

The Daily Iowan

GRADUATION EDITION | WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022

Reaching the summit

Over 5,000 Hawkeyes will graduate this year after an unpredictable college career. From engineering to the arts to sports, students are going on to make an impact in their own unique ways.



Grace Smith/The Daily Iowan

University of Iowa senior and environmental policy and planning major Ayoung Kim poses for a portrait on the Pentacrest at the UI on May 4.

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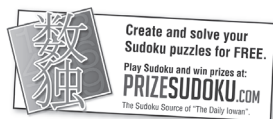
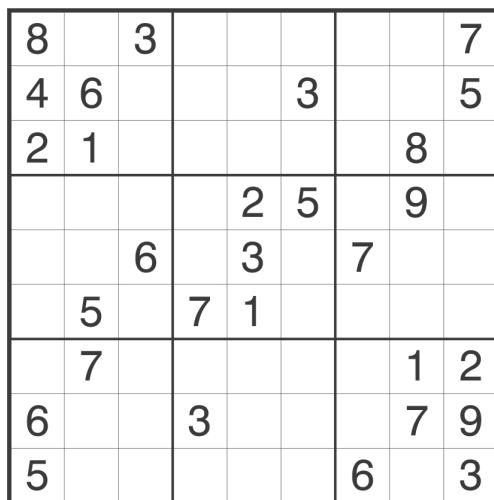
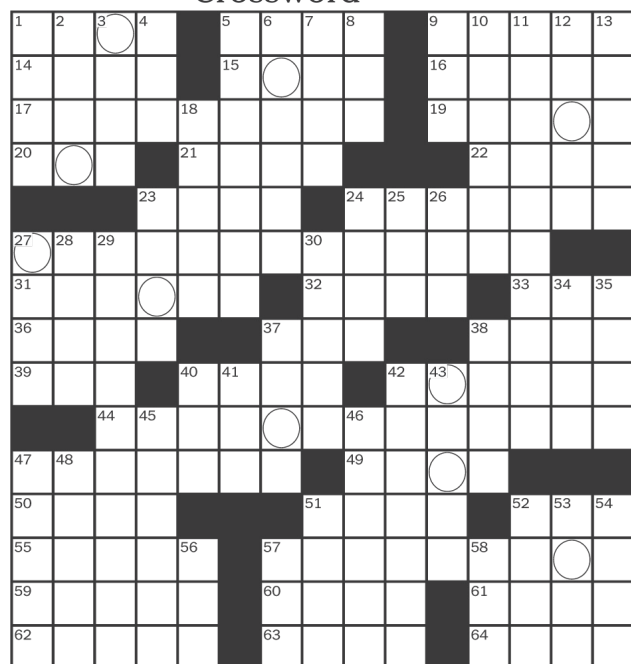
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UI affinity graduations return

After two years of virtual or limited-attendance events, affinity graduations have fully returned to the University of Iowa's campus to celebrate students from marginalized communities.

Marandah Mangra-Dutcher
News Reporter

To highlight minority students on campus, many Multicultural and International Student Support and Engagement, or MISSE, centers are hosting graduation celebrations this spring. The celebrations are all returning to full capacity with in-person programming.

The graduation celebrations for different identity groups are commonly called affinity graduations in MISSE, said Emma Welch, coordinator of the Pride Alliance Center.

"The purpose behind an affinity graduation is [that] we recognize that margin-

alized students are faced with barriers beyond academic barriers," she said. "Whether that's interpersonal barriers, or navigating this campus with an identity that is not the 'majority' where there's a disparity in graduation rates for LGBTQ students and additional marginalized students."

The Pride Alliance Center's Rainbow Graduation in 2020 was entirely virtual because of COVID-19. The celebration featured Instagram highlights of the LGBTQ+ graduates and a YouTube video with slides including quotes from the students, their photos, and their accolades. The Pride Alliance Center held a socially distanced and

crowd-limited celebration in 2021 where some of the virtual elements were transferred over.

"We don't always have that opportunity in the graduation ceremony to hear their message to their supporters," she said. "I thought that was actually really beautiful and that was a piece that we kept into last year's Rainbow graduation ceremony, which was very small because we were still in the height of COVID."

The Rainbow Graduation in spring 2022 has a record number of participants, Welch said.

"This year we have 70 and in the same vein, our last in-person celebration,

in 2019, we had 24 graduates at the in-person ceremony," she said. "Last year, with COVID, we had about 20 again because that was a smaller celebration."

Welch said each cultural center hosting an affinity graduation is communicating its ceremony's structure with the others but there are no standardized elements. She said the Pride Alliance Center gives graduates rainbow cords and upon request blue, white, and pink cords — the colors of the transgender pride flag — at the Rainbow Graduation.

The Rainbow Graduation will be held on May 10 at 6:30 p.m. in the Old Capitol Museum.

Samer Suleman, the Afro-American Cultural Center's student lead, is participating in the Black Graduation in May and was last year's emcee. Suleman said the Black Graduation is a celebration.

"The graduates all had goodie bags that had shirts [in] their sizes, messages, all these things," he said. "If you think about it as a collective grad party, that's how it felt."

Suleman said the celebration brings a sense of community on campus together.

"I think it brings a really good, strong sense of community and love," he said. "I'm really excited for

my little graduation party that I'm sharing with everyone else."

Like the Rainbow Gradu-

the Latino Native American Cultural Center and the International Student Support and Engagement,

“ I think it brings a really good, strong sense of community and love.

- Samer Suleman, Afro-American Cultural Center student lead

ation, the Black Graduation was held entirely virtual in 2020, Suleman said. The 2021 celebration was held in the Iowa Memorial Union Ballroom. The event will be in person this spring.

At the Black graduation, Suleman said, every graduate receives a Kente stole as a form of celebration to dignify the difficult journey of learning about themselves and their heritage.

"The practice is, the parents or friends of these graduates at one point during the celebration, are going to be asked to stand next to the graduate," he said. "The speaker will say some words and after they're done saying some words they say 'You can now put the stole on graduate.'"

Suleman said the Kente stole will be decorated with the graduation year and the university emblem.

The Black Graduation will take place May 13 at 5 p.m.

Other MISSE centers, like

will also hold affinity graduations of their own.

International Student Support and Engagement Coordinator Shuhui Lin said the center will hold its very first in-person affinity graduation for international students. The support center held its first celebrations during the pandemic. The International Student Graduation is on May 12 at 3 p.m. in the Senate Chambers in the Old Capitol.

The Latino Native American Cultural Center is partnering with the UI Latinx Council to put on the Latinx/a/o Graduation on May 12 at 5:30 p.m.

Suleman said celebrating in person is important.

"Going in person, seeing people dressed up having a good time, seeing the speakers, seeing awards being distributed, seeing slides and the whole just, like, dressed-up venue," he said. "That's memorable."

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Isabella Cervantes/The Daily Iowan

Photo Illustration.

Chasing a career in the arts

Carson Simpson will graduate this semester with degrees in dance and business. As a combination of these professions, Simpson is looking into graduate schools for arts administration.

Olivia Augustine
Arts Reporter

From a high school theater kid to a passionate dance major, and now as a future arts administrator, University of Iowa senior Carson Simpson has had quite the artistic journey.

Whether Simpson's taking the stage or advocating for arts education, the performing arts continue to be a key value in his life.

Simpson will graduate from the UI this May and is currently considering graduate school options

Simpson especially fell in love with ballet because of its straightforwardness and lack of interpretation.

"For me, I love the rigor, I love the discipline of it," he said. "Especially in ballet, I like the black and white of it. There's a long line of history with ballet that I fell in love with."

Shortly after starting dance, Simpson decided he wanted to study it in college. He prepared for his UI dance audition with private lessons and made it into the program.

Simpson said during his sophomore year of college

“ I'm really happy with how my senior year went. I wouldn't trade it for the world.

— Carson Simpson, graduating senior

for arts administration. He has applied to programs at the University of Southern California, Boston University, Yale, and New York University.

Simpson didn't begin dancing until his junior year of high school. To add a competitive edge to his theater involvement, he said he wanted to be a "triple threat" — meaning he could act, sing, and dance.

Once Simpson started dancing, he said he never looked back. Beginning in ballet, tap, and jazz classes,

he decided that though he loves the dance world, he wasn't sure if he wanted to be a professional dancer.

By the spring semester of his junior year, Simpson landed an internship with Mark DeGarmo Dance, an organization aiming to bring arts education to New York City public schools. Simpson was responsible for creating a showcase and fundraising, an experience where he said his passion for arts management and administration came to light.



Carson Simpson poses for a portrait at the Field House in Iowa City on April 29. Simpson is a double major in dance and business and is a part of the Iowa cheer team. Recently, graduate schools have reached out to him for arts administration.

Isabella Cervantes/The Daily Iowan

"That's where I really think I found my niche arts administration thing. I really value education and I really think it's important for kids to be exposed to the arts at a young age," he said. "As I continue on, that's a big emphasis that I want to have within arts administration, is just the education aspect."

Simpson plans to move to a large city like New York or LA, and said that he is nervous and anticipates some culture shock. However, he looks forward to the "vibrance" and "liveliness" of performing arts in a big city, Simpson said.

For his final year at the UI, Simpson joined the cheer team after a friend

told him they were looking for more men.

