacy and Awareness (UISDAA)

OUTSTANDING DISABILITY VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP AWARD

In partnership with the Diversity Catalyst Seed Grant and the Council for Disability Awareness, the Disability Graduation Planning Committee is able to recognize incredible undergraduate and graduate students with the inaugural **Outstanding Disability Volunteer Leadership Awards**. This year's recipients are motivated and innovative students with disabilities at the University of Iowa who are involved in disability affairs, advocacy, research, awareness, activities, and/or community building. They go above and beyond in their daily duties to exemplify disability as diversity and to move the University of Iowa towards greater accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities.

GRADUATE AWARD



Andrea Lynne Courtney

College of Education

M.A. Clinical Mental Health Counseling

"Andrea has been an exemplary advocate for disabled students in her time at the University of Iowa."

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS



Michael A. Penniman

Tippie College of Business

B.B.A. Finance

"...he founded Students Care to match UI students with disabled students in need of home and community based care services... and used his experiences to benefit disabled students across campus."



McKenna Margaret Raimer College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

B.A. Criminology; B.A. Medical Anthropology; B.A. Religious Studies

"Type1Hawks has been active on campus ...to fight for all people with chronic illness... Together, we can demand space at the table and continue to shape our own body autonomy for all with different abilities."



Javon A. Stovall

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

B.A. Ethics and Public Policy

"My drive comes from the belief that we are called to make the world a better place - or in our case, institutions of higher education better. They say college isn't for everyone. But it could be."

CLASS OF 2020



ANDREA LYNN COURTNEY

M.A. Clinical Mental Health Counseling
College of Education

Personal Quote "Protect your heart." - Katryn Duarte

Involvement at U.I. UI Students for Disability Advocacy & Awareness (UISDAA) and the University Counseling Service Student Advisory Board

Favorite Memory Being told that SDS will be relocated from the basement of Burge Hall.

Acknowledgements Thank you to the faculty and staff in the RCE department for teaching, supporting and encouraging me, but especially to Dr. Barnes and Dr. Johnson! Thank you to my clinical supervisors during my graduate experience, Adam Robison, Katryn Duarte, Dr. Jacob Priest, Dr. Armeda Wojciak, and Aiden Rohwer-Nutter. Finally, thank you to my partner Kaydee Ecker, my friends, and my cohort, for keeping me going throughout these last two years!



KAYDEE LAYNE ECKER

B.A. English and Creative Writing
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Certificates Disability Studies

Personal Quote "To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Involvement at U.I. UI Students for Disability Advocacy & Awareness (UISDAA), Hawkeye Service Breaks, Student United Way, worked as a Student Involvement Ambassador with the Office of Leadership, Service, and Civic Engagement, and participated in disability-related advocacy efforts across campus.

Favorite Memory Probably my first Hawkeye Service Breaks trip to Biloxi, Mississippi. The friends I made on that trip showed true care and love for me exactly as I was, and the self-confidence and self-love I gained as a result catapulted me into all of the campus activities I eventually became involved in. It was a phenomenal experience I am so grateful for that I'll never forget! It changed my life.

Acknowledgements Thank you to all of the staff at CDE and the Office of Leadership, Service, and Civic Engagement for affording me opportunities for growth and empowering me in my journey as a student and a leader.

CLASS OF 2020



JOHN EARL HARDESTY

B.A. Informatics (Human-Computer Interaction)
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Minors Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Involvement at U.I. Member of UI Students for Disability Advocacy and Awareness (UISDAA)
Member of Students in Technology and Science (SiTS)



NAWFAL KULAM

B.B.A. Accounting
Tippie College of Business

Involvement at U.I. Member of University of Iowa Student Government (UISG)
Member of UI Students for Disability Advocacy and Awareness (UISDAA)
Member of Beta Alpha Psi (BAP)

Favorite Memory Iowa Edge



JESSICA MCMURRIN

B.A. Communication Studies
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Minors Dance, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Personal Quote "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31

Involvement at U.I. I was a student leader in the 24:7 Student Ministry

Favorite Memory Going to my first Hawkeye football game!

Acknowledgements Thank you Mom and Dad for supporting me in everything that I do.

CLASS OF 2020



MCKENNA MARGARET RAIMER

B.A. Criminology
B.A. Medical Anthropology
B.A. Religious Studies
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Personal Quote "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." - Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Involvement at U.I. College Diabetes Network at Iowa- Type1Hawks
Alpha Phi Sigma- The Criminal Justice Honor Society

Acknowledgements. I am thankful for the support I received from the College Diabetes Network nationally and our chapter here at The University of Iowa. I appreciate the effort to continue to advocate for "Insulin as a Human Right" and equal access for diabetics. I look forward to the next chapter in my fight for all diabetics at the University of Iowa College of Law.



JAVON A. STOVALL

B.A. Ethics and Public Policy
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Minors Philosophy, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Personal Quote "Don't count the days. Make the days count."

Involvement at U.I. Student Legal Services, Code of Student Life Review Committee, Student Advisory Committee on Sexual Misconduct, Anti-Violence Coalition, Campus Education Subcommittee, Student Success Team, UISDAA, Student Government, Old Gold Acappella, Human Rights Student Collective, RA in Catlett Hall, Neighborhood Ambassadors, UI Libraries, Division of Sponsored Programs, Office of the Vice President for Student Life, Alternative Spring Breaks, LeaderShape, From Cover to Cover.

Favorite Memory Turning in that last final from an 8-year undergraduate career - I made it!

Acknowledgements My parents, My sister, Kaydee Ecker, Andrea Courtney, everyone at SDS, and everyone in UISDAA

CLASS OF 2020



YANET ABIGAIL VELASQUEZ
B.A. Political Science
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Minors Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Social Justice, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Latino/a Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Personal Quote "The flower that blooms in adversity is the most rare and beautiful of them all."

Involvement at U.I. Iowa City Foreign Relations Council
Walk It Out

Favorite Memory There was so many. I loved the sporting events, the events downtown and on Campus, and interacting with students.

Acknowledgements Thank you to my friends, family, and University Faculty motivating me during these four years. I wouldn't be where I am if it weren't for you!



ALITHEA NELL CHARLSON ZORN
M.P.H. Biostatistics
College of Public Health

Acknowledgements I would like to thank my husband David Zorn for his continued support throughout the last two years, I couldn't have done this without you

Visit the 2020 Inaugural Disability Graduation
website and celebration video by going to
<https://diversity.uiowa.edu/spring-2020-disability-graduation>

THANK YOU

Disability Graduation is a result of love and advocacy, brought to being through the labor of many individuals, both the past and present. We would like to take a moment to thank and acknowledge the following organizations, departments, and people for their incredible effort and support.

Carly Armor

Dr. Maria Bruno

Bob Burchfield

Andrea Courtney

Kaydee Ecker

Cueponi Cihuatl Espinoza

Bria Marcelo

Katie McCullough

Claire Miller

Tabitha Wiggins

**Council for Disability Awareness
(CDA)**

**Disability Graduation Planning
Committee**

**Diversity Catalyst Seed Grant
Selection Committee**

**The Division for Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion**

The Division of Student Life

**Students with Disabilities Services
(SDS)**

**University of Iowa Students for
Disability Advocacy and Awareness
(UISDAA)**

**EVERYTHING YOU TOUCH
YOU CHANGE
EVERYTHING YOU CHANGE
CHANGES YOU**

Octavia Butler