



STUDENT HONORS CONVOCATION

APRIL 28, 2023



CHANCELLOR'S WELCOME

Dear Honorees and Attendees,

Today we gather to recognize the accomplishments of our outstanding students. Honors Convocation provides us with the opportunity to celebrate both students' academic achievements and their contributions and service to our university and community. Their independent thinking and demonstration of excellence in scholarship and service is amazing proof of UNO's mission as a metropolitan university.

The biographies within these pages highlight the individual students, but we also recognize that their accomplishments are shared with the family, friends, faculty, and staff who help make that excellence possible. To each of you who have helped support our students: thank you.

To the students we are recognizing today, congratulations! Know that you have earned this recognition with your long hours of study, service, and dedication. Thank you for that effort, because your work – today and in the future – reflects on UNO and builds on our reputation as a leading force in higher education, research, and community engagement.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joanne Li', with a large loop at the beginning and a horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A.,
Chancellor

CEREMONY

WELCOME

Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D.
Senior Advisor to the Chancellor

Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A.
Chancellor

AWARDS

Helen Hansen Outstanding Graduate Students

Presented by Juan Casas, Ph.D.
Acting Dean, Graduate Studies

National Scholarships and Fellowships

Presented by Lucy Morrison, Ph.D.

Undergraduate Major Honorees

Presented by college deans

Deans' Awards

Presented by college deans

CHANCELLOR AWARDS

Academic Excellence

Presented by Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A.
Chancellor

Outstanding Student Leadership

Presented by Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A.
Chancellor

Outstanding Service Learning

Presented by Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A.
Chancellor

Excellence in Research or Creative Activity

Presented by Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A.
Chancellor

Outstanding Student Athletes

Presented by Adrian Dowell, M.B.A., M.S.S.M.
Vice Chancellor of Athletics

CLOSING

Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D.
Senior Advisor to the Chancellor

HELEN HANSEN OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

Scholarships are awarded to graduate students who have completed at least 18 hours of graduate work, demonstrated excellence in performance, and have been admitted for candidacy with a grade point average of 3.75 and above.



FELIPE BLANCO
Public Administration

Felipe Blanco recently obtained a Ph.D. in public administration. His research interests are social equity and ethnoracial inequalities, representative bureaucracy, comparative public administration, and comparative public policy. Blanco has been recognized with several prestigious awards, including the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration, NASPAA Staats Emerging Scholar Award; the American Society for Public Administration, ASPA Founders' Fellowship; and the University of Nebraska-Omaha Presidential Graduate Fellowship. He was also named as one of 10 Diverse Rising Graduate Scholars in 2021, a national award given by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education to graduate students with the potential to make significant contributions to equity and social justice scholarship in their respective fields. This fall, he will join Colorado University-Denver as an assistant professor in Public Administration.



DIEDRA REEVES
Psychology

Diedra Reeves received her Master of Science in school psychology in May 2022, and is currently pursuing an Educational Specialist degree in school psychology. During her time in graduate school, she has been the graduate assistant for the Special Education and Communication Disorders Department, collaborating with faculty to publish a manuscript addressing the special education teacher shortage. She also conducted an applied research project that focused on using social justice practices to address conflict in schools. As a school psychologist, she will bring her knowledge and passion for learning, student achievement, and equitable practices to the schools and students that she serves. Next year, Reeves will be interning at Omaha Public Schools as a school psychologist.

UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR HONOREES

Honorees selected by departments in which they are majoring must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.33. They are chosen on the basis of academic achievement in addition to their contributions to the university and the community.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Rachel Goettsch	Environmental Science
Connor Eastman	Biology and Medicinal Chemistry
Noah Polacek	Economics
Hanna Rothfuss	English
Kenna Frank	Foreign Languages
Zachary Michka	Geography
Kaitlin Steinauer*	Geology
Jeff Preston	History
Kate Fayman	Interdisciplinary Studies
Jordan Winkler	International Studies
Christine Kunz	Mathematical & Statistical Sciences
Amiey Elsasser	Medical Humanities
Braydon Dreher*	Molecular and Biomedical Biology
Nour Elrokhsi	Neuroscience
Natalie Veloso	Latino/Latin American Studies
Brianna Larson	Philosophy
Kristen Rodenhausen	Physics
Sarah Sedivy*	Political Science
Jack Cosgrove*	Psychology
Barry Berko	Religion
Annie Butler	Sociology
Madelyn Moen	Women's and Gender Studies

