

2022

## CSBS Statements, v24, 2022

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# statements

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES



beyond

VOLUME 24 // 2022 EDITION

**UNI**

University of  
Northern Iowa

# 2022

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# UNI

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The stories reflected in this edition of Statements Magazine demonstrate the extraordinary ways our faculty, students and alumni go above and beyond to make meaningful connections in their careers, communities and the larger world.

These connections are a big part of what makes the people and programs within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences so special. With the support of our dedicated faculty, UNI alumni continue a legacy of making a difference in the lives of others. With the aid of fellow Panthers, families grow larger and stronger. The reach of the “Purple Circle” truly knows no bounds.

We are pleased to take this moment to celebrate all that we have accomplished over the past year and a half. As the challenges within higher education continue to evolve, your support as alumni and friends remains crucial for our success. Financial contributions, as well as gifts of time and expertise, help our students become strong leaders and contributors across Iowa and beyond. Thank you for being a powerful part of the Panther community.

Please feel free to reach out with any thoughts or questions and be sure to keep in touch! Each year we look forward to receiving your updates and sharing your experiences with our students.

With pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda L. Bass". The signature is written in a cursive style. Two thin purple lines are positioned to the left of the signature, extending from the bottom of the page towards the top.

**BRENDA BASS**

DEAN, COLLEGE OF SOCIAL  
& BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES



# EXPERIENCING DEMENTIA

## Gerontology program launches Iowa's first dementia simulation house

**W**hile the aging population can often seem like a forgotten group in society, the University of Northern Iowa is trying to change that. Not only does UNI have the state's only four-year gerontology program, but it also has a unique dementia simulation — the only one in the Midwest to take place in an entire house — located on the edge of campus.

UNI's gerontology program has brought the campus and community this educational experience on what it's like to live with dementia, which opened in February 2022.

Many of the participants who come to the house are family caregivers

who want to understand what their loved ones are facing. Others are students who are pursuing health care, gerontology, speech-language pathology or psychology.

One student who got the chance to experience the simulation is second-year graduate student **Meleah Cue** who is studying clinical mental health counseling. She was interested in going through the simulation both because her grandma has dementia and also because she has considered working with the aging population in the future.

"I really do feel like it's eye-opening in that this could be what a loved one is dealing with or this could be

something that you might be dealing with in the future, and it has made it a bit less scary for me," said Cue.

Cue believes the simulation increased her compassion for others who are living with any illness or disability, not just dementia.

"I think that, particularly in Western societies, we look at this disability as a life ender, but it's just a different way to live," said Cue.

What exactly happens inside the dementia simulation? This is something **Elaine Eshbaugh**, professor of gerontology at UNI who oversees the house, keeps under wraps to preserve the authenticity of the experience.



“When people come in, I’m very open with them,” said Eshbaugh. “I tell them they’re going to have goggles, headphones and gloves and we’re going to ask them to live like someone who has dementia.”

While many simulation participants have a connection to someone with dementia either personally or professionally, Eshbaugh said that isn’t the case for everyone.

“Sometimes we get someone in the community who just hears about us and says, ‘I like to learn. I really don’t know anybody with dementia, but this sounded interesting,’” Eshbaugh said. “I love those people. Because really, this is about community. I want people with dementia to live and thrive in the community for as long as possible.”

Eshbaugh’s passion for the aging population started as a child when her mom worked in a nursing home and Eshbaugh spent time in her mom’s workplace. Eshbaugh describes the people in the nursing home who had dementia as her childhood best friends.

While dementia simulations are not uncommon, said Eshbaugh, they are usually more transportable, getting torn down and set up from one location to the next.

“My initial dream was to get two dorm rooms where we could do a simulation in one and a kind of debriefing in the other,” she said. “I thought that was the best I could do, and I would have been really excited with that. But, for me, the problem is that it kind of implies people with dementia live in just a room like in a hospital or a nursing home.”

Eshbaugh went on to say that 80% of people living with dementia live at home in the community, making the residential setting of this simulation more realistic. However, Eshbaugh has never heard a simulation on this scale happening anywhere else.

Prior to the simulation’s opening, the community donated almost everything to furnish the home and, as Eshbaugh puts it, make it “appropriately cluttered.”

“Really, we don’t want people to come in and say, ‘Oh, this looks like a dementia simulation house,’” she said. “We want people to come in and say, ‘Oh, this looks like my mom’s house or my aunt’s house or the house I live in.’”

Each session takes about 45 minutes, and up to four guests may go through at once. The dementia simulation house has had no trouble filling up openings, as they have brought in 30 to 40 people each week.

“Running this house could easily be a full-time job, but I still have to do all the things I did before it opened,” she said.

At the end of the simulation, each participant is asked to capture the experience using a word or phrase on a piece of wood that's shaped like a brain. All these wooden "brains" are collected in a jar that stays at the house. Some past simulation goers have written things like "noise," "sense of loss," "worried," "dumb," "overwhelming," "slow" and "crazy."

While the dementia simulation is one way to become educated on dementia, it's far from the only way, which is the focus of the work being done by **Megan Zimmerman**, '20. Zimmerman works for the Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging, a nonprofit organization coordinating services that help individuals maintain independence as they age.

Zimmerman is also a gerontology alum who chose to come to UNI because it has the only four-year gerontology program in the state. Now she coordinates a program called Dementia Friends Iowa, which is available to anyone who wants to learn more about dementia including communication strategies and community resources.

"People want to be kind, but when it comes to helping someone with dementia, they don't always know how to do it well," said Zimmerman. "So by equipping them with a little bit more of an understanding of what it's like to have dementia and then also equipping them with some communication strategies, we hope that people will walk toward someone with dementia rather than walking away."

Even before the house's opening, Eshbaugh and Zimmerman had been

working together on the Dementia Friendly Cedar Valley initiative to educate people on dementia. Using the house as another educational tool for people who are interested in becoming a Dementia Friend seemed like a natural fit, said Eshbaugh.

"People with dementia are directly and negatively impacted when people around them don't understand dementia," Zimmerman explained. "So when you make sure that people understand dementia a little bit more and just some basics of how to communicate with someone with dementia, it really improves the quality of life for people with dementia."

Zimmerman said there is no shortage of misconceptions when it comes to dementia, starting with the fact that dementia is more than memory loss. For example, it may impact someone's motor skills and ability to focus, which the house helps simulate. She also said that people living with dementia have a lot to contribute to society. In fact, her program benefits from people with dementia who volunteer.

Ultimately, Zimmerman said that the dementia simulation house and the Dementia Friendly Cedar Valley initiative have a common goal.

"I hope to increase people's empathy towards people with dementia, and then decrease the stigma surrounding dementia," she said.

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WE HOPE THAT PEOPLE WILL WALK  
TOWARD SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA  
RATHER THAN WALKING AWAY.

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**Help  
support  
the dementia  
simulation  
house and  
Iowa's only  
four-year  
gerontology  
program!**



For more information about the Dementia Simulation House, including scheduling a session, visit:

**[csbs.uni.edu/  
dementia-simulation-  
house](https://csbs.uni.edu/dementia-simulation-house)**



# UNDERGROUND IOWANS

Recognizing grave sites of interesting people



*The Savery Mausoleum. Photo by Carl Wycoff.*

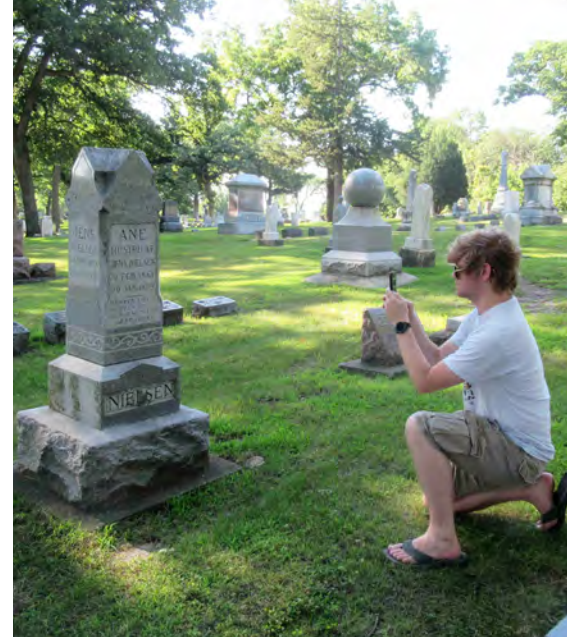
**T**hrough a project led by Associate Professor of History **Thomas Connors**, the public will soon have the chance to learn about how famous Iowans shaped history and changed society.