"I wanted to spice it up," city, Simpson said. "I wanted to try something new, and the spirit squad and being a cheerleader allowed for a performative aspect that I really missed with the COVID-19 pandemic."

Balancing a dance degree, a business degree, and

being on the cheer team his senior year, has at times been difficult to manage, Simpson said — but it has also been more rewarding than anything else.

"I'm really happy with how my senior year went," he said. "I wouldn't trade it for the world."

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Finding his beat

University of Iowa senior Tom Corbridge will start his master's degree at the University of New Mexico after graduation. Corbridge hopes to share his love for percussion with others through teaching.



Contributed photo of Thomas Corbridge, a senior percussion performance major at the University of Iowa.

Olivia Augustine
Arts Reporter

When he was in middle school, Tom Corbridge be-

gan playing the trombone. After his brother got mad at him for picking the same instrument that he played, Corbridge switched to per-

cussion — which would lead to a full-fledged career, and ultimately, a life-long passion.

Corbridge is now a senior

at the University of Iowa with a major in percussion performance and an arts entrepreneurship certificate. Following graduation in May, he will begin his master's degree at the University of New Mexico, where he also has a teaching assistant position lined up.

Music is culturally immersive and breaks the boundaries of social issues like bigotry and racism, Corbridge said. He emphasized the uplifting nature of music and how it inspires a positive outlook on life — an important part of why he loves it.

“It's a glimpse into other cultures, and I think that's just such a unique kind of experience,” he said. “It's something you can bring straight into your home, and while traveling is great, I think music can also be extremely eye-opening for a lot of people.”

Corbridge said that, for as long as music has been a part of his life, he has known it would one day be his career.

In the future, Corbridge said he would be interested in becoming a professor of percussion, and that he ultimately just wants to keep teaching and playing.

“That's kind of my goal,

both professionally and artistically,” Corbridge said. “I want to develop my skills so I can help develop my students' skills in the future.”

When Corbridge starts as

working here,” he said. “Then I got a job through Birch Creek, so it all kind of stems from the UI.”

Corbridge said he spends close to five hours a day

“That's kind of my goal, both professionally and artistically. I want to develop my skills so I can help develop my students' skills in the future.

- Tom Corbridge, University of Iowa senior

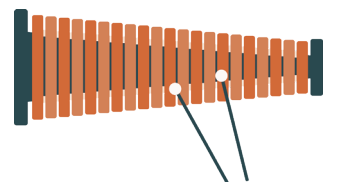
a TA in the fall, it won't be his first time teaching. In addition to percussion, Corbridge said that teaching is one of his long-standing passions.

In the summers, Corbridge works at Birch Creek, a music program camp in Door County, Wisconsin. Corbridge attended as a camper when he was in high school and said that spending two weeks focusing solely on music helped him to realize just how much he wanted to pursue percussion as a career.

Studying music at the UI has afforded Corbridge many opportunities, he said, especially job opportunities that have led him to other career endeavors.

“I've gotten jobs through University of Iowa, playing in musicals, but also my job at Birch Creek I got through

practicing. Since he has come to the UI, he said his mentality has shifted from



“I have to practice,” to “I get to practice.”

In part, Corbridge attributes his success at the UI to this shift in thinking and encourages other students in music to pursue what makes them happiest.

“You really have to put the time in, but if it's something you're interested in, it shouldn't feel like work,” Corbridge said. “It should just be fun, and that's kind of how I've taken it.”

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Hawkeye graduate NASA bound

Jack Sieleman said the road to his dream job hasn't been easy, but he doesn't regret a thing.



Gabby Drees/The Daily Iowan

University of Iowa student Jack Sieleman poses for a portrait at the Iowa City Municipal Airport in Iowa City on April 27. Sieleman completed flight school at the Iowa City Municipal Airport in late 2020 and will head to Houston this June after accepting a position from NASA as a flight controller in the propulsion group.

Madeleine Willis
News Reporter

Jack Sieleman knew he would be an engineer when he was 7 years old.

Fifteen years later, after Sieleman graduates from the University of Iowa, he will head to NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

"I picked out and started forming things I wanted to do with my life, and one of them was to work in flight operations and be the expert

on rocket engines, and that's my job description," he said.

Sieleman is graduating in May with a degree in mechanical engineering, with a focus area in design and analysis. In June, he will travel to Houston to start his position as a flight controller with the propulsion group.

He said his journey hasn't been easy, but he doesn't regret any of it. Some classes in the mechanical engineering major were very chal-

lenging, but if it were easy, he said, anyone would do it.

Working with NASA isn't Sieleman's first experience with an aerospace company. For the past year, he interned with Collins Aerospace, a maker of aerospace defense products.

Two years ago, Sieleman attended flight school and earned his pilot's license. He started the program at home in Southern California and finished at the Iowa

“He understands the physical being and theoretical being, puts both components together and that's what makes a great engineer.

- Phillip Derling, UI College of Engineering associate professor

City Municipal Airport.

Mary-Kate Wesley, a fourth-year UI student and Sieleman's classmate since their sophomore year, said she was incredibly proud of him and is looking forward to visiting him in Houston.

"NASA is a peak," she said. "He did it. He made it."

She and Sieleman both talked about working for aerospace companies. She said he was always meant to be at NASA, and getting there has been his passion since the first time they met.

Sieleman said he was motivated to pursue his career by relatives, who are also engineers, and his knack for curiosity.

"What kind of led me into engineering was the ability to solve whatever problem was in front of me," he said.

Sieleman said he owes his achievements to his main group of friends at the UI who he studied with for the past four years, as well as mentorship from professors.

He said one of those

lemen in class because not only was he very smart, but also very personable.

"It's great to have a student like that in class because he brings out the best in everyone," Deierling said.

Sieleman's ingenuity helps him to think outside of the box and ask questions, he said.

"He understands the physical being and theoretical being, puts both components together, and that's what makes a great engineer," Deierling said.

But it isn't just Sieleman's intelligence, Deierling added, as he is also humble, outgoing, caring, and expressive.

"Jack is a well-liked individual that keeps everyone entertained and interested," he said.

Wesley said that when Sieleman sets his mind to something, he will get it done no matter what.

Sieleman said he still sees himself working in flight operations five years from now. He said NASA is a very dynamic organization, and it has a lot coming up with its Moon to Mars program.

"I think what I am looking forward to the most is being a part of the world's largest engineering agency," he said.

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Graduating earlier than their peers

Two University of Iowa students are preparing to graduate at a younger age than most of their peers after deciding to speed up the process of earning their degrees.



Isabella Cervantes/The Daily Iowan

Kyle Lastine, a senior graduating in May, poses for a portrait in the Chemistry Building on April 25. Lastine began at the University of Iowa at age 16 through the Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy.

Kate Perez
News Reporter

At age 16, Kyle Lastine wanted to accelerate his postsecondary education.

Lastine is set to graduate from the University of Iowa in May at 18 years old. He completed his undergraduate degree in three years and is one-third of the way done with his master's degree.

Lastine sped up his college process by entering the UI's Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy at age 16, which allows high-achieving students to begin full-time, on-campus study at the university following their sophomore year of high school.

Lastine said he applied to the program after realizing it

could help him get a jump-start on his degree. He was accepted into the program and skipped his junior and senior years of high school in Johnston, Iowa.

"I had kind of felt like I had done everything that I wanted to that the high school would have offered, and then I also realized that college classes are a lot more targeted and faster than high school ones," Lastine said. "I just thought it would be a better use of my time to do everything here."

Lastine graduated from high school in May 2021 by transferring university credits back to his school. At the time, he was also over halfway done with his undergraduate degree in

computer science and engineering at the UI.

"I've always been into computers more than anything else," he said. "Once I got to college and started interacting with a lot of mechanical engineers, I kind of got into the mechanical side of it, too."

Walking around campus with college students at age 16 was intimidating at first, Lastine said, but it became normal after a while.

"When you get into the classes and you start doing as well as they are, then you realize, yeah, it doesn't really matter," Lastine said. "I don't think it really made much of a difference. No one has ever guessed that I'm younger than my grade would suggest."

While working to finish his undergraduate degree early, Lastine's path is also unusual as he is taking dual enrollment classes to finish his master's degree.

"Right now, I'm in three classes that will count towards my undergrad and master's degree even though I'm only taking them once," Lastine said. "That's, like, a third of my master's degree for the low, low price of nothing because I would have taken them anyways to graduate the first time."

Next year, Lastine will continue taking classes for his master's degree in computer science, while working as a software engineer at Collins Aerospace in Cedar Rapids.

For Lastine, the college experience was about finishing in an efficient manner.

"People hear what I do, and then they think that I love school ... I'm using the program to get a good chunk of my master's out of the way for fewer classes," Lastine said. "It's just getting the most reward out of the least amount of effort, really."

Jacob Sammon, a UI third-year and first-generation student, is also completing his degree in three years. For Sammon, his early graduation is possible because his counselor suggested that he take dual-credit classes in high school.

Sammon decided to fill

“No one has ever guessed that I'm younger than my grade would suggest.”

- Kyle Lastine, University of Iowa senior

his high school schedule with dual-enrollment classes but said it was an added layer of stress because, if he failed a class, it would show up on his college transcript.

Ultimately, he decided to enroll in the classes so he could go to a university after high school.

