



STUDENT HONORS CONVOCATION

APRIL 22, 2021



CHANCELLOR'S WELCOME

Dear Honorees and Attendees,

Today we gather to recognize the accomplishments of outstanding students. Honors Convocation is one of our most valued traditions because it provides us an opportunity to celebrate not just students' academic achievements, but also their contributions to our university and community. The students we are honoring are Mavericks; independent thinkers demonstrating excellence in scholarship and service.

The biographies on the following pages highlight individuals, and we recognize their accomplishments are shared with family, friends, faculty, and staff who help make that excellence possible. Thank you to all who provide such valuable support to our students.

Let me also congratulate the students we are recognizing today. Your accomplishments speak to your determination, intelligence, curiosity, and passion. Your work — today and in the future — reflects on UNO, helping us build on our reputation as a leading force in higher education, research, and community engagement.

My sincerest congratulations to all.

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.

Chancellor

CEREMONY

INTRODUCTION

Jabin Moore
Outgoing President of Student Body and Regent

Vanessa Hatfield-Reeker
President, UNO Staff Advisory Board

Elliot Ostler, Ph.D.
President, UNO Faculty Senate

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Sacha E. Kopp, Ph.D.
Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

WELCOME

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
Chancellor

AWARDS

Helen Hansen Outstanding Graduate Students

Presented by Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D.
Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Dean, Graduate Studies

Undergraduate Major Honorees

Presented by Jonathon C. Benjamin Alvarado, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

Deans' Awards

Presented by college deans

CHANCELLOR AWARDS

Academic Excellence

Presented by Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
Chancellor

Outstanding Student Leadership

Presented by Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
Chancellor

Outstanding Service Learning

Presented by Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
Chancellor

Excellence in Research or Creative Activity

Presented by Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
Chancellor

Outstanding Student Athletes

Presented by Trev Alberts
Vice Chancellor, Athletic Leadership and Management
Director, Intercollegiate Affairs

CLOSING REMARKS

Sacha E. Kopp, Ph.D.
Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

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.



LIZ PEKAS
Exercise Science

Liz Pekas is currently a second-year Ph.D. student in the School of Health & Kinesiology studying exercise physiology. Under the mentorship of Dr. Park in the UNO Vascular Research Lab, Liz has produced 14 peer-reviewed publications and has received top-place awards for several research presentations.

She will graduate in May 2023 and plans to pursue a postdoctoral fellowship. Her research interests include vascular dysfunction and redox signaling pathway alterations in cardiovascular diseases.



BRIDGET LILLETHORUP
English

Bridget Lillethorup is an English graduate student and teaching assistant. She will graduate in May 2021 with a master's degree in English and a Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing.

Her nonfiction writing has been published in several literary journals, and she is currently serving as the blog editor for the journal Literary Mama.

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

Josiah Aakre	Mathematics
Kaleb Ball	History
Brooke Beckius	Psychology
Cassidy Brocaille	Latino/Latin American Studies
Julia Cormack*	English and Foreign Languages & Literature
Megan Czerwinski	Environmental Science
William Danze	Philosophy
Brady Dodds*	Women's & Gender Studies
Brooklyn Larimore	Medical Humanities
LeeAnna Lui	Molecular and Biomedical Biology
Guadalupe Najera	Sociology
Josie Nelson	International Studies
Pranav Ojha	Neuroscience
Grahm Peschel	Geography
Kaia Phelps	Black Studies
Matt Pile	Chemistry
Luis Rodriguez*	Economics
Elias Smith*	Biology
Jimmy Wood*	Geology
Aya Yousuf*	Political Science

*Denotes Honors Student

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cody Anderson	Kinesiology
Caitlyn Bartholomew	Kinesiology
Brooke Berube	Secondary Education
Hannah Buswell	Public Health
Karla Carlson	Elementary Education
Kennedy Hughes	Elementary Education
Gena Jensen	Early Childhood Inclusive Education
Andrea Lopez	Secondary Education
Ana Ortiz	Library Science
Kolten Schnack*	Special Education - Sign Language Interpreter
Matt Spieker	Biomechanics
Elyse Thompson	Special Education
Tatum VanKooten	Communication Disorders

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Ashley Caito	Logistics & Supply Chain Management
Emily Coleman*	Real Estate & Land Use Economics
Haylee Faltin	Economics
Abigail Gevik	Human Resource Management
Justin Krug	Marketing
Will Major	Investment Science and Portfolio Management
Yumeka Matsushita	International Business
Samuel McDermott*	Banking and Financial Markets
Katie Moragues	Management
Keegan Olson	Business Finance
Erica Pokorney	Entrepreneurship
Faith Przymus	Legal Studies
Hailey Tierra	Sales
Austin Voigtman	Accounting