The project, dubbed Underground Iowans, will also draw attention to the richest historic landscapes in most communities: cemeteries.

Working from a database of 500 names and identified graves in both cities and rural areas, Connors and students in the history department will work to create a map marking the graves of notable Iowans across the state. They're also partnering with director of the GeoTREE Center, **John DeGroot**, and his students to develop and populate an app with the information gathered.

Connors explained the history students will conduct the fieldwork and historical research, while the GeoTREE students will handle the digital and technical work.

The idea behind Underground Iowans, Connors said, is to identify new landmarks and make them accessible to the public – work that encourages appreciation for Iowa's rich history while enabling students to participate in hands-on research.



“That’s the point,” Connors said. “To break through the walls of the classroom and engage students not only in the community, but around the whole state.”

He added that other benefits to students being involved in the project include experiencing new technologies and learning how to apply research in ways that impact the public.

According to DeGroote, students from GeoTREE also benefit from being part of Underground Iowans because it’s real-world experience that will translate into their future careers.

“These are technology skills that are very valued out in the world when people are looking for jobs, even if it’s not going to be the main part of their job, but just to have some skills helps them,” he said.

One such student is senior in geographic information science **Casey Shanaberger**, who’s developed an app prototype for the Underground Iowans project and helped from a mapping standpoint.

“I plan on going into something GIS-related in the future, and this – working

for GeoTREE – provides some much-needed real world experience that will benefit me down the road,” he said.

To support the project, Connors and DeGroote applied for and received UNI’s Capacity Building Grant, which will be used for student salaries or travel expenses. By the end of the summer, the team plans to have created a pilot app including information on approximately 100 graves, helping tourists to plan routes and guide them to particular graves, while also telling stories of the individuals buried there through images and prose.

Iconic figures like artist Grant Wood, jazz musician Bix Biederbecke and Amelia Bloomer, an early suffragist, editor and social activist, will be represented, but so will lesser-known people like sand bottle artist Andrew Clemens, Native American activist Maria Pearson and Iwo Jima flag-raiser Harold Keller.

“It’s surprising some of these people you find,” Connors said, pointing to other names such as circus performer Felix Adler and Glen Buxton, the former lead guitarist for the rock band Alice Cooper.

Above all, Connors hopes the Underground Iowans project will help more people be remembered and serve as a resource for the state and its visitors.

“By telling the stories of individuals who made significant cultural and social contributions, Underground Iowans will engage the public in our past, giving them the opportunity to ponder and investigate the experiences of Iowans who left a mark on our world,” Connors said.

And, Connors continued, the project will give Iowans an accessible resource to appreciate the breadth of the state’s past as can be found in the quietest corners of its cities, towns and countryside.

He added, “The app will ultimately demonstrate how UNI integrates its expertise in the humanities and new technology to create resources that directly benefit the people of Iowa and beyond.”

// FEATURE



# TRIPP OF A LIFETIME

## Adoption pairs care with Panther pride

**T**he connections UNI students and alumni make extend well beyond campus.

This is certainly the case for **Bethany (Leos) Wever**, '13, and **Ryan Murphy**, '12. Even though they attended UNI around the same time, they didn't meet until fall 2018.

At the time, Wever, a psychology graduate, worked for the State of Iowa (Pottawattamie County) as a social worker, providing ongoing case management for children and families involved in the child welfare/foster care system in Iowa. She received a case in which a baby boy, who was only a week old, was going to a new foster home in Council Bluffs. That home happened to be Murphy and his wife, Kourtney's.

During her first visit there, Wever commented on Ryan's UNI gear.

"Keep in mind, UNI is about a four-hour drive from Council Bluffs, so fellow Panthers can be hard to find here!" Wever said.

Their conversations about their shared love for UNI continued throughout each of Wever's subsequent home visits.

"We exchanged our short stories of college life at UNI to see if we knew any common people and talked about our favorite UNI places," she said.

That next summer, in 2019, the time came when the State of Iowa pursued termination of parental rights on the baby's biological parents, making him

available for adoption.

"My instant recommendation to the State was for the Murphy family to adopt the baby, as they loved him as any parent would love their child since the day he was placed in their home," Wever shared. "After 530 days in foster care, the Murphy family took a 'Tripp' of a lifetime and adopted the baby boy, who is now Tripp Murphy."

For Murphy, who holds a bachelor's degree in computer science, he and his wife's decision to call Tripp their own was an easy one.

"When we were given the opportunity to adopt over a year later, he had been with us for pretty much his entire life," Murphy said. "We already loved him."

He added that working with Wever – someone who shares his UNI ties – made the whole process a lot easier.

Wever agreed.

“I think UNI alumni connections can have an extraordinary impact on new and existing relationships,” she said. “Talking about UNI and the surrounding communities with others brings joy to conversations. These times of reminiscing leave me with a sense of connectedness and pride.”

Today, the Murphy’s often update Wever about Tripp and his life, including details of his adoption book which has her name in it. They also send Christmas cards, invited her to his adoption party and shared pictures of his adoption day.

“Tripp’s story will stick with me for life as his foster care case worker,” Wever said.

Ultimately, both Wever and Murphy feel that the connections UNI alumni have can make a deep impact on the community. One moment from an alumni event Wever attended in 2018 at the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo reinforces that idea.

“During the event, **Coach Mark Farley** made a statement that has stuck with me: although the UNI circle is small, its bounds reach every corner of this state and beyond,” Wever shared. “I love reflecting on this every time I meet another alum.”



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ALTHOUGH THE UNI CIRCLE IS

SMALL, ITS BOUNDS REACH EVERY CORNER

OF THIS STATE AND BEYOND.

”



# SUITCASE OF KNOWLEDGE

After a two-year hiatus, summer study abroad trips return to taking students around the globe

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**T**aking part in a study abroad trip as a college student is often the opportunity of a lifetime.

That was certainly the case for **April Vande Voort**, a senior in psychology. This past summer, her capstone group from UNI partnered with the Universidad Marista in Mérida, Mexico.

During the two-week trip, students traveled throughout the Yucatan Peninsula and learned about many things, including ancient Mayan culture, past and current social issues, and Spanish colonization.

Their days consisted of attending a Mayan culture or language class in the morning and taking a trip to a significant place in Yucatan in the afternoon. Some of the places the group visited included ancient Mayan

ruin sites, colonial cities, cenotes (deep water sinkholes) and museums. Each UNI student was partnered with another student and stayed with a host family for the duration of the trip.

“One very important takeaway for me was recognizing that every place has its own unique history,” Vande Voort said. “Before traveling to Mexico, I had little to no knowledge of Mayan history or Spanish colonization. On this trip, I was able to educate myself and gain a better understanding of an area I knew little about.”

She also realized the beauty of Mexico.

“The Yucatan Peninsula is covered in forests, which is not something I had expected,” Vande Voort said. “Additionally, the Mayans were skilled architects and built indescribable structures. It’s almost unbelievable

how they were able to do that many years ago.”

As a future human resource manager, Vande Voort feels the trip gave her a better understanding of the differences in norms and values of individuals from contrasting cultures.

“The culture in Mexico is much different than the United States, but it is equally as important,” she said. “I will work hard to make sure all cultures are acknowledged and respected in my future workplace.”

Associate Professor of History **Fernando Calderón** led the trip to Mérida – the first of its kind. He hopes the partnership with the Universidad Marista is a stepping stone to other initiatives, like exchanging visiting professors.

“It was the most amazing experience for me as a professor and course leader,” Calderón said.

He also felt the students – about 15 of them – benefited greatly from the trip.

“The camaraderie, the bonding that the students forged, I was so surprised,” he said. “Many of them did tell me at the end how this was a life-changing experience because they felt they came back with a suitcase of knowledge.”

Another study abroad trip held this past summer was the Capstone in London course, themed “Science and Pseudoscience: Critiquing the World Around You.” In this course, students applied critical thinking and scientific analysis to controversial topics (e.g., evolution, psychoanalysis, conspiracy theories and vaccines) from multiple perspectives.

Led by Professor of Psychology **Carolyn Hildebrandt**, the trip enabled the 18 students to visit museums, research institutes, hospitals and historic sites related to the course.

Highlights included excursions to Stonehenge, Bath, the Bethlem Museum of the Mind, Freud’s house in London and Darwin’s house in Downe. In addition, students had plenty of free time to visit places of personal and

professional interest. One thing that intrigued many of the students was how multicultural London is.