"I thought this is going to be my best, most efficient way to be able to get the money rather than hoping for a bunch of scholarship money," Sammon said. "I figured I could earn my way doing this, and so I spent a lot of time prioritizing taking

these classes, making sure I was getting good grades."

When Sammon graduated high school, he also graduated with an associate's degree, which transferred over to the UI.

From a financial standpoint, Sammon said it made a huge difference for him to come in with an associate's degree.

"That was like winning the lottery, but not winning, because I earned it," Sammon said. "It was like winning the educational Olympics, in a way."

Originally, Sammon planned to come to the university for two years then graduate with his under-

joining the publishing track in the English major.

"I came here thinking like yes, I'm going to enrich my writing," Sammon said. "And then I learned that literary magazines exist, and I actually really liked the process of what goes into making a book and being an editor."

Due to his head start in his education, Sammon said he was able to find his career goal, leading to his post-college plan of attending Columbia University in New York for the publishing institute program with Penguin Random House.

"If I hadn't received that associate's degree, I would have never needed the reason to spread out my schedule more, and I probably might not have explored the literary publishing track," Sammon said. "Now, that's what I want to do for the rest of my life."

Overall, Sammon said if he's learned anything over the past few years, it would be to slow down, appreciate what you have, and not worry about who you need to be. He said he hopes other UI students learn that as well.

"I hope that [students] can just take a second and focus on that right here, what's right in front of you, and exist in this moment and realize that what you're doing right now is important too, if you let it be," he said.

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UI seniors use certificate to fight for human rights

Four seniors in the Human Rights Certificate program at the University of Iowa started their involvement in human rights and education advocacy through a supervised internship.

Emily Delgado
News Reporter

Four graduating University of Iowa seniors found a purpose for human rights advocacy and activism in the university's Human Rights Certificate.

Through the certificate, Grace Wenstrom, Lauren Fuller, Kirsten Smith, and Levi Bowman were a part of a guided internship at Scholars at Risk, a national

organization that aims to protect international scholars and academic freedom.

Fuller, a political science major, said she and Wenstrom — a journalism and mass communications major — went to Washington, D.C., to speak to Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, Rep. Ashley Hinson, R-Iowa, and Rep. Cindy Axne, D-Iowa, in April about a human rights case. Wenstrom said the team was

assigned the case of Ilham Tohti, a Uyghur economist who was detained for creating a website for Uyghur-Han cross-cultural communication.

Each member of the team led meetings with the members of Congress. Wenstrom led a conversation with staffers from Ernst's office.

"I would say they were receptive. Kind of like all the others, they had a little bit of apprehension, just in

terms of [the] human rights angle, most of the staffers wanted to go toward like, 'OK, how's this economically affecting us,' and kind of a protectionist type of angle," Wenstrom said.

Through Scholars at Risk, the seniors worked alongside Clare Farne Robinson, Scholars at Risk advocacy director.

"University of Iowa students raise awareness about the persistent, deeply concerning, global problem of wrongful prosecutions and imprisonments of scholars and students," Robinson said. "But, perhaps even more important, the students' actions remind the world that imprisoned scholars are not forgotten. They remind the scholars and their families that the higher-education community remembers them, values them, and continues to support them."

Wenstrom said the conversations with the congressional staffers taught her to be assertive.

Before coming to the UI and taking the Seminar in Human Rights Praxis: Supervised Internship, each member of the group had an interest in human rights and advocacy, Fuller said.

"We've all kind of talked about being interested in human rights and advocacy and social justice awareness," Fuller said.

Bowman, a global health studies major, said he

was interested in advocating social inequities at a young age and was concerned. It was during her time at the UI that she started to get involved in the legal side of advocating for human rights.

“Once I got into human rights through the certificate, I figured out that that's what I want to do.”

- Kirsten Smith, University of Iowa senior

started his work in advocacy after seeing his father, an Iowa senator, pursue advocacy and activism.

"I just started working with the Democratic caucus in Iowa," Bowman said. "And so, that just kind of turned into more of an advocacy role."

Smith, a communication studies major, came into college with the intent of getting into women's rights, but changed her mind when she discovered the Human Rights Certificate.

"Once I got into human rights through the certificate, I figured out that that's what I want to do," Smith said. "And I'm actually going to be attending a graduate program for human rights in the fall."

Wenstrom started no-

"I kind of carried that through to my summers in college, that's really when I first started to, like, explore if I wanted to attack it from a legal sense or not," Wenstrom said. "So I did some volunteer work and Legal Aid firms and things and really started to build my interest that way."

All four seniors said the professors within the Human Rights Certificate helped foster their dedication to human rights and advocacy.

"Even just feeling a passion, while they're lecturing, is sometimes intense," Smith said. "It's so inspiring and makes you want to be like them and learn what they know."

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Contributed photo, from left to right, of Lauren Fuller, Delaney Patrick, Olivia Friederick, Esti Brady, and Grace Wenstrom. The group traveled to Washington, D.C., to speak to congress members.

Everyone needs an editor

I prefer to keep myself out of the news — but for my senior send-off, I'm ready to tell my own story.



Rylee Wilson
Managing Editor

Someone once told me maybe I liked journalism so much because I wanted to write, but I wasn't ready to write about myself.

That's probably true. I've written hundreds of stories in my four years at *The Daily Iowan*, but none of them have been about me.

So for my last *DI* story, and the first one about me, I want to share what being a journalist has taught me.

First, this job has developed my confidence in every way.

If anyone had told me just how much talking on the phone with people I'd never met this job would require when I started, I probably would have picked something else to do. The first few times I interviewed a source, I would pretend to be a different version of myself — someone who knew what she was doing.

Now, I am the person

I used to pretend to be. Being a *DI* reporter has taught me everything I know about advocating for myself, speaking up, and how to send a killer, polite-but-firm follow-up email.

I've covered enough crazy, incredible news for an entire career in just four years here. I went from covering student government, to presidential candidates, and even to Washington, D.C., twice. And I did all these things as the youngest reporter in the room.

It's a tough position to be in, but it taught me I can hold my own anywhere.

This job taught me to be confident, but it also taught me to persevere and to have a little trust in the universe.

There's an old cliché that making a newspaper is a daily miracle. It's more like a biweekly miracle at *The DI* now, but every time I thought a paper would never come together and we'd just have to draw a smiley face on the blank page, we found a way to make it happen.

Every time I thought I would totally blow a deadline, and definitely, get fired, someone called me back at the last minute. (If

you were ever that source, seriously, thank you.)

Of course, I've learned so much more than I can fit in these pages. But I've only got 500 words, so I'll get to the most important lesson I've learned: everyone needs an editor.

In fact, I have so many people I want to thank that I couldn't fit it all here, so I've left those for the web edition.

We often say that the *DI* is a learning lab. Part of learning is messing up — and I have messed up many times. As much as I hate to say it, I will, most likely, continue messing up for the rest of my life.

But a good editor helps you fix the mistake, learn from it, and move on. And everyone I've worked with has helped me to do that. I hope I've been able to be that editor for others.

Whatever I do next, I know I owe it all to the people who have guided me — my editors on the page and in life. Though I'm donning my alumni T-shirt and deleting the *DI* Slack off my computer for good, I'm so lucky to have this group of editors, mentors, and friends to turn to when I need help.

rylee-wilson@uiowa.edu

Living outside my comfort zone

Although I'm not pursuing a career in journalism, my work with DITV has taught me life lessons I'll never forget.



Lauren Johnson
DITV Politics Reporter

There's this old saying that goes, "Life happens just outside your comfort zone." When I was younger, I never really believed it. Being out of my comfort zone made me anxious, and anxiety makes it difficult to feel like I'm living and not just surviving. For most of my life, I happily existed in my comfort zone.

I probably would have stayed there, too, if I hadn't lived alone in fall 2020, realized I missed people and wanted to do something that let me interact with them. I had friends who were a part of DITV at that point, and when one of them suggested I apply, I impulsively threw my comfort zone out the window and said yes. I had no prior journalism experience and didn't plan on going into journalism, but I showed up ready to learn what went into producing the news.

By leaving my comfort zone and working at DITV,

I've learned three important lessons. First, the best teachers are the people around us. Writing stories meant I had to reach out to people who had far more expertise on a topic than I did, and I learned a lot listening to them.

The people I met at work also taught me so much, from how to be a stronger journalist to how to be more confident in what I had to say. The confidence I gained after leaving my comfort zone helped me find my voice, which was lesson No. 2. I quickly realized you can't tell someone else's story if you don't know how to tell your own.

Before working here, I frequently second-guessed myself and wondered if the things I had to say were really worth saying. DITV forced me to gain more confidence in myself as a thinker and communicator. After finding this confidence, I found myself more willing to do the things that scared me at DITV as well.

When I started working at DITV, I was terrified of tech roles. Now, I've directed quite a few broadcasts and — shocker — they went pretty well. Additionally, I was fortunate to have a news director this year who

believed in and trusted me enough to let me create a political segment. I am so proud of the work that went into creating "Back-room Breakdown," and I know it will be an experience I'm going to miss.

Finally, I learned life outside my comfort zone is actually fun. I've had a lot of great experiences through my work at DITV, such as covering the 2020 election on Election Night and getting to go to Washington, D.C., with a group of reporters to interview members of Iowa's congressional delegation the week the Senate voted to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court.