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Maddie Daley	Gerontology
Spencer Lueders	Criminology and Criminal Justice
Laynie Martineau	Emergency Management
Brigid Moynihan	Criminology and Criminal Justice
Travis Nelson	Aviation Institute (Professional Flights)
Alexander Nguyen	Aviation Institute (Unmanned Aircraft Systems)
Scott Nugent	Aviation Institute (Airport Transport Administration)

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

Sarah Liassidi	Multidisciplinary Studies (Healthcare Administration)
Samantha J. Salvatori	Multidisciplinary Studies (Political Science)
Benjamin Thornburg	Multidisciplinary Studies (Organizational Studies)

COLLEGE OF INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Kaitlyn Baysa*	IT Innovation
Andrew Bullock	Cybersecurity
Grace Maline*	Bioinformatics
Kyle T. Phipps	Computer Science
Oussama Talha	Management Information Systems

**Denotes Honors Student*

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION, FINE ARTS AND MEDIA

Nora Jean Baker	Music Education (K-12)
Joshua Holke	Music (Music Technology)
Nicholas A. Jansen	Theatre
Kaitlin Kratky	Studio Art
William Kunkle	Communication Studies
Katheryn Lopez-Chavez	Journalism & Media Communication
Cierra Osentowski	Studio Art (K-12 Education)
Aury Pilachai	Creative Writing
Hannah Rembert	Music (Music Performance)
Shelby Rohe	Art History
Isabella Saklar	Studio Art (Graphic Design)

UNL COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Joe Embury	Construction Engineering
Morgan Gallagher	Computer Engineering
Ethan Hall	Civil Engineering
Eric Jones	Electrical Engineering
Benjamin Schnatz	Architectural Engineering
Kaylee Tobiason	Construction Management

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.



AYA YOUSUF

College of Arts and Sciences

Aya is a political science and economics double major with a concentration in foreign and national security affairs. She will graduate in 2021.

In addition to her school work, she has served as Student Body President/ Student Regent during the 2019-2020 school year and was a member of various other student organizations including GenUN and ULOP.

She is also a member of the Goodrich Scholarship Program and the Honors Program on campus.



KATIE MORAGUES

College of Business Administration

Katie Moragues is a student in the College of Administration, with a concentration in management. She will graduate in May 2021.

In addition to her schoolwork, she is working full-time as a Human Resources Intern at the United States Strategic Command. She is also a member of the Goodrich Scholarship Program.



AURY PILACHAI

College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Aury Pilachai received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing in December 2020. Her work has been judged in many competitions including the: Association of Writers & Writing Programs; New Voice Reading Series; and even received a public reading at the Bookworm Bookstore.



KOLTEN SCHNACK

College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

Kolten Schnack graduated in December 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in education with a concentration in Sign Language Interpreter. In addition to his schoolwork, he mentored new Sign Language Interpreter students; provided interpreting services to The Rose Theater and the UNO student theater; and contributed to meetings of the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, a state agency devoted to advocacy.



KAITLYN BAYSA

College of Information Science & Technology

Kaitlyn Baysa is a student in the IT Innovation program with a minor in Spanish. She will graduate in May 2021 with her bachelor's degree and continue onto her master's in IT Innovation next semester.

In her time at UNO, she has worked in two labs at PKI, studied abroad in Spain, volunteered as a grade school basketball coach, and has been involved in Greek life on campus.



MADDIE DALEY

College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Maddie Daley is earning her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, with a concentration in management, and is working on her Bachelor of Science degree in gerontology, with a concentration in administration.

She will graduate in May 2021. She is a member of Beta Gamma Sigma and Sigma Phi Omega. Upon graduation, Maddie will pursue her master's degree in business administration with a concentration in Health Care Administration here at UNO.



SAMANTHA J. SALVATORI

College of Public Affairs and Community Service
Division of Continuing Studies

Samantha Salvatori graduated in December 2020 with a Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies, with a concentration in political science, a minor in nonprofit management, and secondary emphases in public administration, journalism, and media communications.

She was inducted into the Alpha Sigma Lambda honor society, graduated cum laude, and interned with the U.S. Department of State. She has served professionally throughout the nonprofit sector, including in program management, fundraising, and communications. She is also active as a volunteer ESL tutor with inCOMMON Community Development.



MORGAN GALLAGHER

UNL College of Engineering

Morgan Gallagher is graduating with a Bachelor of Science in computer engineering, with minors in cybersecurity, computer science, and math.

She will graduate in May 2021. She has held positions as an officer in the student branch of IEEE, serving as external relations, VP, and President through her time as an undergraduate.

She also has served as a tutor for the Engineering Study Stop as well as a TA for the freshman labs and seminar.

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.



SAMANTHA J. SALVATORI

College of Public Affairs and Community Service
Division of Continuing Studies

Samantha Salvatori graduated in December 2020 with a Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies, with a concentration in political science, a minor in nonprofit management, and secondary emphases in public administration, journalism, and media communications.