**Grace Petrzelka Gage**, senior in psychology with a focus on health psychology said, “My time in London helped grow my desire to help the population at large and work with those from all walks of life, seeking out opportunities to learn and grow from cultures all around the world.”

She added, “It also helped foster my desire to travel for pleasure and find experiences in everyday life that align with my interests both personally and professionally.”

Added fellow participant, senior in biology **Joseph Correa**, “The London trip was a truly amazing experience with a great group of people where I got to see lots of tourist sites as well as learn a lot about London and other parts of the world.”

Also held this summer was a trip led by **Gregory Bruess**, associate dean of CSBS and associate professor of history, and adjunct history instructor, **Isabela Varela**, who have been leading trips to Greece since 1999.

Their program allows students the opportunity to visit and experience the “cradle of Western civilization,” and then challenges them to re-examine

the classical perception from the perspective of Greece’s other rich cultural heritages.

Students learned, on site, about various aspects of Greek civilization. They visited notable locations like the Acropolis, Ancient Corinth, Ancient Olympia and Ancient Delphi, explored Byzantine castles and monasteries, visited numerous world-renowned museums, met contemporary Greeks and more.

Perhaps **Leah Ingraham**, a senior in history and Spanish teaching, who attended the trip to Greece, sums up the benefit of studying abroad best.

“It was amazing,” she said. “I made friends that will last me throughout the rest of my college career and most likely afterward. It changed me as a person going on this trip. Culture shock is real but in the best way possible. I tried the best food, met the best people and saw the best places.”



# A BELOVED PROFESSOR'S LASTING GIFT



**T**here are certain professors who stand out over the many years of an institution. Those whose classrooms are a whirlwind of challenging perspectives, but whose office is a respite for an ever thoughtful, listening ear.

**James (Jim) McCullagh** was that kind of professor.

His journey to Iowa was an unlikely one. Born in New York in the 1930s to Irish immigrant parents, McCullagh's start into the world came with its own share of struggles. He bounced around several schools, admittedly kicked out of a few as a self-proclaimed "scraper," before enlisting in the U.S. Army at the age of 18.

The Army provided a new foundation and opportunity to travel abroad. While stationed in Germany, McCullagh connected for the first time with his extended family in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. His cousin Rachel fondly remembered that his arrival was announced by a swarm of children, including herself, who followed him throughout the little town like the pied piper. From early on, people were just drawn to McCullagh.



After his time in the Army and with the support of the GI bill, McCullagh attended Curry College in Massachusetts and, later, California State College at Chico. He then settled for a time in San Francisco — a city and time he remembered quite fondly. It was there he found his love for helping others, diving into welfare work during the height of 1960s Haight-Ashbury.

Although McCullagh loved this work, he knew furthering his education in social work would only allow him to better help those who struggle.

And so, a scholarship and serendipity brought him to the Master of Science Social Work program at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and to the love of his life, Cheryl Ann Edwards, a fellow student in the program.

Their relationship was not fondly embraced by the institution. He was ten years her senior and from a very different background than the young daughter of a Missouri physician and World War II veteran. University administration attempted many times to dissuade Cheryl and terminate the relationship. She did not listen.

McCullagh turned this experience into a lesson on how to better relate with his students. He wanted to get to know them, connect with them, and challenge them to explore how they interacted with the world. He knew too well the difficulties life could bring — but that these experiences would, in turn, make them

better future social workers.

After graduation, McCullagh secured an assistant professor position at the University of Kentucky where he and Cheryl started their new lives with their young son, James John McCullagh. In 1981, they moved together to northern Iowa.

It was a homecoming for Cheryl, who had family roots in Iowa. Both she and her mother attended Graceland College in Lamoni and her parents had lived in the state.

McCullagh's introduction, however, came with a challenge along their route. His son shared the memory, "We had a big U-Haul and he ran out of gas in the middle of some random farmland. So he's got to go to these farmers and ask them for gas, and he's a New Yorker. He was so shocked that they would not take any of his money. He couldn't believe it — and this was his first experience with Iowa."

In Cedar Falls, the couple settled into the professions they would keep for several decades: Cheryl, a school social worker employed by the Area Education Agency; and McCullagh, a professor of social work at the University of Northern Iowa.

Professor of Criminology **Clemens Bartollas** joined UNI just a few months prior to McCullagh, and remembers how instrumental he was to the department

from the very beginning. Not only as a committed teacher and mentor, but also in the establishment of UNI's Master of Social Work program.

"We need giants in this world. People who are going to make a difference. And that was Jim McCullagh," Bartollas remarked firmly and fondly. "He was very dedicated to his craft and to making a difference in the lives of his students."

After receiving tenure from UNI, however, McCullagh felt once again at a crossroads. Many would use this opportunity to continue their research, and relax in some well-deserved security. McCullagh decided to go to law school.

"He loved learning," his son explained. "He was really proud of this accomplishment; it meant a lot to tell friends and family back East that he was a lawyer."

McCullagh went on to practice juvenile law part-time in Cedar Falls and Waterloo, alongside teaching and research at UNI. The experience had a profound effect. "It was really tough to see parents and kids from all walks of life go through some of their challenges," his son remarked. "It gave him some of the experience that many social workers see and go through — the burnout and emotional overhaul."

He thrived through this yearning for perspective and understanding. In his research, McCullagh found an unlikely kinship in the Cherokee people; specifically, Howard Chandler Walkingstick, a social worker who worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in several states, serving numerous tribes for over 30 years. In his article, "The Road Not Taken: Discovering a World I Never Knew," McCullagh expressed hope that his research and insights would lead to a greater understanding and appreciation of the Cherokee Nation's social workers and educators.

Outside of academia, McCullagh was a devout member and volunteer sacristan at St. Stephen the Witness Catholic Student

Center, located just across the street from his office on campus. He was additionally a Benedictine Oblate, a designation of persons who offer themselves to God in the service of others.

But, above all, McCullagh loved to teach and was very close to his students. "He got to know them," his son remembered. "If they came and wanted to talk, he would just listen for hours as they shared their lives. That was really meaningful to him."

Professor and former Head of the Department of Social Work, **Cindy Juby**, also witnessed this commitment. "His students were his priority. If he could have, he would have lived in his office. He developed a lot of relationships that continued even after graduation."

This dedication to his students did not go unnoticed. Over his years at UNI, McCullagh received several awards, including the Regents Award for Teaching and the Randy A. Fisher Lifetime Achievement Award.

There were also the smaller, but equally meaningful moments, like when a classroom of students decided to throw McCullagh a surprise 81½ birthday celebration. When the photos were posted on UNI's Facebook page, alumni flocked to the comments to help celebrate with their favorite professor.

"Best professor I've ever had! He truly cares about his students and their dreams," said **K.C. Moore**, '11. "Dr. McCullagh taught me so much not only about social work but also what it means to be a great person," stated **Kendra Renner**, '15. And from **Heather Tjernagel**, '07, "He was the first person I called the day I got an acceptance letter for graduate school. He has made such an impact on the worlds of those who know him. Such a genuine soul!"

Later, on McCullagh's tribute wall, alumnus **John Stanley**, '87, wrote, "I met Dr. McCullagh in 1983. I had just served four years in the U.S. Marine Corps. I was



very uncertain what I wanted to do with my life. I was accepted to UNI but under academic probation. My very first class on my very first day of college I met Dr. Jim. His words inspired me to become a social work major, go to grad school and become a social worker. I feel very lucky to have had him be part of my life. I would not have become the social worker or the man I am without him."

The later years of McCullagh's life came with another set of challenges. After a wonderful, long marriage, his beloved wife Cheryl passed away unexpectedly in 2015. Then came 2020, with all its hurdles and adjustments. "He would have rather been with his students," said his son.

McCullagh retired from UNI's Department of Social Work in 2021. In early 2022, he and his son took a final river cruise through Germany, France and the Netherlands. "He loved it. It was a final farewell."

In August 2022, McCullagh was laid to rest at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Greencastle, Northern Ireland, in a beautiful plot beside Cheryl.

In his memory, McCullagh has not only left a legacy of caring trained social workers, but fresh hope for those to come. His \$1.1 million gift to the university will go toward scholarships to help support students pursuing social work for many years ahead. A little help to the generations of people who, like Jim and Cheryl McCullagh, dedicate their lives to helping others.