I've made incredible friendships through my work here, and I will truly miss the people I've worked with as we all move on to other things. I've grown considerably as a person through my work at *The Daily Iowan*. Although I don't plan to go into journalism after I graduate, I will be forever grateful for the experiences I've had as a student broadcast journalist. So, for the last time: From the University of Iowa, Lauren Johnson, DITV.

lauren-e-johnson@uiowa.edu

Contributing to my community

Feeling like a fish out of water from Houston, Texas, working at the *DI* the last four years has made it feel like home.

Katie Ann McCarver
Copy Editor



When I came to the University of Iowa as a freshman, I didn't know anyone. My mom helped me settle in before embarking on the 16-hour drive back to Houston, Texas, and in her absence I experienced the greatest sense of loneliness I have ever felt. My surroundings were completely unfamiliar — I knew little to nothing about Iowa, and I had no connections

within a hundred-mile radius.

I had two options — I could walk with my head down and wait for friends to find me, or I could set out to find them myself. I chose the latter, and within a week I was working as a news reporter at *The Daily Iowan*.

Four years later, I have written countless stories about the UI; interviewed multiple university leaders and Iowa politicians; and overseen extensive coverage of Iowa City's culture and community.

Though I initially came to the *DI* for its promise of practical journalistic experience,

that's not why I stayed. Despite the stress of late nights eating Buffalo Wild Wings and editing stories, rushing to write about an event across campus at the last minute, or staying up for 24 hours in the Iowa Memorial Union to cover UI Dance Marathon, I clung to the *DI* throughout my college career for two reasons.

One, because it cultivated a deeper appreciation in me for my community, and because working alongside passionate people in a high-energy collegiate newsroom is a one-of-a-kind feeling.

I owe much of my belief in

the importance of what we do at the *DI* to my editors over the years. To my freshman year editors Brooklyn Draisey and Kayli Reese, and former executive editors Marissa Payne and Sarah Watson, you are all wonderful teachers and I am grateful for how you took me under your wing — whether on the higher-education beat, or by entrusting me with a newly minted copy editor position.

Sophomore year, together with my forever co-News Editor Alexandra Skores, and an incredibly hard-working team of reporters, we covered major campus events, primary elec-

tions, the start of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, and more.

Zandra, you are a force to be reckoned with as a writer and an individual. Thanks for always holding me up when I was tempted to fold under the pressure. I want to be you when I grow up.

Finally, thank you to my family for giving me the courage to move to Iowa and endure the ups and downs of my four years here. No experience as a writer has been more important to me than writing on my mother's loss of friends in the Oklahoma City Bombing,

and her story since then, for which I won a Hearst Journalism Award. Mama, I look to you for inspiration daily.

I love this campus, this city, and this state, and I attribute much of that admiration to the Iowa City City Council meetings I have had to attend, UI research articles I have had to write, and long Iowa drives I have had to do for this newsroom. Thank you *Daily Iowan*, for not only educating me on my community, but allowing me to give back to it through storytelling.

katie-mccarver@uiowa.edu

The *DI* was my classroom

Joining *The Daily Iowan* taught me more about being a journalist than any class I took at the University of Iowa.

Rachel Schilke
Senior Print Editor



When I stepped into *The Daily Iowan* newsroom for the first time, I never could have imagined what unbelievably crazy and unexpected experiences I would have that would shape me into the journalist, leader, and person that I am today.

I am unique among of my fellow seniors, as I joined the *DI* as a sophomore rather than a freshman. I recall a time sitting in my Principles of Journalism class with several *DI* reporters, two of whom would eventually be-

come close friends.

They seemed to know the answer to every question posed by our professor by the second day of class, especially on ethics and interviewing tactics. I would constantly ask myself, "How did they know this if we haven't learned anything yet?"

I came to realize that sitting and listening to people talk about journalism would not do anything for me — I needed to go out and see for myself what it is like to be a journalist.

This is not to say I didn't want to join the *DI* the second I stepped onto the University of Iowa campus. In fact, the *DI* and its eagerness to accept freshmen right off

the bat is what drew me to pick the UI out of five other colleges, all with equally talented campus newspapers.

The reason I didn't join, I told people, was because I was busy with school and connecting with new friends. The real reason? I was afraid I could not live up to the challenge. I assumed everyone I met would be so much more talented than me, and I would fail.

Sophomore year, I began to rethink why I came to the UI in the first place. The *DI* popped into my head, and I decided to email then-editor Marissa Payne about openings in news. The rest is history.

Here, I learned how to best interview underrepresent-

ed populations and amplify their voices. I reported on everything from profiling the first Latina woman to win Spanish awards in poetry and writing, to writing an in-depth project on the fearless Black women behind Iowa City's abolitionist and Black Lives Matter organization, the Iowa Freedom Riders.

Reporting on the Mollie Tibbetts murder trial as a junior alongside well-seasoned, full-time media members will forever be a highlight of my journalistic career. From that experience, I became an expert at following a story to its entirety and learned how to handle an article with caution yet conviction. I learned to take mistakes and turn them

into teaching moments.

I appreciate those who opened their hearts and homes to me so I could add color and purpose to projects and articles. The *DI* taught me that there is nothing more important than the question of "why," along with the "what" and the "how."

This newsroom not only educated me in my profession, but also on the meaning of true friends that support you and your love for journalism. One of the girls I met in my Principles of Journalism class became my best friend, so thank you to the *DI* for bringing me Josie Fischels. I will miss you, our 10-plus hours in the newsroom, and our many crazy, wild, and

wonderful nights.

To the lovely news editors, Eleanor and Sabine, and my design partner in crime, Marandah, it has been a privilege to watch you grow as writers, designers, and mentors. I cannot wait to see what you accomplish.

The *DI* gave me more than I could ever hope for: an educational experience that I could never receive anywhere else. As I take my next steps in Washington, D.C., I will carry with me the successes and mistakes that I made at the *DI* to continue what I've wanted to do since stepping into the newsroom: learn a little bit more every single day.

rachel-schilke@uiowa.edu

Quittin' time

I can't thank enough the people that make this newspaper tick and the experiences it's given me.



Caleb McCullough
Executive Editor

It wasn't until a couple years into reporting that I realized this was a thing I could really stick with.

That's a little late, considering all the money and time I had spent on school and pumping out halfway-decent articles at *The Daily Iowan*. But to be honest, I spent a couple years with plenty of misgivings that I wasn't cut out for this stuff.

But it was during the 2020 election — the chaos on caucus night, flying out to Vermont, following Iowa's competitive House and Senate races, and the excitement of election night — that I really caught the bug.

Journalism is a unique endeavor. It's probably the only job where I can get paid to find things out and annoy people about it, which I'd do for free. You don't need anything but a pen and paper, and hopefully a few readers. To paraphrase the apropos words of Pulitzer Prize winning *Storm Lake Times* Editor Art Cullen: Our only license comes from the Constitution.

"Nobody can require some academic degree of us to publish," he wrote in a 2014 column addressed to his son, Tom. "All we have is our own credibility, which

is called into question twice a week in our circumstance. Readers decide our future, not any branch of government."

It may not be the most revered or highest paying field, but somebody's gotta do it. Good information will always be valuable, and if there's no real information out there, nefarious things will fill the gaps.

The people who have helped me along the way are too numerous to name here, but in the spirit of the above quote, it's really the readers and the community that I have to thank. Thanks for letting us tell your stories, and I hope we've been able to amaze, shock, delight, and inform.

Thanks for holding us accountable when we fall short. I may not agree with every Twitter reply, Facebook comment, or all caps email, but healthy skepticism and dialogue keeps us honest and on our toes.

DI Publisher Jason Brummond and coaches Lyle Muller and Jennifer Wagner have been invaluable mentors to me over the last four years. I learned more in conversations and critique with those three than I ever could have in a classroom.

And I can't give enough credit to the people on this masthead — you can flip back and read their names yourself. From picking up breaking stories, to dashing out to get photos, to simple things like swiping me a flex meal when I didn't have time or money (or both), the people in this newsroom deserve far more of the credit than the guy running the show. I spent most of

this year just telling them what to do. They're the ones who actually did it.

It's truly remarkable the well of talent that this place produces. Our newsroom leaders could hold their own against professional journalists anywhere in the field, and the people coming up to take the reins are just as capable.

Once, when I went on a college visit to Iowa State, a promotional video they showed promised college would be "the best four years of your life." (The UI, on the other hand, had the good sense to keep our expectations low).

I was fairly repulsed by the concept. Why would I want the best part of my life to end at age 22? I still hope that's not true, but these last four years will be hard to beat.

I'll enjoy the extra sleep and a somewhat regular work schedule. But I'll miss the late nights in the newsroom, the scramble to break the latest story, and the feeling of relief when it all comes together.

Waking up every Monday and Wednesday to remember that, remarkably, our paper had made it onto the stands and seeing people picking up copies and flipping through them around campus never got old.

I wouldn't be much of an editor if I couldn't keep it brief, so I'll wrap things up. It's been a pleasure to report on the greatest little college town in the world. Good luck everybody.

caleb-mccullough@uiowa.edu

'The show must go on'

Rebuilding and leading DITV has been a highlight of my time at the University of Iowa.