*Denotes Honors Student

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Vanessa Chavez Jurado	Elementary Education
Abigail Guinan*	Communication Disorders
Macy Owens	Early Childhood Inclusive
Curtis Berge	Special Education
Ericka Alvarez	Public Health
Tatum Hemmingsen	Kinesiology
Nicole Kleffman	Kinesiology
Alejandro Vargas	Biomechanics
Kevin Layher	Library Science
Elayna Holcomb	Secondary Education
Amy Lopez Hernandez	Secondary Education
Karina Salcido-Rodriguez	Secondary Education
Connor Garges	Elementary Education
Catie Tangeman*	Elementary Education
Delaney Williams	Elementary Education

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION, FINE ARTS AND MEDIA

Christine Robino	Music Education
Alfredo Almaraz-Herrera	Art History
Artur Melika	Studio Art - BFA
Caroline Baroco	Studio Art - BSA
Chloe Bertrand	Theatre
Nathan Foo	Creative Writing
Meg McCoy*	Communication Studies
Lexy Schulte	Journalism and Media Communication
Rachel Goettsch	Music Entrepreneurial Studies
John Lim	Music Performance

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Erin Wendt	Emergency Management
Carly Andersen*	Gerontology
Vanessa Chavez Juardo	Elementary Education
Korby Ward	Criminology & Criminal Justice
Taylor Tygesen	Criminology & Criminal Justice
Kent Robinson	Aviation - Unmanned Aircraft Systems
Precious Ayelomi	Aviation - Professional Flight
Tyler Swanson	Aviation - Air Transport Administration

*COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
DIVISION OF CONTINUING STUDIES*

Channon Butler	Multidisciplinary Studies (Behavioral Health)
Marina-Bob Hand	Multidisciplinary Studies (Library Sciences)
Piper Wildeman	Multidisciplinary Studies

COLLEGE OF INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Zander Gibney*	Information Technology Innovation
Amaya Ackerman	Management Information Systems
Klim Fedorchuk	Computer Science
Maia Bennett	Bioinformatics
Travis Munyer	Cybersecurity

**Denotes Honors Student*



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Morgan Dickey	Management and Human Resources Management
William O'Donovan Scheopner	Marketing
Elizabeth Howard*	Economics
Joscelyn Vincent	Real Estate & Land Use Economics
Savanna Denton	Logistics & Supply Chain Management
Michael Becker	Investment Science and Portfolio Management
Michaela Lentsch	Entrepreneurship
Grant Johnson	Accounting
Samuel Kennedy	Business Finance
Liberty Donahoe	Business Analytics
Karlie Ellis	Legal Studies
Dylan Sales	Banking and Financial Markets
Dustin Hovanec	International Business
Kai Harris	Sales

UNL COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Emery Gigantelli	Construction Management
Alexander Verdoni	Construction Engineering
Crispin Corpuz	Electrical Engineering
Dillon Falkinburg	Computer Engineering
Jillian Dlouhy	Architectural Engineering
Katrina Meier	Civil Engineering



DEANS' AWARDS

Award recipients reflect a combination of outstanding scholastic achievement and leadership on campus and in the community. They are selected from the Undergraduate Major Honorees.



RACHEL GOETSCH

College of Arts and Sciences

Rachel Goetsch is pursuing a bachelor's degree in English, environmental sciences, music, and a certificate in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), to be completed by May 2023. Goetsch studied abroad in Seoul, South Korea during the summer of 2022, and completed several internships, including a remote music management position based in Los Angeles. She is currently exploring local and international career paths that will allow her to combine her diverse skill set and pursue her varied interests post-graduation.



VANESSA CHAVEZ JURADO

College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

Vanessa Chavez Jurado will graduate this May with a degree in elementary education with an endorsement in English as a second language and a minor in leadership and public policy. She served as the Vice President of Student Government, President of the Teacher Education Diversity Organization, and is co-founder of First Forward. She was an intern for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute congressional internship program in Washington, D.C. Chavez Jurado is grateful for the constant support and encouragement of her family, mentors, and the Goodrich Scholarship Program faculty and staff.



MORGAN DICKEY

College of Business Administration

Morgan Dickey will receive a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in human resources management in May 2023. Dickey has held leadership roles in multiple student organizations, including SLAM, HRA, and PC3. She is a part of the CBA Scholars Academy and is the recipient of several awards, including Distinguished Student in Human Resources Management (2022), Outstanding Student in Human Resources Management (2023), and Outstanding Student in Management & Leadership (2023) Dickey will work as an Associate Talent Acquisition Advisor at Valmont Industries.



ERIN WENDT

College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Erin Wendt (she/her) graduated in December 2022 with a Bachelor of Science in emergency management with concentrations in natural disasters and planning & preparing for urban hazards. She also has minors in geography and political science. While attending UNO she worked a part-time job, completed an internship at the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, and was an Event Coordinator for Maverick Productions, helping plan and facilitate events such as the spring concert in 2022, social media giveaways, and Fall Festival. As a first-generation college graduate, Wendt attributes her success to the support from her family.