# college news



## CENTER FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION RENAMED IN DEDICATION

In conjunction with its 10-year anniversary, UNI's Center for Violence Prevention was renamed the Patricia A. Tomson Center for Violence Prevention, in honor of the alumna's decades of work on behalf of survivors of abuse.

**Patricia**, '86, and her husband, **O. Jay Tomson**, announced a \$2 million gift to the center in support of its mission to build the capacity of Iowa's schools, victim service agencies, law enforcement and other institutions to systematically implement best practices in bystander-based prevention education.

The endowed gift will provide operational support as well as sustained funding for the Tomson Scholars Program, which since 2016 has funded student internships with violence prevention organizations and agencies providing direct services to survivors of abuse.

## ROTC PROGRAM CELEBRATED IN NIELSEN FIELD HOUSE REDEDICATION

The historic Nielsen Field House building, located just off campus at 1400 West 19th Street, was rededicated in a spring 2022 ceremony that featured **Sen. Chuck Grassley**, '55, a performance by the Panther Marching Band and a celebration of the value of the two programs that call the field house home — UNI's Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and Child Development Center.

The ceremony highlighted the ROTC program's unique impact on its students and the benefits of its facility in the field house.

"The rededication of this building is a major milestone for the UNI ROTC battalion," said **Brenda Bass**, CSBS dean. "UNI and the ROTC have a shared vision of training the next generation of leaders to serve their communities. The renovated field house provides a training facility that will better prepare our students for their future leadership positions."

## **FACULTY AWARDED HUMANITIES CONNECTION GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES**

UNI was awarded a highly competitive \$35,000 Humanities Connection Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for the project, “Humanities for Civic Education: Preparing Teachers and Students for Engaged Citizenship.”

Through this national grant, a team of faculty from across three colleges that span the humanities, education and social sciences — including the Departments of History and Political Science — will create coursework and requirements for a 12-hour interdisciplinary certificate, “Civic Literacy and Engagement,” that is part of the new University of Northern Iowa Foundational Inquiry (UNIFI) general education program.

This certificate will center the humanities in civic education and will encourage students to explore their obligations as citizens, both in the classroom and outside of it. As one of the members of the panel reviewing the proposal noted, due to UNI’s role in educating future teachers, the certificate has “the potential to improve civic education in the state as a whole.”

## **ARCTICENTER AWARDED GRANT TO STUDY ARCTIC CLIMATE IMPACT TO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES**

UNI’s Arctic Remote and Cold Territories Interdisciplinary Center (ARCTICenter) was awarded a \$720,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to study how people could collectively manage climate change in the Arctic.

Research will examine the sustainability of ice, snow and permafrost landscapes under changing environmental conditions to assess Arctic community resilience, as climate change has impacted the frozen landscapes that Indigenous communities have used to support their lifestyle for thousands of years.

## **NEW ONLINE ADVANCED STUDIES CERTIFICATE IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**

School counselors from across Iowa have a new educational pathway to serve the mental health needs of school districts and communities with the addition of a new Advanced Studies Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling offered from the University of Northern Iowa.

Designed with working professionals in mind, this program provides a flexible, dynamic experience for school counselors from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited programs with at least two years of experience to complete the educational requirements to obtain licensure as a clinical mental health counselor. Offered entirely online, students will gain extensive training in brain-based, evidence-based and holistic mental health counseling interventions.

Additionally, with the current national shortage of mental health professionals, this program will aim to address a need for additional mental health counselors in schools, and help graduates improve access to mental health services in rural and local communities.

## **NEW ONLINE BA DEGREE IN HUMAN SERVICES**

In order to help serve a growing population of students hoping to complete a four-year degree online, UNI recently launched a new, entirely online Human Services (BA) degree.

Primarily targeted towards students with an AA from any community college or a AAS in Human Services from DMACC, the program has proven to be popular straight out-of-the-gate, with 50 students in its first cohort.

The interdisciplinary degree includes courses in social work, family services, gerontology and psychology, helping students develop skills to assist various populations in times of crisis, and preparing them for success in a variety of social services professions.

# new faculty & staff

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**Sarina Carrillo**  
Secretary III,  
Social Work (2022)



**Linda Davis**  
Secretary II, Applied  
Human Sciences (2022)



**Denise Grant**  
Secretary III, Sociology,  
Anthropology &  
Criminology; Psychology  
(2021)



**Isra Hendon**  
Assistant Professor of  
Military Science (2022)



**Kelly Jensen**  
Secretary III, College  
of Social & Behavioral  
Sciences (2022)



**Willie Jones**  
Battalion Recruiting  
Operations Officer,  
Military Science (2021)



**Maria Lawson**  
Assistant Professor,  
Military Science (2021)



**Jaimie O'Gara**  
Assistant Professor,  
Social Work (2022)



**LTC Dean Ray**  
Professor and Head,  
Military Science (2021)



**Katie Sires**  
Secretary III,  
Political Science (2021)



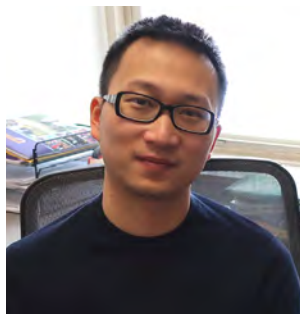
**Henry Uribe**  
Senior Instructor,  
Military Science (2021)



**Angelica Velazquillo**  
Assistant Professor,  
Social Work (2022)

# promotions & awards

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**Jiuqing Cheng**  
Outstanding Teaching  
Award 2021



**Chad Christopher**  
2021 P&S Council Staff  
Excellence Award



**Rebecca Dickinson**  
Apple Polisher Award



**Libby Fry**  
Apple Polisher Award



**Donna Hoffman**  
MWOne Advising Award  
(nomination)



**Ashleigh Kysar-Moon**  
Outstanding Teaching  
Award 2021-2022



**Christopher Larimer**  
James F. Lubker  
Research Award 2021;  
Regents Award for  
Faculty Excellence 2022



**Elizabeth Lefler**  
Promotion to Full  
Professor of Psychology



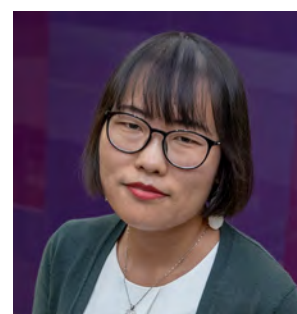
**Scott Peters**  
Faculty Administrator of  
the Year, United Faculty  
2022



**Evan Renfro**  
Promotion to Associate  
Professor of Political  
Science with academic  
tenure



**Gloria Stafford**  
Outstanding Teaching  
Award 2021



**Lixia Zhang**  
Apple Polisher Award

# retiring

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**Dennis Dahms** was a vital and critical member of the Department of Geography throughout his long and storied career at UNI, and his continuing scholarly activity remains the envy of most of the university.

Dennis is an associate editor of *Catena*, one of Quaternary Geomorphology's premier journals, and just in the last two years has published the following work:

"Age, geochemistry and geomorphic significance of new Lava Creek ash exposures from Lander, WY, USA," *Geomorphology* (in review)

"Dynamic Soils"; Chapter 427 "Pedology" in *Encyclopedia of Soils in the Environment* (2nd Ed.)

"Landscape Evolution, post-LGM surface denudation and soil weathering processes from Dickinson Park mire, Wind River Range, Wyoming (USA)," *Geomorphology*

"The Deglaciation of the Americas during the Last Glacial Termination," *Earth-Science Reviews*

Dennis plans to continue writing grants and papers and will maintain a lab on campus.

**Katrinka Carpenter** retired in October 2022 after 37 years of service to UNI. In addition to her seven and a half years in the Department of Political Science, Katrinka worked in the College of Education, the Departments of Theater and Accounting, and the School of Applied Human Sciences, among other offices.

With her support and hard work, political science's annual Women in Politics Scholarship Benefit doubled in size. She was integral to planning the department's American Democracy Project and PanthersVote efforts and to the growth and success of UNI's student Model United Nations group which travels regularly to national and international competitions. She additionally provided vital support in the transition of the Master of Public Policy program to a successful online program.

From Department Head Scott Peters, "Most of all, though, Katrinka offered compassionate, patient and helpful service to our faculty and students, guiding us through university processes, directing us to the offices that could answer our questions, keeping us on task and making sure we didn't miss deadlines."

In her retirement, Katrinka plans to spend more time with her family, pursue her interest in local history and volunteer with her local library.