Elisabeth Neruda
DITV News Director

I'm an anxious person, so I tend to carry worry around with me — especially with TV related things. I worry that if I am not physically in the studio, the building will burn down, or everything that can go wrong — will.

To be fair, DITV has thrived despite many technical issues. So, these worries are not unfounded. But, to my knowledge, no actual fires have ever broken out.

I keep a tight grip on TV because I care. This was a rebuilding year for us. I put a lot of effort into making the show the best it could be and the studio a place where people were their best selves. For a long time, caring for me looked like being at every production night and every live show and surviving off of five hours of sleep.

I held on tight to DITV because I had big goals for what I wanted it to be. We were coming back from COVID-19, I was worried productions would shut down as soon as we were hitting a stride.

We were going through a lot of employee turnover, I was worried we would have to produce a newscast with a minuscule staff.

We were going back to live shows instead of shooting and editing the show on our phones, I was worried none of us would know what we were doing and fail spectacularly.

But to quote Lorne Michaels of Sat-

urday Night live, "The show doesn't go on because it is ready. It goes on because it is 11:30." Replace the time with 8:30 a.m. and you have DITV.

I had to learn that the show always goes on.

I had to learn to let go. To let the show be what it is and work with the good, the bad, and the ugly.

I did not learn this fast. Coaches would tell me every week that nothing in TV happens alone. Other directors would ban me from the studio when I got burnt out. I had an amazing, weird, talented staff who worked so hard to achieve our collective goal of a great show.

Finally, it clicked.

It is tough wanting to give people the space to make mistakes and also wanting a perfect show. It hurts when you write and produce a great show and then the TV gods smite you with faulty mics, a broken monitor, or a prompter that turns off on a whim.

But that is the nature of TV. You can't pay for the type of experience that is troubleshooting and rewriting until the last possible second.

Letting go is hard because change is hard. This studio is where I have spent a majority of my time for the last two years. This is my morning and night routine. These are the people I spend most of my time with. This is where I learned what I want to spend my life doing.

But if there was ever a time to truly let go of the reins, it is now. The show has grown far more than I ever could have imagined. The sky's the limit for what DITV can achieve. There is nothing else I know more in this life than the fact that the people taking over will do a great job.

DITV, you will have a viewer for life.

elisabeth-neruda@uiowa.edu

CHRISTOPHER TROST

We are all so very proud of you and all that you have achieved!



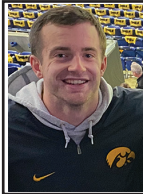
We are excited for what your future holds and all of the happiness it will bring you. Always take pride in how far you have come and continue to have faith in how far you can go.

COLLEEN CLAFFY

Cheers to you!!!

Congratulations on Graduation and a New Job!

We are so very proud of you!
Love, Your Family



DEREK HANSEN

We are so proud of you!
Love you more, Mom, Dad & Maddie
Go Hawkeyes!!

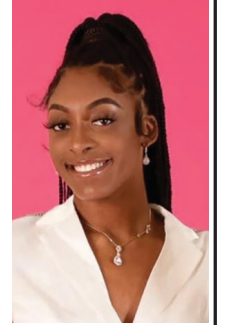


Zahria De'Mere Flake

Congratulations!

We are very proud of your accomplishments. Looking forward to seeing what's next.

With God all things are possible!
Love Mommy, Dad & Queen



JESSICA SCHROEDER

We are so proud of you and your accomplishments! Congratulations on your ChemE degree! Good Luck with your new job!
Love, the FAMBAM



KELSEY HARRELL

Congratulations!

We are so proud of you and your accomplishments!

Can't wait to visit your new home in Tampa!

Love, Dad, Mom, and Aaron



LUCEE JAMES LAURSEN

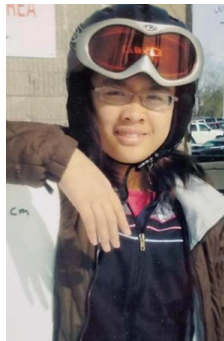
Knowledge unlocks your future potential. The diploma helps a little too! Congratulations, we are so proud of you.
Love Mom & Dad



JAY KING

You have completed your remarkable student career. We're so happy that you achieved this great milestone. **Congratulations!**

We're so proud of you.
Love, Dad and Mom



PARKER MURPHY

Congratulations Parker on your graduation! We are so proud of you!
Love, Your Family



CAROLINE JOY BITTLE

Congratulations Sweet Caroline! We are so proud of you and all you have accomplished. Your resiliency and can-do spirit have brought you this far, and they will carry you into your future.
Love, Dad and Mom





KYLA PETERS
 You did it!
 We are so incredibly proud of you.
 Love, Mom, Kenny and Bryce

RILEY MOHR
 Congratulations on your graduation from the College of Pharmacy!
 We are proud of you and all your accomplishments!
 We love you!
 Dad, Mom, and Gracie

NICOLAS A CARZOLI 

Prepared and ready to conquer the corporate world. Congratulations!
 We love you! Mom, Dad & Andrew



ANGELICA MARIE DIAZ (JELLY)

Jelly, Congratulations on your nursing degree. We are overly joyed and so very proud of you. Nothing can explain the excitement we have for your future. We know you're ready to change the world and the world really needs you right now.
Congratulations to all your Hawkeye brothers and sisters you've made along the way.
 We love you!
 Mom, Dad and Armani




SEAMUS RANEY
 Congratulations, Seamus!
 We are so proud of you.
 Love,
 Mom, Papa and Fiona




LYDIA ROSE
 Congratulations on your two degrees!
Amazing!!
 I am so proud of you & look forward to seeing what you do next!
 Love you! Mom

CALEB McCULLOUGH

Congratulations, we are so proud of you!
 Love, Your Family



NICHOLAS LIND
 congratulations on becoming one of Iowa's newest doctors!
 Love, Mom, Dad and Family




BRADY OVERSTREET
 Congratulations Punkin' Town!

My how time flies... We are very proud of you and your accomplishments!
 Love,
 Mom & Dad





RILEY MOHR

As Eleanor Roosevelt said, *"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."* Continue to dream. Continue to believe. Look how far those actions--and a whole lot of hard work--have gotten you! I am so proud of you!
I love you very much! Grandma



ANNA RENEE VLASAK

Congratulations on your graduation from the College of Education! We are very proud of you and all of your accomplishments! Can't wait to see what is next for you as you continue your life's journey!
 Love, Dad & Mom





AIDAN O'CONNOR

Congratulations Aidan O'Connor on your graduation from the College of Public Health!

So proud of our 4th Generation Hawkeye!

Love, Your Family



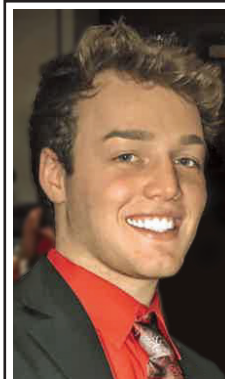
MEGAN McEVOY

Congratulations Honors Graduate!
With love and pride today and always!
Mom & Dad



SAM EICHHORN

Congratulations on your graduation, Sam!
We love you and are so proud of you.
Love, Mom, Dad, Leah and Liz



DOMINICK GIANNINI

Congratulations Dom!!
We are so proud of your accomplishments and hard work.
Love, Mom and Dad (Alan)

CONGRATULATIONS, SIGNE NETTUM!!

We are so proud of you graduating with honors in two degrees. Good luck on your way to future accomplishments.

Love,
Your large and extended family



KAMARA SHAW

Congratulations! We are extremely proud of you and your accomplishments.
Love, Your Parents



ALEXIS OPPMAN

Congratulations!
We are very proud of you and your accomplishments!
Love, Mom and Dad



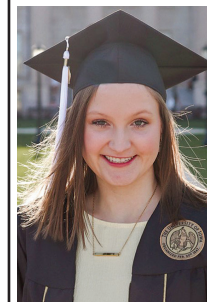
CONGRATULATIONS TO OLIVIA BULL!

We are bursting with pride in your accomplishments and excitement about your future!

So much love,
Dad, Mom, Chico, and Sam



AMELIA THORESON



The "Yellow" group, International Relations and Spanish at UI, a job in Austin - you know what you want and go after it!
I am so proud of you!

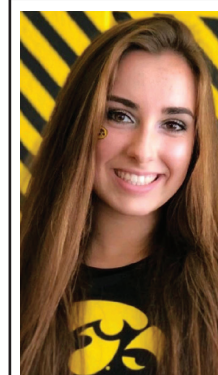
Love, Mom



LUKE O'CONNOR

Congratulations!
We are so proud of you!

Love, Mom & Dad



MARISSA MEADE

Congratulations on your graduation from the College of Medicine!

We are so proud of you!!!
Love, Mom and Dad



CONGRATULATIONS LAUREN JOHNSON!

We are proud of all of your accomplishments and are confident great things are in store for you.

*Love, Mom and Dad,
Abby and Fergus*



CHRISTINE BARTON
Congratulations! So proud of your graduation from Tippie!
Hawkeye for Life!
Love, Mom, Dad, PJ



LEXI MENDOZA

Congratulations on all your hard work and accomplishments!

We are so very proud of you!