CHANNON BUTLER

*College of Public Affairs and Community Service
Division of Continuing Studies*

Channon is graduating with a bachelor's degree in multidisciplinary studies with a minor in sociology. She plans to get a master's degree in social work. She would like to thank her family and friends, especially her husband, for all their support. She has found it rewarding going back to school at her age. She hopes that in earning her degree, she will be equipped to help people.



ZANDER GIBNEY

College of Information Science & Technology

Zander Gibney (he/him) is receiving a Bachelor of Science in IT innovation with minors in theatre and screenwriting. He is a recipient of the Walter Scott Jr. Scholarship and the University Honors Program Distinguished Scholarship. Gibney redesigned Nebraska Medicine's discharge instruction process for non-English-speaking patients, starred in the theatre department's productions of Macbeth, Into the Woods, and many other shows. After graduation, Gibney is pursuing a master of fine arts degree in Acting at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in Birmingham, England.



CHRISTINE ROBINO

College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Christine Robino will graduate in May 2023 with a Bachelor of Music in music education. Robino has played the oboe with the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Heartland Philharmonic Orchestra, and the woodwind quartet/trio. In 2020, she began playing oboe in the 43rd Army Band where she continues to serve her community through music. She credits any successes to her professors in the School of Music, the Goodrich Program, and her family and friends. Upon graduation, she will share her passion for music as a music teacher in the Omaha Public Schools.



EMERY GIGANTELLI

UNL College of Engineering

Emery Gigantelli, a native of Omaha, Nebraska, is set to earn a bachelor's degree in construction management with a minor in business administration in May 2023. During his tenure at UNO, Gigantelli participated in a number of distinguished organizations, including the Associated General Contractors of America, Sigma Lambda Chi, and Women in Engineering. Through his involvement in these groups, he fostered valuable professional relationships and honed his leadership skills. He plans to remain in Omaha and continue his career as an assistant project manager at Miller Electric Company.

CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

This Award is given based on a combination of outstanding scholastic achievement and demonstrated leadership on campus and in the community. The recipient is selected from the Deans' Award recipients.



RACHEL GOETTSCH

College of Arts and Sciences

Rachel Goettsch is pursuing a bachelor's degree in English, environmental sciences, music, and a certificate in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), to be completed by May 2023. Goettsch studied abroad in Seoul, South Korea during the summer of 2022, and completed several internships, including a remote music management position based in Los Angeles. She is currently exploring local and international career paths that will allow her to combine her diverse skill set and pursue her varied interests post-graduation.

CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENT LEADERSHIP

This award recognizes an undergraduate student who has demonstrated exemplary leadership through influential participation in campus organizations and community volunteer work, in addition to scholarly achievement.



VANESSA CHAVEZ JURADO

College of Arts and Sciences

Vanessa Chavez Jurado will graduate this May with a degree in elementary education with an endorsement in English as a second language and a minor in leadership and public policy. She served as the Vice President of Student Government, President of the Teacher Education Diversity Organization, and is co-founder of First Forward. She was an intern for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute congressional internship program in Washington, D.C. Chavez Jurado is grateful for the constant support and encouragement of her family, mentors, and the Goodrich Scholarship Program faculty and staff.



CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE LEARNING

This award recognizes a student enrolled in service learning courses who demonstrates reflective practice techniques in coursework, provides outstanding service and maintains an excellent relationship with a community agency, and embraces the philosophy of service learning and community service.



DANIKA RATNAPRADIPA

UNL College of Engineering

Danika Ratnapradipa is majoring in architectural engineering. She participated in service-learning projects with both the Field Club Elementary's Completely Kids and Canopy South for their Upland Park project. Danika uses the skills she learned from these projects to manage her everyday interactions in the academic and professional environment. She continues to look for opportunities to improve her relationships with others and assist those in need as much as she can.

CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH OR CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Selection of recipient is based on a combination of outstanding research or creative activity as demonstrated through scholastic endeavors and achievements. The recipient is selected from the Dean's Award recipients.



ZANDER GIBNEY

College of Information Science & Technology

Zander Gibney (he/him) is receiving a Bachelor of Science in IT innovation with minors in theatre and screenwriting. He is a recipient of the Walter Scott Jr. Scholarship and the University Honors Program Distinguished Scholarship. Gibney redesigned Nebraska Medicine's discharge instruction process for non-English-speaking patients, starred in the theatre department's productions of *Macbeth*, *Into the Woods*, and many other shows. After graduation, Gibney is pursuing a master of fine arts degree in Acting at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in Birmingham, England.