**Jan Cornelius** retired from her role as secretary in the Department of Psychology in April 2022. She began working at UNI in March of 2001 and held several different positions in the college, including as a secretary for the Iowa Center for Immigrant Leadership and Integration and as a grants administrative assistant. She served as the psychology secretary for 14 years and was the point person for many students who needed help with registration, advising and life. She helped usher in many electronic processes in the department and was instrumental in organizing the department's move from the now-demolished Baker Hall to the newly renovated Bartlett Hall. Jan continues to live in Cedar Falls and is spending a lot more time with her grandchildren.

## Major Bert Flather

retired from UNI's Department of Military Science in May 2022. He is a field artillery officer with a career that spans 23 years of service in the Army. Bert came to the program from Fort Stewart, GA, in 2018 as an assistant professor of military science and never looked back. He has served multiple positions in the department, including operations officer, recruiting operations officer, freshman instructor, military history instructor, CSBS senator, and executive committee member. Bert looks forward to remaining in Cedar Falls and enjoying time with his family, including his wife Kate, 4-year-old son Quinn and 1-year old daughter Eleanor.

**Annette Lynch** retired in May 2022 after over 30 years at UNI. During her time, Annette held multiple positions vital to the university's core mission. She was director of the women's studies program, a co-founding director of the Center for Violence Prevention and a director of the School of Applied Human Sciences, for which she was recognized as the United Faculty Administrator of the year.

Annette has been a tireless advocate for her students. Her teaching excellence has been recognized, in-part, by the various teaching awards she has earned. However, a larger part of her success can be witnessed through the prolonged mentoring relationships she engages in with her students after they graduate.

At UNI, Annette has been a strong scholar, authoring over 20 peer-reviewed articles, books and book chapters. In addition, she has participated in close to 40 peer-reviewed presentations over her career. Most importantly, Annette has consistently applied her research to communities in which she lives and works to better people's lives.

Finally, Annette has been the type of colleague any faculty member would be lucky to have. She has been a mentor, encourager and friend to everyone she works with, and is willing to stand up for what she believes in. UNI, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and School of Applied Human Sciences have all benefited because Annette chose to become a faculty member here in the fall of 1991.

**John 'Henry' Owusu**

was an indispensable and crucial member of the Department of Geography throughout his 22 years at UNI. He is a leading expert on economic development and resource management in Sub-Saharan Africa through his research on the timber trade. In addition, through excellent teaching and dedicated mentoring, he has had an outstanding record of fostering and advancing student success through his LAC classes. He plans to continue working and publishing on Sub-Saharan development issues while splitting his time between Ghana and Iowa.

**Anne Woodrick's** legacy

at UNI will be grounded in her reputation as an outstanding teacher. Anne consistently demonstrated a great passion for teaching. Demanding but fair, she was employing critical thinking strategies in all of her classes years before the approach became a widespread expectation. Anne also did important research during her years at UNI, with articles published in many highly regarded journals.

Central to her outstanding record of service was Anne's many years with UNI athletics. She served as the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative from 2002-2011, one of the most demanding and time-consuming service jobs on campus. She also served on the Missouri Valley Conference President's Council and she was a member of the search committee that hired women's basketball head coach Tanya Warren. When she was recently inducted into the 2021 UNI Athletics Hall of Fame, it was duly noted that Anne "impacted the lives of countless student-athletes through her advocacy and leadership."

Dahms



Carpenter



Flather



Lynch



Owusu



Woodrick



# in memoriam

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## B. Keith Crew

passed away September 1, 2022.

Growing up, Keith enjoyed his mother's fantastic Southern cooking, playing competitive board and yard games, and being mischievous with his three brothers. His father was in the United States Air Force, and Keith fondly remembered attending school in Cape Cod, Massachusetts; Okinawa, Japan; Tampa, Florida; and Montgomery, Alabama.

Keith attended Auburn University at Montgomery for his undergraduate degree. He received his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Kentucky in sociology, specializing

in criminology. He taught criminology at the University of Northern Iowa for 34 years, before his retirement in 2019. He enjoyed teaching classes, engaging with his students, and focusing on his research related to social deviance and equality in the courts. Keith served as chair for the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology; as a member and prisoner advocate on the Institutional Review Board; and was an active participant in several professional organizations. He was a regular attendee at noon basketball pick-up games with his colleagues and played in other basketball and softball leagues with his friends.

On October 17, 1992, Keith married Mary Jane (Mayhew) Rundall. He quickly adapted to the role of "dad" for her two children and enjoyed attending their athletic and music events, coaching, helping with homework, and guiding them through their teenage years and early adulthood.

Keith was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in his 40's. Despite increasing symptoms over the years, he and Mary Jane remained active, going on fishing trips, traveling to Italy, visiting their children and grandchildren, attending sporting events, theater performances, and having game nights with their friends.

Keith learned to fish from his father and later fishing became a passion (obsession). He also enjoyed yard games, drawing, writing comic strips and other works of humorous fiction, and listening to an eclectic mix of music from the Mississippi delta blues to abstract jazz, from psychedelic and avant-garde rock to classical symphonies. Keith loved making people laugh and was known to crack bad jokes constantly. One of his most recent pastimes was playing very competitive games of Scrabble with Mary Jane during lunch. He was an ardent fan of the Alabama Crimson Tide football team - Roll Tide!



## Thomas W. Keefe III

passed away April 22, 2022.

Thomas was a man with deep convictions and a drive to advocate for others. He loved to teach and was known for sharing his knowledge with any who stopped to listen.

Thomas was also an avid runner, regularly running long-distance road races and participating in marathons and triathlons.

Thomas was born in North Charleroi, Pennsylvania, and attended graduate school in Colorado, after which he joined the Air Force Medical Corps, where he worked as a psychiatric social worker providing counseling for men returning from Vietnam. This gave him a deep understanding of the stress that comes with war and returning to peace. He later earned his Doctorate of Social Work from Utah State.

After earning his doctorate, he began as a professor of social work at the University of Northern Iowa. Here, he contributed to several textbooks, including two as the primary author. He also wrote many articles about social work, advocating for stress management strategies, particularly exercise and meditation. While serving as the head of the Department of Social Work, Thomas spearheaded the development of the graduate program. In keeping with his passion for others, he was active in the Democratic Party, a member of Citizens for Peace and challenged people to vote and be politically active.



## James (Jim) McCullagh

passed away April 27, 2022.

Jim was born on August 26, 1936 and grew up in New York, New York. His parents emigrated from County Tyrone in Northern Ireland, making Jim a dual U.S. and Irish citizen. He served in the Army for three years in several locations, including Germany and California.

He attended Curry College in Massachusetts before graduating with a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Chico State University in 1963. He received a Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW) from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1970 where he met his wife Cheryl Ann Edwards.

Jim worked as a welfare worker in San Francisco in the early to mid-1960s. Before coming to UNI, he was an assistant professor at the University of Kentucky. Jim, his wife and their son moved to Cedar Falls in 1981.

Jim was a professor of social work at the University of Northern Iowa from 1981 until he retired in 2021. He was honored with the Randy A. Fisher Lifetime Achievement Award

as well as a UNI regent's award. His research focused on Native Americans and their contribution to social work. As a part-time lawyer he focused on juvenile law in Cedar Falls and Waterloo. Jim was a member of St. Stephen's Student Center in Cedar Falls where he volunteered as the sacristan for over a decade. Additionally, Jim was a Benedictine Oblate.

Jim loved to travel. He visited Europe many times including several visits with his family in Northern Ireland. He also visited Israel, where he worked on a kibbutz for four months. He additionally often traveled to Hilton Head with family and friends. Jim was an avid antique collector and deeply enjoyed puzzles and Sudoku.



## John Somervill

passed away May 11, 2022.

John was born in Memphis, Tennessee. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Rhodes College; a master's degree in psychology from the University of Mississippi; a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in clinical psychology from the University of Arkansas; and a clinical internship in the Department of Psychiatry at the Ohio State University Health Center. He was a professor at Southern University from 1969 - 1975.

John devoted nearly 40 years to the University of Northern Iowa and taught psychology from 1975 - 2013 and served as the dean of the Graduate College from 1989 - 2004.

John understood that education was the gateway to success and personal advancement, and he was committed to helping others regardless of race or ethnicity. While dean of the Graduate College, he presided over the development of new interdisciplinary master's programs in public policy, women's studies and environmental science.

He emphasized the development of recruitment strategies which led to the highest increase in graduate enrollment in the history of the university at that time. Much of his work focused on recruiting students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

John supervised numerous honors and master's theses and many of his students have gone on to successful careers in psychology and other disciplines. Even in retirement, John continued to be a friend, mentor and voice of encouragement.