*Love, Mom, Dad, Elijah,
Darion and Miguel*

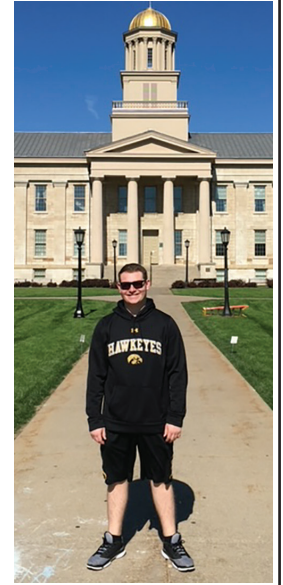


SAMMY SOMMERFELD

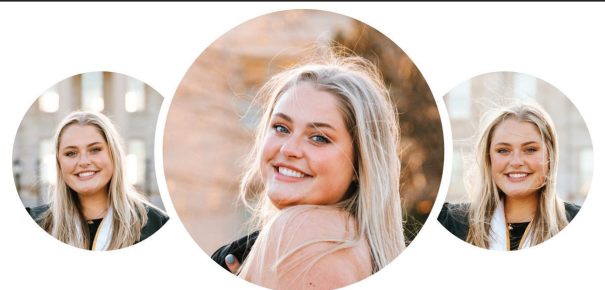
Congratulations!
We're so proud of you and the story you've written at Iowa.

We look forward to your next chapter.

We love you very much,
Mom, Dad, and Charlie



NATHAN PETSCH
Congrats! We are so proud of you Nathan!
Love Mom, Dad, Megan & Zach

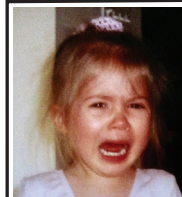


KAITLYN ZABADAL

We are so very proud and happy for you!
May your feet always take you where your heart wants to go.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Love, Dad and Heather

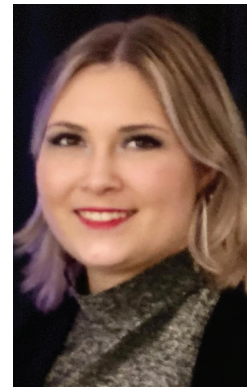


CLAUDIA WITHERS

Chip, Chip, Hooray!!
We are in awe of your talent and accomplishments and are so proud of you.

Congratulations on your graduation from the College of Engineering!

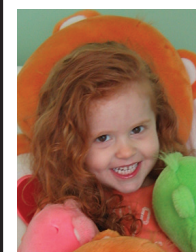
*Love you always, Mom, Dad,
Brandon & Tabitha*



CONGRATULATIONS 533!



Keep your heads in the game but your hearts in the song!



REESE MORGAN

CONGRATULATIONS!

I am so proud of you!
The whole world is ahead!

Love, Mom



ANNA ELLIS

Congratulations on your Bachelor of Arts Degree in English-Creative Writing with High Honors and two Minors!

We are so proud of you!

*Love, Mom & Daddy-O,
Evie & Peter, Luna &
Scully*



RYAN MIKSCH

We are very proud of you chasing your dreams!! Congratulations on a job well done!!
Love, Dad and Mom

Congratulations to the one and only

CLAIRE KIPLE -

you are loved by all.
Your whole family is proud of you!



JUSTIN ALPERS

Congratulations!

You have accomplished so much at the University of Iowa. We cannot wait to watch you grow and learn in PT school.

Fly High Hawkeye!

Love, Mom, Dad, and Brandon



CONGRATULATIONS, DILLON and ALIVIA!

Graduate MSECE and College of Education.

So proud!

Love, The Africa's



MEREDITH MURPHY

Life is full of both sunshine and storms.

You've always been skilled at facing both with gusto!

We are in awe of you and so incredibly proud! -Love, Mom and the whole etended fam- ♡



CONGRATULATIONS to our 4th generation Iowa Hawkeye grad....

ALLY GREENE

We are so proud of you!

Love,
Your Family



CONNOR BAACK

Be bold, be fearless...
Adventures await you!

CONGRATULATIONS

Love, Mom & Dad



GRACE ECHOLS

We are so very proud of you!
Love, Mom, Dad, Poppy, UU,
and all your friends and relations!

*Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
and he will establish your plans.
Proverbs 16.3*



Congratulations!

IOWA



CONGRATS!

College of Nursing Class of 2022

POLITICAL SCIENCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS


Congratulations!
CLASS OF

2022

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cole Adesso | Nicolett Fodor | Cora Murphy |
| Majid Al-Kaylani | Ben Freking | Emily Murphy |
| Jack Baird | Olivia Friederick | Elisabeth Neruda |
| Jordan Banfield | Lauren Fuller | Bryant Nichols |
| Grace Basler | Matthew Galles | Nathan Oakes |
| Paige Batten | Kyle Galvin | Koy Ortega |
| Gabriel Bautista | Eduardo Garces | Zachary Osgood |
| Thomas Beckett | Sophia Gilbert | Delaney Patrick |
| Vanessa Bittok | Joseph Grabowski | Lauren Phillips |
| Madison Black | Brian Grace | Nicholas Pryor |
| Jared Bock | Ben Gradert | Spencer Roetlin |
| Emma Bohn | Brady Hackney | Rachel Schilke |
| Ashley Chipokas | Amna Haider | Justice Schmidt |
| Megan Christianson | Eli Harberts | Burke Scott |
| Jacob Ciabatti | Claire Hardiek | Emmanuel Shott with Two Arrows |
| Chloe Clemenson | Kelsey Harrell | Zachary Silver |
| Payton Colbert | Dylan Harvey | Drew Sloan |
| Sydney Conaway | Emily Heinrich | Holden Smith |
| Antonio Cosimini | Carson Helms | Sean Suetsugu |
| Caleb Courtney | Noah Herr | Anna Sullivan |
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| Ella Daniels | John Kamp | Timothy Taylor |
| Connor Delaney | Maria Kayser | Amelia Thoreson |
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The Daily Iowan

would like to congratulate our graduating staff

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The Basics • • • • •

My name is Jack Squire. I grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y., and enrolled at the University of Iowa in February 1948. I majored in journalism and graduated in February 1952. I'm now retired and live in Raleigh, North Carolina.

I was sports editor of *The Daily Iowan* my senior year. The last big story I worked on was the naming of a new football coach from Washington State. A fellow named Evashevski.

The Giving • • • • •

In 1956, I received a mailing soliciting a contribution to a new program at the university called the Old Gold Development Fund. I remember sending a small donation. Since my salary at the time was \$90 a week, it had to be small. Every year thereafter requests for contributions came in from the University of Iowa Foundation and every year I complied. That's 64 consecutive years of giving. My wife long complained that I'm a creature of habit and routine. I guess she was right. While the size of my donations grew as my income grew, they were never huge. Unlike some of my contemporaries (Dick Levitt and Marvin Pomeranz), there are no buildings on campus named for me.

The Reasons • • • • •

Nothing complicated. I loved my four years in Iowa City. The school. The campus. The people. The town. The sports. The education and training I received that led to a successful career at *Look* magazine and then *Newsday*, the Long Island newspaper. Sadly, the state legislature is now unable (or unwilling) to provide the funding to maintain the UI's excellence. So without financial support from alumni and friends, decline is inevitable.

The University of Iowa Foundation (now the UI Center for Advancement) has done a splendid job raising impressive amounts of money. But here's the shocker: At Iowa, a small percentage of alumni contribute each year. The same is true, more or less, at most public universities. Imagine what it would mean to this campus if every graduate gave – no matter the size of their gift. That's where you come in...

The Proposition • • • • •

I'm 90 years old and the time I have left to contribute is limited.

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Jack Squire wrote this letter before his death in 2020. His daughter, Claudia, continues to make gifts in Jack's name to keep the donation streak alive.

Jack Squire
1952 University of Iowa graduate

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Finding and holding on to a love for storytelling

Writing has been a large part of my life for a while now, and I am grateful my experience at *The Daily Iowan*.



Yassie Buchanan
Opinions Columnist

Two years ago, suffering from boredom during quarantine, I decided to explore what *The Daily Iowan* had to offer. I remember seeing “we are always hiring” on the website and tentatively filling out an application.

I had no experience with journalism, and no idea how to go about writing my first column, but through

experience and practice started to get acclimated to things. Two years ago, I had never heard of what the AP Stylebook was, had no concept of a lede, or what supplements referred to. My eyes were opened to a whole new world of writing.

Working in journalism has shown me the passion this field requires. It has also taught me the importance of asking why, especially when writing about social justice issues. While bringing attention to an issue is a first step, often there is a lot to investigate within an overarching issue.

Without asking and being asked why, I never would have finished my project, “Examining the erasure of Black history in education,” which won best column in the 2021 Associated Collegiate Press Awards. I also would never have finished my most recent project on infant mortality, opening my eyes to another disparity Black Iowans face.

I am grateful that the *DI* has allowed me to develop as a writer and as a critical thinker.

Another way writing at the *DI* has surprised me is through the occasional restoration of my faith

in humanity. We have had the pleasure of writing through a pandemic, social justice uprisings, and tragic events, and there are always people in the community working hard to drive change.

Even when I have felt peak apathy toward Iowa politics, the passion to center marginalized people shown by readers, other writers, and community members always comes through.

When writing about infant mortality, I talked to a multitude of powerful Black women working to address disparities. When examining the erasure of

Black history in our education system, I talked to multiple community members dedicated to reforming curricula and exposing the true contributions Black people make in the U.S.