She was inducted into the Alpha Sigma Lambda honor society, graduated cum laude, and interned with the U.S. Department of State. She has served professionally throughout the nonprofit sector, including in program management, fundraising, and communications. She is also active as a volunteer ESL tutor with inCOMMON Community Development.

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.



HANNAH JOHNSON

College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Hannah Johnson is a student in the Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies program in the College of Public Affairs and Community Service. She will graduate in May 2021 with a Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies with a concentration in communication disorders and minors in gerontology and psychology.

Hannah is employed as a research assistant at Boys Town National Research Hospital in the Translation Auditory Physiology and Perception lab. She has served as President and Secretary for the UNO National Student Speech-Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA), as well as the Student State Officer of Audiology for Nebraska. Hannah will continue her education in the Doctorate of Audiology program at Rush University.

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.



AYA YOUSUF

College of Arts and Sciences

Aya Yousuf is a political science and economics double major with a concentration in foreign and national security affairs. She will graduate in 2021. In addition to her school work, she has served as Student Body President/Student Regent during the 2019-2020 school year and was a member of various other student organizations including GenUN and ULOP.

She is also a member of the Goodrich Scholarship Program and the Honors Program on campus.

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.



JESSICA WOOLEY

College of Arts & Sciences

Jessica Wooley is working on a Bachelor of Science in biology. She has completed a service-learning project with the Nebraska Forestry Service in connection to an entomology class at UNO. She also helps with a research collaborative at Glacier Creek Preserve.

In addition to her schoolwork, she works at Omaha Permaculture to help restore natural habitat to Omaha city space.



RACHEL CULROSS NIELSEN

College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

Rachel Culross Nielsen is a graduate student enrolled in the Speech-Language Pathology program at UNO. She will graduate this August. Throughout her time at UNO, she has been a member of the UNO student speech-language-hearing association. In addition, she enjoys serving as a board member for the Autism Society of Nebraska.

Rachel has participated in many Service Learning projects through UNO and has loved each experience as she has learned through hands-on work and served the community.

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.



ANDREA DAVES

College of Arts & Sciences

Andrea Daves is a student receiving dual degrees in Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Language & Literature with a Spanish concentration and a Bachelor of Science in neuroscience. Andrea is a four-year letter winner for the Omaha women's soccer team.

Outside of her schoolwork, she has volunteered at UNMC at South Medical Associates, being an animal caretaker in a lab here on campus, and spending time with youth across Omaha in various capacities.



MATT PILE

College of Arts & Sciences

Matt Pile will graduate in May 2021 with a bachelor's degree in chemistry with a concentration in medicinal chemistry and minors in medical humanities and molecular & biomedical biology. He is also a four-year member and two-year captain of the Omaha Men's Basketball team where he was a two-time academic All-American.

He will attend medical school at UNMC this fall.



University of Nebraska at Omaha Administration

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., Chancellor

Sacha E. Kopp, Ph.D., Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

Doug Ewald, M.A., Vice Chancellor, Business, Finance and Business Development

Dan Shipp, Ed.D., Vice Chancellor for Student Success

Trev Alberts, Vice Chancellor, Athletic Leadership and Management; Director of Intercollegiate Athletics

The Colleges

David Boocker, Ph.D., Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Nancy A. Edick, Ed.D., Dean, College of Education

Michelle Trawick, Ph.D., Dean, College of Business Administration

John Bartle, Ph.D., Dean, College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Hesham Ali, Ph.D., Dean, College of Information Science & Technology

Michael Hilt, Ph.D., Dean, College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D., Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs; Dean, Graduate Studies

David Richards, M.A., M.L.I.S., Dean, Criss Library

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Academic Programs

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

University of Nebraska Board of Regents

Timothy Clare, J.D.

Robert Schafer, J.D.

Jim Starks, Ph.D.

Paul Kenney

Jim Pillen, D.V.M.

Bob Phares

Elizabeth O'Connor, J.D.

Barbara Weitz

Student Regents

University of Nebraska at Omaha, Maeve Hemmer 2021-2022

University of Nebraska at Kearney, Max Beal 2020-2021

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Emily Johnson 2021-2022

University of Nebraska Medical Center, Thomas Schroeder 2020-2021

University of Nebraska Administration

Ted Carter, Ph.D., President

Susan M. Fritz, Ph.D., Executive Vice President and Provost

Chris Kabourek, M.B.A., Vice President, Business and Finance; CFO

James P. Pottorff, Vice President and General Counsel

Special thanks to:

Reader: Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, Ph.D.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha will be taking pictures at this event for use in advertising and other promotional materials, whether in print, electronic, or other media.

The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. UNO is an AA/EEO/ADA institution. For Title IX concerns, please contact the Title IX Coordinator(phone:402.554.2120). For ADA/504 accommodations or assistance, please call/contact the ADA/504 Coordinator(phone 402.554.2463) or the Accessibility Services Center (phone: 402.554.2872).



0294PRGMUC0421