After his retirement, John and his wife, Darcy, moved to Orange Beach, Alabama. They later moved to Inman, South Carolina to be closer to family. He was an expert gardener and cook. He enjoyed fishing, entertaining, varied creative endeavors and adoring his pets.

He is remembered for his friendliness, thoughtfulness, and genuine love for those around him. John had a quick wit and a (sometimes corny) sense of humor that lifted everyone's spirits and kept us all laughing.



# FASHION CAREER TAKES ALUMNA FROM SMALL TOWN TO BIG CITY



**G**rowing up in the small town of Muscatine, Iowa, with a passion for fashion, **Cassie Hendrix**, '21, has always had her sights set on big city living.

In 2021, that dream came true when she moved to New York City.

There, Hendrix, who double majored in marketing and textiles and apparel (TAPP) at UNI, works as an assistant buyer for the kid's division of Ross Stores, a chain of discount department stores that operates under the brand name Ross Dress for Less.

"I learn something new every day," Hendrix said. "It's been a good match for me to combine both my

analytical and creative skills."

Hendrix, a first-generation college student, credits her experience in the TAPP program for preparing her to have a successful career in the industry.

"A big part of my job is the analytics, but the other big part is the actual product," she explained, adding that what she learned in her classes at UNI – particularly technical skills – directly translated to her job.

"The high standard the program holds you to with projects has made me more detail-oriented and ensure accuracy, which is extremely

important, especially in a fast-paced industry," Hendrix said.

In addition to her studies, which "didn't feel like school because I had genuine interest and excitement to learn," Hendrix was a career guide for the Office of Career Services. She was also involved with Business Student Ambassadors, Connecting Alumni to Students and Student Admissions Ambassadors.

"I enjoyed giving tours, helping prospective students find their home at UNI, just like I did," she said. "It was always really important for me to make a connection and let others know how much the university helped me."

Additionally, during her senior year, Hendrix served as co-editor-in-chief of Uprising Magazine, a social justice, fashion and arts magazine on campus, as well as director of the UNI Catwalk Fashion Show.

One of Hendrix's favorite memories from her time as a student was when she got to study abroad in Florence, Italy. There, she took classes specific to fashion and business while experiencing a new country and culture for the first time.



*Cassie Hendrix (right) with fellow TAPP alumna Melina Gotera, '22 (also employed with Ross Stores).*

Hendrix also recalled spending many late nights in the Latham Hall sewing lab with other TAPP students.

“We would talk, laugh and even order dinner because we were too busy to leave,” she said. “That’s where a lot of my friendships formed, and we still stay in contact to this day. I think it’s special to find a group of people you bond and share similar interests with. We all supported each other and made sure to keep the energy high even when we were seam ripping out our designs.”

One of Hendrix’s mentors in the TAPP program was former School of Applied Human Sciences Director **Anette Lynch**, whose feeling of respect is mutual.

“Cassie always went above and beyond and inspired others to do the same,” Lynch said.

She felt that Hendrix helped the TAPP program produce outstanding UNI Fashion Week productions that gave all students an opportunity to showcase their original work in creative ways, despite the challenging restrictions of the pandemic.

Additionally, Lynch shared that during Hendrix’s tenure as co-editor of Uprising Magazine, the student organization won the Diversity Matters Award, recognizing the outstanding work the team did in producing photo shoots and articles that captured a wide range of voices in the community and on campus.

“The combination of Cassie’s smile, generosity and drive for excellence moved everything she was involved in on campus to a higher level,” Lynch said.

Looking to the future, Hendrix hopes to take her career to a higher level as well, soaking up all the knowledge and experiences she can along the way.

No matter where her path takes her, though, she’ll hold onto her affinity for the university she felt was more like home.

“I felt a true connection and knew UNI was the place for me,” Hendrix said. “After spending four years there and graduating, I still believe UNI is the reason I’m the professional I am today.”

# VETERAN HELPING FELLOW VETERANS

At the age of 17, **Kole Hosch**, '21, enlisted in the United States Army.

During his three-and-a-half years of service – including one year in Afghanistan – the Monticello, Iowa, native worked as an aviation operation specialist. That role gave him a number of responsibilities, from coordinating flight plans to alerting crash crews of emergencies.

When he got back home from overseas, Hosch met with a psychiatrist who told him he seemed to be “one of the lucky ones.”

“It shouldn’t be that way,” Hosch said. “We should all be doing what we can to survive. So, it really made me want to get into the field of social work and help veterans get through their issues.”

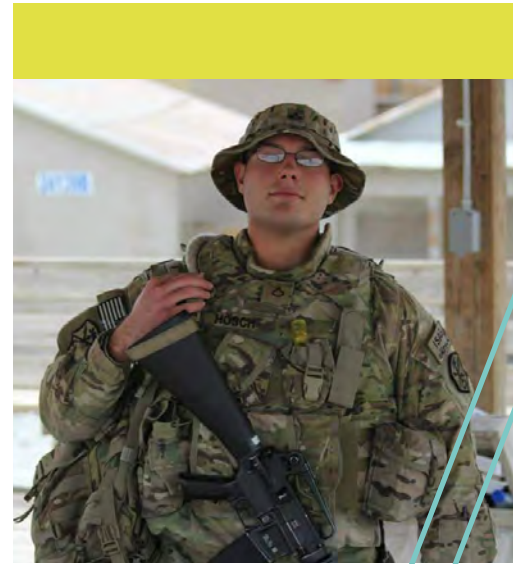
Hosch started looking for degree programs that would enable him to do just that. He attended Mount Mercy University for his undergraduate studies, then transferred to UNI for

his master’s degree because of the department of social work’s focus on trauma.

In fact, the program offers a trauma-informed care specialization, which is based on decades of research on how people are affected by stress, adversity and oppression. Students like Hosch get to work with scholars and experts in the field of trauma and mental health while learning innovative approaches to addressing complex issues.

“I knew if I wanted to continue in a career helping veterans, a trauma-focused background would be the best option,” Hosch said.

As a student, Hosch had the opportunity to intern with Veterans Affairs. It was a role he especially enjoyed because he feels it’s helpful for veterans to have other veterans to talk to and support them as they navigate their problems. He also got to help with homeless outreach and the Veterans Justice Outreach Program.



One of the staff at UNI who impacted Hosch the most was BSW Program Director **Jenny Becker**, who also serves as the program’s director of field instruction. He felt she did an outstanding job of helping him keep on top of his field placements and checked in often to see how he was doing.

In addition, Hosch believed associate professor **Matthew Vasquez** led engaging classes that were a deep dive into trauma and how it impacts the body and brain.

Moving forward, Hosch hopes to find a full-time job with the VA after gaining more clinical experience to help fortify his knowledge and skills. He’s particularly fond of doing homeless outreach – a passion he discovered as a student at UNI.

“The trauma-focused experience I received at UNI will help build a great foundation when helping fellow veterans,” Hosch said.

“

I KNEW IF I WANTED TO CONTINUE IN A CAREER HELPING VETERANS, A TRAUMA-FOCUSED BACKGROUND WOULD BE THE BEST OPTION.

”

# 2022 GOLD & BOLD RECIPIENT COMMITTED TO ADVOCACY & EQUALITY

**H**asina Jalal, '21, knows only too well the high stakes for women who work for equality, liberty and democracy in her native Afghanistan.

Her mother and role model, Massouda Jalal, a psychiatrist and pediatrician, ran two strong, independent and self-financed campaigns as the only woman candidate for president of the war-torn country in 2002 and 2004.

She defied the Taliban, warlords and corrupt politicians to promote anti-poverty and human and women's rights policies.

"Seeing the kind of amazing work she has done, she was my initial mentor," said Jalal. "I wanted to do the kind of work she has done. That became my passion."

Jalal, who received her MA in Women's and Gender Studies as a Fulbright scholar from UNI and is now pursuing a PhD in Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh, is already well on her way to building her own legacy of empowering Afghan women.

Jalal has been involved in finding and managing several civil society organizations in Afghanistan and at the South Asian regional level.

She is the founding director of the National Association of Afghanistan Civil Society and co-founder of the Afghanistan Women Empowerment and Capacity Building Center and the South Asian Women's Coalition for Cooperation. She has given talks and participated in panel discussions at some of the most established institutions in the U.S., and by doing so, has raised the voices of Afghan girls and women.