As a result, I have consistently been reminded of how important it is to stay grounded in the communities that have contributed to my own success. Through writing and sharing stories, I feel the most connected to playing a part in advocating for progress.

While I love writing short stories, nonfiction essays, and occasionally

poetry, writing journalistically has given me a new passion. It has expanded my understanding of what I can do with language and how statistics don’t have to be boring.

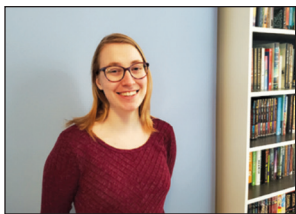
I have a lot of people at the *DI* to thank for encouraging and uplifting the stories and columns I wanted to share — and, also, for teaching me about journalism, and how to become better at something I love.

If you ever feel like you have a story to tell, I highly recommend looking at the *DI* as a place to start.

yasmine-buchanan@uiowa.edu

The DI made me feel heard

Because of *The Daily Iowan*, I always felt like my voice and opinion mattered.



Signe Nettum
Opinions Contributor

Once again, I am writing a goodbye letter and I am at a loss for words. I can talk your ear off for two hours about the latest *Magic: the Gathering* set, or about how my plants are doing, but when I am tasked with writing a letter to myself or others as a

goodbye statement, I struggle to find the right words.

Does this problem happen because I have too many ideas and only 500 words at my disposal? Is it because I believe I am inadequate and have to have the perfect goodbye? Or is it because I am trying to type this up in between making scripts for presentations or writing my third five-page essay? Spoiler — it’s a combination of all three.

I never considered myself a news person. Growing up, the only news that caught

my attention was the *Sunday Morning Show* on CBS that my parents forced me to watch. I liked the interesting stories they told, making small moments appear the most important.

I sought out the opinions section of *The Daily Iowan* because I wanted an outlet for my opinions, so I marched into the newsroom in early 2020 and demanded they add me to the roster. My time spent in the newsroom ended shortly thereafter. I never returned after the last meeting before spring break

— none of us did, for the rest of the semester.

Half of 2020 and all of 2021 are a blur to me, in all aspects of my life — academic and personal. But the *DI* stood by me as a pillar and gave me the sense of belonging in the chaotic world. I felt heard on campus when I sat across state lines in Wisconsin.

I know that my journey through college in connection to the *DI* is not as exciting as other sections of the newspaper. I never traveled to new places to interview

politicians or took pictures of rallies in the Iowa City streets. But I do not mind because I still had my share of the limelight with each of my articles.

I squeezed myself within the opinions section and produced articles that others would consider soft news — news that covers entertainment, lifestyle, culture, things that were important to me while on campus. Thanks to the *DI*, I always felt heard.

I added a journalism and mass communication major

to my college plan at the beginning of my freshman year. At first, I did it just to appease my parents to say that I got a degree that meant a decent job. I did not like writing essays in high school, and I hated double checking things and researching. But, through my classes at the university alongside the *DI*, my love for journalism grew. I am happy that I took on the major and that I received it alongside my experience with the campus newspaper.

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Digital journalism is the future, and I embrace it

My time at the *DI* has taught me to take every opportunity that comes my way, especially when it comes to digital journalism.



Kelsey Harrell
Managing Digital Editor

I walked into *The Daily Iowan* newsroom before I even stepped foot in a classroom at the University of Iowa. Little did I know, I would spend more hours than I could count in that room over the next four years, writing thousands of words and meticulously rearranging our website homepage.

Saying goodbye to the *DI* al-

most doesn't feel real. It probably just hasn't sunk in yet.

Reflecting on everything that's happened over four years seemed like an impossible task. I've watched people come and go, transitioned from printing daily to twice weekly, and made a push to get the entire staff to think digital-first.

I wouldn't be ready for a career in journalism without the *DI*.

I spent my first two years reporting on higher education, attending meetings, and interviewing as many people as I could in a given week. (For the record, I have no relation to former UI President Bruce Harrell, though my dad, Bruce Harrell, likes to joke about it.)

While I loved writing, working as a digital producer helped me think beyond the words on the page. It opened my eyes to all the possibilities the internet and social media have created.

Journalism is changing. It's not just a physical thing typed in ink on paper, it's pixels on a computer screen and characters and URLs in social media posts. The digital-focused job field is expanding and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Yet, some of the people holding these positions aren't considered journalists. Maybe it's time to reconsider what it means to be a journalist.

People have asked me if I plan to use my post-graduation job as an engagement

producer — a position focused on posting stories on social media, curating newsletters, and making graphics — to “move up” as a reporter.

No. I intend to make a career out of working in engagement and digital journalism. Sometimes I miss writing, but I've found what I love in websites and social media work. Digital positions in professional newsrooms shouldn't be used purely as a way to get your foot in the door, just to join a new section when you get the chance.

I've had the opportunity to explore my interest in digital journalism throughout my time at the *DI*. The digital producing team has grown, we've created more data visualiza-

tions/infographics/interactive content, our news podcast has expanded, and we've used our social media platforms to increase our audience size.

I'm so proud of the digital team and all it's accomplished. I've been lucky enough to work with a team of people eager to learn new skills and think of what can be incorporated into a story. The growth I've seen from the team and staff as a whole makes me excited to see where the momentum takes the paper.

Walking away from something I've spent two years helping build is proving to be harder than I anticipated.

It's even harder realizing this may be (in some cases) the last time I spend late nights

in the newsroom bantering back and forth with friends old and new. The newsroom is a place I found myself even when I didn't need to be there. I sometimes joked I should be paying rent to the *DI* since I spent more time there than at my apartment.

It's on to the next chapter now. I'll be moving to Florida and trying not to girlboss too close to the sun in the Sunshine State.

Although I failed to get the *DI* verified on Twitter (you'd think after four attempts it would happen) I'm walking out of the newsroom for the final time accomplishing more than I ever thought possible.

kelsey-harrell@uiowa.edu

On the farm

DI Photo Editor Jerod Ringwald reflects on a favorite photograph.

“ This photo is a favorite of mine because it reminds me of where I started photographing. I really like the stories that this state has to offer and am really thankful I have the opportunity of telling so many.

— Jerod Ringwald, photo editor

SENIOR PHOTO



Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan
Steve Swenka feeds his yearling Angus bulls at Double G Angus Farms in Tiffin on Sept. 12, 2021. Swenka said he grows his own corn to feed the bulls.





Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

Alex Marinelli poses for a portrait during Iowa wrestling media day in Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Oct. 27, 2021.

MARINELLI

Continued from Page 24

Miamisburg, Ohio. The now-five-time Academic All-Big Ten honoree said he was a natural on the mat, which helped introduce him to Team Jordan, an Ohio-based wrestling club that Marinelli's high school coach, Jeff Jordan, still oversees. One of the wrestling club's fundamental parts is its "Jordan Trained: State Champ Camp."

Marinelli said Jordan's camps helped him evolve his technique and take his wrestling to the next level. Because Jordan taught him so much as a youth wrestler, Marinelli decided to pursue his high school education at St. Paris Graham, where Jordan was the head coach.

St. Paris Graham is an hour drive from Miamisburg. To decrease his daily travel time, Marinelli moved out of his parents' house when

he started high school and roomed with his friend, Joey Sanchez in St. Paris, Ohio.

The four-time state champion took all of his high school courses online, which, coupled with his temporary residence with the Sanchez family, enabled him to participate in Jordan's two-a-day practice schedule. His virtual learning experience allowed him to live with his parents and commute to St. Paris when needed during wrestling's offseason.

Marinelli's decision to attend St. Paris Graham paid off. He went 200-4, won four individual state championships, and didn't lose a single match during his junior and senior years. Marinelli's dominant, in-your-face style of wrestling helped him earn his "Bull" nickname.

Raucous recruitment

Iowa men's wrestling assistant coach Ryan Morning-

star had his eye on Marinelli before his prestigious high school career even began. Morningstar, who was principally involved in Marinelli's recruitment, first heard of "The Bull" in 2011.

"I remember going out to work camps for Jeff Jordan when I was young," Morningstar said. "Basically, Jeff told me, 'There's a kid out here that you're gonna want to recruit some day. He's a hammer. His name is Alex Marinelli. He's only an eighth-grader, but he's your kind of guy.'"

When Marinelli was old enough to start fielding offers from colleges, two schools stood above the rest: Iowa and Ohio State. During his recruitment, Marinelli offered commitments to both teams.

Iowa men's wrestling head coach Tom Brands said Marinelli committed to Iowa first, then eventually decided to swing to Ohio State. At

that time, the Buckeyes had won a national championship more recently than the Hawkeyes had.

When Marinelli decided to decommit from Iowa, he called Brands. What the Ohioan said left Brands speechless.

"He was a top-10 overall recruit," Brands said. "He was a blue of the blue chips. It was a big, big deal. When he called me to decommit, I didn't even say anything. I just hung up. I was like, 'That's silly' in my head ... It was like, I'm just not gonna take no for an answer."

When Marinelli decommitted from Iowa, Brands and Morningstar didn't cease their recruiting efforts. They continued their push to lure "The Bull" to Iowa City, while his parents made an effort to keep him rooted in Ohio.