OUTSTANDING STUDENT ATHLETE AWARDS

The Outstanding Student Athlete Award is presented to one male and one female student athlete. Honorees are also selected on the basis of academic and athletic achievement, in addition to their contributions to the university and the community.



GRACE THEDE

College of Arts and Sciences

Grace Thede is a four-year letterwinner for the Omaha women's soccer program. Thede has played in 55 games and has logged over 4,257 minutes on the back line. She is a four-time member of the Summit League Academic Honor Roll and Commissioner's List of Academic Excellence, carrying a 4.0 GPA, which helped her earn Academic All-League and CoSIDA Academic All-District honors. Thede graduate in 2022 majoring in medical humanities. Thede has volunteered her time for Omaha Athletics Snow Day with the Mavs event and worked with Football for the World, a nonprofit organization with a mission to increase access to soccer for kids from low-income communities, while empowering young females to play the sport.



NOLAN SULLIVAN

College of Business Administration

Nolan Sullivan is a four-year member of the Maverick hockey team. He wore the alternate captain A in his second and third seasons with the program before donning the captain's C this year. Sullivan is a four-time member of the NCHC Academic all-conference team and was an NCHC distinguished scholar athlete all four of those years. Sullivan has played in 131 career games and has registered 15 points so far this season. He graduated in the fall of 2022 with a 3.82 GPA and a major in business administration. Sullivan is a SAAC member, and is also an MLK Elementary volunteer.

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

RASHMI CHATAUT

Finalist

Thomas R. Pickering
Foreign Affairs Fellowship

NATHANIEL MOORE

Fulbright Semi-Finalist

English Teaching Assistant, India

JULIA CORMACK

Fulbright Recipient

English Teaching Assistant, S Korea

DANA LEVAN

Fulbright Semi-Finalist

Study/Research, Costa Rica

ABIGAIL SWOBODA

Awardee

Barry Goldwater Scholarship

University of Nebraska at Omaha Administration

Joanne Li, Ph.D., C.F.A., *Chancellor*

Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D., *Senior Advisor to the Chancellor*

Phil He, Ph.D., *Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs*

Adrian Dowell, M.B.A., M.S.S.M., *Vice Chancellor of Athletics*

Carol Kirchner, M.B.A., C.P.A., *Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance*

Rich Klein, Ph.D., *Vice Chancellor of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success*

Sara Myers, Ph.D., *Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity*

Jaci Lindburg, Ph.D., *Associate Vice Chancellor for Innovative and Learning-Centric Initiatives*

Cathy Pettid, M.S., L.M.H.P., *Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Life and Wellbeing, Dean of Students*

Bret Blackman, *Chief Information Officer*

Keristiena Dodge, MSc, *Chief of Staff to the Chancellor*

Victoria Kohout, *Chief of Government and Community Relations*

Sasha Thurin, *Interim Chief Communications and Marketing Officer*

A.T. Miller, Ph.D., *Chief Diversity Officer*

Drew Nielsen, *Chief Compliance Officer*

Sara Woods, MPA, *Chief Engagement Officer*

Jody Neathery-Castro, Ph.D., *Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Engagement*

Steven Kerrigan, J.D., *Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources*

Anthony Flott, M.A., *Executive Director, Alumni Engagement*

Lauren Miltenberger, *Vice President for UNO Advancement*

The Colleges

Melanie Bloom, Ph.D.,

Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Nancy Edick, Ed.D.,

*Dean, College of Education, Health,
and Human Sciences*

Michelle Trawick, Ph.D.,

Dean, College of Business Administration

John Bartle, Ph.D.,

Dean, College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Martha Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D.,

Dean, College of Information Science & Technology

Michael Hilt, Ph.D.,

Dean, College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Juan Casas, Ph.D.,

Interim Dean for Graduate Studies

David Richards, M.A., M.L.I.S.,

Dean, Criss Library

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Academic Programs

Lance Pérez, Ph.D., *Dean, College of Engineering*

University of Nebraska Board of Regents

Timothy Clare, J.D.

Jack Stark, Ph.D.

Jim Scheer

Elizabeth O'Connor, J.D.

Rob Schafer, J.D.

Paul Kenney

Kathy Wilmot

Barbara Weitz, M.P.A., M.S.W.

Student Regents

University of Nebraska at Omaha, Tori Sims

University of Nebraska at Kearney, Emily Saadi

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Jacob Drake

University of Nebraska Medical Center, Nicole Kent

University of Nebraska System Administration

Ted Carter, *President*

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., *Executive Vice President and Provost*

Heath Mello, *Vice President for External Relations*

Chris Kabourek, M.B.A., *Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer*

Phil Bakken, *Chief of Staff/Corporation Secretary*

Stacia Palsler, J.D., *Vice President and General Counsel*

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha



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