Her awards, activism and achievements fill three single-spaced resume pages. In 2020, Jalal was named one of the "100 Most Influential Women in Afghanistan" and previously has won a Global Women Leadership award along with honors from the World Human Rights Congress and Women's Economic Forum.

In October 2022, she was awarded

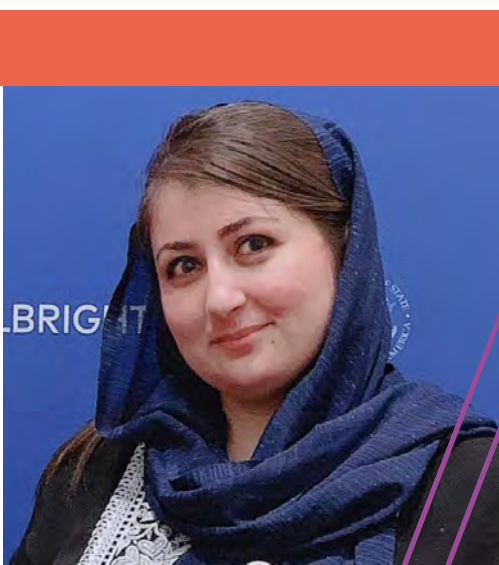
a Gold and Bold award from UNI, in recognition for her commitment to activism and advocacy for gender equality, human rights, women's empowerment and democracy.

Upon her return to campus to receive her award, Jalal spoke of her journey at UNI and introduction to the United States. "The person I am and I have become, this is due to the professors, the students and the community here at UNI."

**Wendy Hoofnagle**, interim associate dean of UNI's Graduate College, said she is humbled by Jalal's and other young international women students' strength, determination and passion for knowledge. "Jalal's story is inspirational, heartbreaking and, sadly, not unique," Hoofnagle said.

UNI faculty, staff and the long-established women's and gender studies program work hard to ensure international students such as Jalal benefit from their studies here — and expand local students' worldview.

Jalal has leveraged her smarts, compassion and work ethic every step of the way. She earned merit scholarships throughout her academic career. And she has worked professionally and through collaborative programs to empower women at each step in her own impressive career.



## // ALUMNI ACCOLADES

*Ambassador John R. Dinger (center) with family.*



major American companies, including Boeing and Coca-Cola, and negotiated with the Mongolian government over American foreign policy priorities. In a country that had only 300 miles of paved road, he traveled over 10,000 miles, visiting each of the 21 provincial capitals twice.

Ambassador Dinger spent the rest of his career in key intelligence and political offices in Washington.

He served as deputy coordinator for from 2003 to 2005, where he helped develop U.S. counterterrorism policy. From 2006 to 2012, Ambassador Dinger was the principal deputy assistant secretary for intelligence and research. Among other accomplishments in this role, he helped establish the department's first Office of Cyber Affairs and was integral in forming principles to guide the diplomacy of cyberspace.

"John Dinger's career highlights the strengths of UNI and our department," said **Scott Peters**, current head of UNI's Department of Political Science. "His mentor, Robert Ross, helped him find his passion, which led him to a career of service to his country."

Ambassador Dinger now helps return the favor, frequently visiting the UNI campus to share his career experiences with students and encourage them to pursue foreign service careers.

# HONORARY DEGREE

The University of Northern Iowa presented Ambassador **John R. Dinger**, '74, with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the spring commencement ceremony in May, 2022.

"The honor recognizes Ambassador Dinger's commitment to public service and lifelong ambition to help improve the lives of individuals around the world," said President **Mark A. Nook**. "This commitment is grounded in his Iowa upbringing and his experience at UNI. We are proud to recognize his extraordinary career with this honorary degree."

After growing up in the small town of Riceville, Iowa, Ambassador Dinger graduated from UNI in 1974 with a degree in political science and a minor in French. Upon encouragement from his professor and head of the Department of

Political Science, **Robert Ross**, Ambassador Dinger applied and was accepted into the foreign service, launching a career that would take him around the world representing U.S. interests.

Ambassador Dinger began his Foreign Service career with tours to London and Rio de Janeiro. During his career, he served three tours in Japan, which culminated in his serving as consul general in Tokyo from 1998 to 2000. He also served as a labor attaché in Johannesburg, South Africa, working with Black labor unions during the fall of Apartheid, and as director of the Office of Press Relations in the Bureau of Public Affairs in Washington where he advocated U.S. foreign policy positions to U.S. and foreign media.

In 2000, Ambassador Dinger was appointed ambassador to Mongolia, where he helped open markets to

# PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED AWARDS

**E**stablished in 1956, the Heritage Honours Awards have a long tradition of recognizing UNI alumni who have gone above and beyond. The Alumni Achievement Award, which recognizes the significant professional accomplishments of UNI graduates, was presented in 2021 to **Joan L. Larsen**, '90.

Larsen graduated from UNI with highest honors and bachelor's degrees in political science and Spanish. She would go on to attend Northwestern University School of Law, graduating first in her class in 1993. Larsen clerked for Judge David Sentelle in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circ, and then for Justice Antonin Scalia on the United States Supreme Court. After her clerkship, Larsen returned to the Washington, D.C. office of Sidley Austin LLP, where she had worked as a law student.

In 1998, Larsen left Sidley to join the faculty of the University of Michigan Law School teaching constitutional law and criminal procedure until 2015. She served as deputy assistant attorney general in the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel from 2002 to 2003. In 2015, Larsen was appointed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder for an opening on the Michigan Supreme Court. In 2017, she was on President Trump's list of potential Supreme Court justices. President Trump nominated Larsen to serve as United States circuit judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in 2017.

As a prominent academic, Larsen has written extensively on constitutional structure, civil rights and other areas of law. She and her husband, Adam Pritchard, have two children and live in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The President's Philanthropy Awards recognize the philanthropic efforts of alumni, young alumni, faculty, staff, corporations and foundations. The Purple and Gold Award, which recognizes the extraordinary, long-time support of an individual or couple who have had a significant and inspiring impact on UNI, was presented in 2021 to **Robert and Carol Deppe**, '53.

Robert Deppe graduated from UNI in 1953 with a social science teaching degree. Carol also graduated in 1953 with a degree in music. The Deppes settled in central Iowa where they owned and operated several farms. Robert founded the Fernald Grain Company in 2001 and served as president and CEO.

The Deppes are the parents of five children, one of whom is a UNI graduate.

They have been active and loyal philanthropists over the past three decades, making annual gifts to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Dean's Fund for Excellence and the School of Music Development Fund. In addition, they established the Robert D. Deppe/Donald F. Howard Scholarship and the Carol Froning Deppe Fund for Music Excellence. Each of these funds will be enhanced through a generous legacy gift.

In 2022, the Purple and Gold Award was presented to **Patricia, '86 and O. Jay Tomson**.

The Tomsons have been active community members throughout their lifetimes, lending their time, talents and treasure to many organizations and colleges. Both St. Olaf alums, Pat returned to school and received a M.A. in counseling from UNI in 1986. O. Jay currently serves as chairman of the board of First Citizens Financial Corp. and is the former chair of the board and president of First Citizens Bank. Pat is the executive director of First Citizens Charitable Foundation and a retired family therapist.

In their 40-year giving history with UNI, the Tomsons have supported Panther Scholarship Club, the Annual Fund, the Provost's Fund for Excellence, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Dean's Fund, the College of Education Dean's Fund, Midwest Piano Competition and Women in Bipartisan Politics Scholarship Fund.

They established the Tomson Scholars program with the UNI Center for Violence Prevention in 2016 and later made a transformational gift of \$2.5 million to the center. It was renamed the Patricia A. Tomson Center for Violence Prevention in the fall of 2021 in recognition of this gift and Pat's lifelong dedication to the field of personal violence, having spent decades advocating for children and other survivors of abuse.



# GIVING BACK IN TIME & TREASURE



**D**ylan Keller, '14, '16, felt called to study history in part because of his grandfather, who served in World War II and passed away in 2004 right as Keller's interest in the topic began in earnest.

"I was just starting to gain an understanding of the Greatest Generation but missed the opportunity to have personal conversations with my grandfather about his service and experiences," Keller said. "In pursuing history, I had the goal of understanding the past and discovering the everyday stories that made up the fabric of our communities, whether big or small."

Today, Keller works as a legislative analyst for the Iowa Senate Republicans, primarily providing detailed policy analysis for Republican state senators.

Keller has had no shortage of success in his career thus far – he's especially proud he's staffed 105 bills that have become law – and credits much of it to his education from UNI.