"When Ohio State was recruiting me, they offered something that my parents and family thought I

shouldn't pass up," Marinelli said. "It kind of made it pretty tough to go somewhere else. You know, just a lot of pressure in different ways. Then, I committed to [Ohio State], and I just knew it didn't sit well with me."

Marinelli eventually decommitted from Ohio State and realigned with Iowa.

"He was fatigued of the process," Brands said. "He was like, 'I know this is the best place for me. My first impression is the right impression. I'm gonna be a Hawkeye.'"

"I think he had a little pressure to decommit from Iowa from his own family. I think that kind of wore him out too. Then, he was finally just like, 'F— it, I'm gonna be a rebel.'"

A team of two

Marinelli's commitment to Iowa reunited him with his now-wife Moriah Marinelli. Moriah is a year older

than Alex, so she enrolled at Iowa in 2015.

Alex and Moriah first met at the Ohio state junior wrestling tournament in 2011. At that time, their homes in Miamisburg and Urbana, Ohio, were separated by about 50 miles.

Alex and Moriah started dating on March 13, 2011. They got married in 2019, and Moriah changed her last name from Stickley to Marinelli.

When Alex moved in with the Sanchez family in St. Paris, which is only 11 miles from Urbana, he and Moriah spent time together on a near-daily basis. Like Alex, Moriah took classes virtually. She and her brother Eli Stickley, who also met Alex at the 2011 Ohio state junior wrestling tournament, were home-schooled their whole lives.

"[Moriah and Eli] were kinda on the same schedule as me," Alex said. "So, it made it fun. We'd get done with



Jerod Ringwald/The Daily Iowan

Alex Marinelli takes down Harvard's No. 8 Phillip Conigliaro during session four at the NCAA Wrestling Championships at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit, Mich., on March 18.

school and Eli and I would just go ride four-wheelers, or Moriah and I would just hang out. So, it was pretty cool.”

Eli and Alex both wrestled at St. Paris Graham. Eli committed to the University of Wisconsin ahead of the 2015-16 collegiate season.

Eli wrestled three years at Wisconsin, qualifying for the NCAA Tournament in 2017-18. Eli’s career was tragically cut short after that season.

Eli died in a car crash on his way to Iowa City to see Alex and Moriah on July 5, 2018. Alex was planning to propose to Moriah later that weekend, per the *Des Moines Register*.

Now, nearly four years removed from the accident, Alex and Moriah are still moved by Eli’s legacy.

“[Eli] is with us every day,” Moriah said. “From the second the accident happened, I basically vowed to myself, and to Eli, and to my family that I was going to live out his legacy. That’s just something that I, personally, have taken on. Obviously, that includes Alex because we’re married. I think he feels the same way too — that it’s our duty to do that.”

Over the last 10 years, Moriah and Alex have remained grounded in their

“Then he was finally just like, ‘F— it, I’m gonna be a rebel!’

— Tom Brands, Iowa men’s wrestling head coach

faith. The pair’s religion helped them grapple with Eli’s death and better understand each other.

“Jesus is at the center of our relationship,” Moriah said. “That’s a huge part of

our story. Obviously, a lot of people have heard the story of my brother. When anyone deals with tragedy, you’re kind of forced to really lean on the people that are close to you. Naturally, for both of us, that was each other.

“In a sense, it’s been a blessing because we’ve experienced a lot of trial,” Moriah added. “But it’s brought us closer to one another and kinda helps us know that, no matter what happens in the future, we’re going to be side-by-side.”

In rare air

During Marinelli’s recruitment, he received a letter from Morningstar, who wrote that Marinelli should aspire to be a four-time Big Ten Champion. “The Bull” never doubted his ability to reach the bar Morningstar set for him.

“I definitely thought I could do that,” Marinelli said. “I don’t like to brag and talk about this or anything, but since I was a little kid, every single time I went to the state tournament, I never lost. Grade school, junior high, high school, every single little tournament I went to, I never lost.

So, that was like the natural thing to do — for me to come in here, be a four-time Big Ten champ and a four-time national champion.”

On March 6, more than six years after he received

Morningstar’s letter, Marinelli won his fourth consecutive Big Ten championship. Alex downed Michigan’s Cam Amine via 2-1 decision at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln, Nebraska, to clinch his piece of history. As he walked off the mat and headed for the venue’s tunnel, Alex triumphantly held four of his fingers in the air.

Marinelli is the eighth Iowa men’s wrestler to win four individual conference titles. Mark Ironside became the seventh Hawkeye to win four conference championships in 1998. Only 17 wrestlers in history have won four Big Ten championships.

Despite the gravity of his achievement, Marinelli said he would trade all four of his conference championships to reach another one of Morningstar’s goals for him — win a national title.

“For us, it’s a qualifier,” said Lee, who is a three-time NCAA champion and two-time Hodge Trophy winner. “It’s awesome to win, but the reason why you want to win Big Tens isn’t because the Big Ten title is a big deal. It’s because it’s good for [NCAA] seeding. You’re not like, ‘I want to be a Big Ten champ.’ I don’t think anyone on our team says that. I think it’s like, we want to be a national champ.

“[Alex] has every right to say that. I think Marinelli would’ve rather been a four-time second and won one than a four-time champ and won zero.”

Marinelli qualified for the NCAA Championships five times.

Marinelli never advanced further than the third round



Grace Smith/The Daily Iowan

Alex Marinelli raises his hand after earning first place during session five of the Big Ten Wrestling Championships at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln, Neb., on March 6.

in the national tournament — though he did help the Hawkeyes win a team national championship in 2020-21. He and Mike DeAnna are the only Iowa wrestlers to win four Big Ten titles and zero national championships.

“I mean, it’ll always, always, always stick with you,” Marinelli said. “I think people are like, ‘oh, you’ll forget it. Time heals everything.’ Time can heal certain things. But I’ll always remember that pain, that hurt. I’ll never forget it. I’ll never forget the good things too. So, that’ll help with processing it.”

When Marinelli met with reporters after his last match, he spoke with a quiver in his voice as he tried to fight back tears. When media availability wrapped up, he embraced Moriah in the tunnel at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit.

“That was hard,” Moriah Marinelli said. “It’s really hard to put into words. It was

a huge emotional rush. It was just kind of like the culmination of his whole career and the pinnacle of everything right there and it was just done. That’s really a hard pill to swallow when it’s not the way that you want it to end. I just knew what he wanted, and I could only imagine what he was feeling.

“When he got his hand raised for the last time, it was like agony, almost. You could just see it in his face ... It’s like, what am I supposed to say or do? Nothing will make that moment better.”

Coaching coronation

Marinelli may have already competed in his last-ever wrestling match. As of his April 14 interview with the *DI*, Alex had not officially decided if he’ll wrestle again.

While Marinelli isn’t sure if he’ll don a singlet another time, he does know that he wants to get into coach-

ing. He’s already joined the Hawkeye Wrestling Club to help train its athletes.

Marinelli’s career in a singlet might be over, but he won’t stop using the lessons he learned during the 20 years he wrestled. The heartache he suffered on and off the mat will help him teach the next generation how to wrestle like “The Bull.”

“I think it’s the same with anybody where you face that adversity, and you get past it, and it makes you better,” said Michael Kemerer, Marinelli’s long-time teammate. “He’s obviously faced some adversity in his wrestling career. He’s also faced it off the mat ... I think those things have made him stronger and more of a leader. If he wants to go into coaching, I feel like that adversity is going to make him a better coach and equip him to help other athletes.”

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Sports

Behind “The Bull”

Shivansh Ahuja/The Daily Iowan
Iowa's Alex Marinelli has blood cleaned off his face during a wrestling dual meet between No. 1 Iowa and No. 2 Penn State at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Jan. 31, 2020.

Iowa wrestler Alex Marinelli claimed four Big Ten titles in six years. But there's more to him than trophies and nicknames.

Austin Hanson
Sports Editor

Iowa men's wrestling coach Tom Brands has a number of trinkets, posters, and art pieces that adorn the walls of his office at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. Among the items is a framed picture of Alex Marinelli.

The photo doesn't depict Marinelli wrestling for a Big Ten championship or flexing after an upset victory in a dual meet. The Hawkeyes' 165-pounder isn't even scoring a takedown in the frame. Rather, Marinelli is returning Nebraska's Isaiah White to the mat during a regular season match between the Hawkeyes and Cornhuskers.

Marinelli, however, doesn't think White or any of the athletes he took on in college are the toughest he's ever wrestled. He feels the same way about the guys he wrestled in high school.

The most fearsome wrestler Marinelli has ever grappled with is himself.

“It's me,” Marinelli told *The Daily Iowan*. “I'm the toughest. [Iowa teammate] Spencer Lee said you are your toughest opponent because when you lose, you kind of feel like you beat yourself or you get in your own head. There's just another human on the mat. They shouldn't be tougher than you are. When I lose, I feel like I beat myself, every single time.”

From eighth grade on, Marinelli wrestled with difficult and life-altering decisions. From moving out of his parents' house

in high school to committing to Iowa, Marinelli amassed his share of battle scars.

Through all the gut-wrenching moments he endured on and off the mat, Marinelli emerged a four-time Big Ten Champion. Beyond that, the four-time All-American became a man his teammates, coaches, friends, and wife call confident, relatable, reliable, and steadfast.

Wrestling takes precedent

Marinelli has been wrestling since he was 4 years old in

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