"I believe the soft sciences or social sciences offer its students a foundation that sets them up for a successful future," he said. "The foundation I poured for myself at UNI focused on critical reading, critical writing and critical thought."



Keller – a Donnellson, Iowa, native who graduated from Central Lee High School in 2010 – recalls when it came time to decide on colleges, he couldn't have imagined attending a state school.

He was encouraged to visit UNI, though, and the campus tour sealed the deal. Keller said the two biggest deciding factors for him were the academics within the history department and the community feel on campus.



While a student, Keller participated in a number of groups, including the UNI Varsity Men's Glee Club and UNI College Republicans. As an undergraduate, Keller also spent a semester in Washington D.C. through the Washington Center Experience, which enabled him to intern with the Bipartisan Policy Center.

Additionally, he took part in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences' inaugural cohort of Social and Behavioral Representatives (SABRs) and represented the college as a senator in Northern Iowa Student Government.

PORT IS A KEY ELEMENT IN SHOWING  
STUDENTS, STAFF AND PROFESSORS  
THAT THE PANTHER FAMILY EXTENDS  
BEYOND CAMPUS IN CEDAR FALLS.

”

Keller's volunteer work with political campaigns inspired him to add a second major in political communication. He graduated in 2014 before pursuing a master's degree in history from UNI, which he earned two years later after completing his thesis on labor history in Waterloo post-World War II.

Now as an alum, Keller continues to keep UNI at the forefront. He's part of the UNI Central Iowa Alumni Club and sits on both the CSBS Dean Advisory Board and UNI Alumni Board. He previously served on the UNI Varsity Men's Glee Club Les Hale Endowment Fund Board, too.

In fact, Keller feels a deep-rooted passion to give back to the university.

“I created numerous connections at UNI over my six years as a student,” he said. “Those connections and relationships are a strong driver in why I support UNI with my time and money. I think it's important to give back in these ways, because it highlights how UNI has impacted my life and career.”

Keller added, “UNI is a public institution, but alumni support is a key element in showing current students, staff and professors that the Panther family extends beyond campus in Cedar Falls.”

# annual giving

The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences alumni and donors are as diverse as our different class offerings, but they all share one thing in common: a strong desire and commitment to give back to the college and university that means so much to them. We want to thank each of you who have made a contribution this past year. Your support is pivotal to the delivery of a quality education to our students! Our goal, when working with alumni and donors, is to find a way for them to support their passion and vision. Your gifts are an investment in students, faculty and programming. It is important that you, our supporters, see a return on that investment.

If you would like to explore different giving possibilities, please reach out. It would be an honor to work with you!

**DIANNE CAMPBELL, '91**  
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
dianne.campbell@uni.edu  
319.273.5985





# AMETHYST SOCIETY

In its fifth year, the Amethyst Society recognizes annual donations of \$1,000 or more. These donors embody the beliefs ancient civilizations had with regard to the amethyst, one of the world's most admired gems. It was their belief that the amethyst would bring forth the highest, purest aspirations and deepest wisdom of humankind. This year's members include:

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## DIAMOND

*(gifts \$100,000 and above)*

Kern Family Foundation  
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O. Jay & Patricia Tomson

# LEGACY SOCIETY

Members of UNI Legacy Society (formerly Old Central Associates) are a special group of friends who have provided for the University in their estate plans. A deferred gift of any size or type brings an invitation to become a member of the UNI Legacy Society. Membership means continued funding for scholarships, faculty support, research and facilities. The common thread among the members of the UNI Legacy Society is a strong belief and confidence in the work of the University of Northern Iowa. The following members of the UNI Legacy Society have made provisions for the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences through a deferred gift:

Jessica Moon Asa  
Susan K. Baker  
Bruce D. Bernard  
Elizabeth M. Brand  
Darrell E. Briggs  
Sue Caley  
Mark A. Cubit  
Robert D. Deppe  
Terry Edmunds  
Al Geiger

Charles E. Grassley  
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Dr. Harmon Hosch  
John Johnson  
Doris Kelley  
John L. Koberg  
Katie Kuker  
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Patricia J. Maxwell  
Cheryl Myhr  
Marybeth Nelson  
Joann Neven  
Dr. Judy K. Nissen  
Scott A. Schamberger  
Sara K. Stark  
Suzanne Strever  
David VanSickel  
Diane E. Wille

# DEAN'S FUND FOR EXCELLENCE LOYALTY ROSTER

UNI thanks all Dean's Fund for Excellence donors for their commitment and support to College of Social and Behavioral Students. The Dean's Fund allows our students to participate in educational and career enhancing opportunities they otherwise might not have had. We are profoundly grateful for their support. Below is the CSBS Loyalty Roster (those donors who gave \$100 and above to the Dean's Fund during fiscal year 2022. Please consider joining this group of special donors during the upcoming year:

Brenda S. Allen  
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David VanSickel



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# class notes

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## 1960s

**'63 Marvin Happel**, BA, Managua, Nicaragua, published a book titled "Cabbages & Kings," telling his story of going from a Bremer County farmhand to college dean and provost.

## 1970s

**'75 Deb (Kofron) Stanek**, BA, Manchester, received the 2022 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She teaches family and consumer science at Hudson High School.

## 1980s

**'83 Jon Niehaus**, BA, MA '85, Oak Ridge, TN, celebrated 34 years with Health Management Resources. He is a senior account manager and national trainer.

**'84 Charisse (Brown) Gillett**, BA, MA '87, Versailles, KY, was elected to the Transylvania University board of trustees, appointed by the Kentucky governor to serve on the Kentucky African-American History Commission and celebrated 10 years as president of Lexington Theological Seminary.

## 2000s

**'01 Jeremy Jones**, BA, MA '11, ASC '11, Cedar Falls, was named the 2022 Iowa Middle Level Principal of the Year by the School Administrators of Iowa. He is the principal of Holmes Junior High School.

**'01 BJ McGinn**, BA, Boone, was named 2021 Athletic Director of the Year by the National Junior College Athletic Association. He is the athletic director at DMACC.

**'02 Laura (Williams) Booth**, BA, Cedar Rapids, was promoted to director of family philanthropy with the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

**'05 Leslie (Rash) Berckes**, BA, MPP '09, Des Moines, was selected by the Des Moines Business Record as one of the 2022 Forty Under 40 honorees. She is the director of programs with Trees Forever.

**'05 Andrea Devore**, Reinbeck, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. She is a facilities manager at Lincoln Savings Bank.

**'05 Holly (Petersen) Wardlow**, BA, MSW '07, Waverly, is a licensed independent clinical social worker with Waverly Health Center.

**'08 James Crawford**, BA, MA '12, Washington, DC, served as a GIS Analyst for Polk County for seven years and then as a GIS Systems Administrator for the Library of Congress since 2020.

**'08 Tonya (Darrow) Hotchkin**, BA, Mount Vernon, was named one of the 2021 Women of Influence by the Corridor Business Journal. She is the vice president of clinical services at Tanager Place.

## 2010s

**'10 Jordan Dunn**, BSW, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2022. He is a clinical director at Pathways Behavioral Services.

**'10 Julia Ruetten**, BA, Albuquerque, NM, is the director of government regulation and reimbursement policy with the New Mexico Hospital Association.

**'11 Adam Haselhuhn**, BA, Des Moines, was promoted to director of development at UnityPoint Health John Stoddard Cancer Center.

**'13 Lauren Hernandez**, BA, Saint Paul, MN, is a senior corporate business recruiter for Indeed.com.

**'13 Margaret Nervig**, BA, MA '15, Ankeny, received a Fulbright scholarship to the Slovak Republic and served as an English teaching assistant for the 2021 2022 school year.

**'13 Chris Phalen**, BA, BM '13, MM '18, Storm Lake, is the director of choral activities at Buena Vista University.

**'13 Adriana (Hofstadter) Yarrington**, BA, Warren, MI, is the Families Together Building Solutions pathways to potential supervisor with Orchards Children's Services.

**'14 Jessica (Woodward) Auel**, BA, Mankato, MN, is a mental health therapist at Gustavus Adolphus College.

**'14 Logan Kraus**, BA, Marion, is an associate in the litigation unit of Dentons Davis Brown.

**'15 Tirzah Roussell**, BA, Delhi, is a law associate with Bradshaw, Fowler, Proctor & Fairgrave, P.C. and practices on the Bankruptcy and Reorganization Practice Group.

**'15 Ty Smith**, BA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2022. She is a fitness influencer at Bodied by Ty Fitness.

**'16 Carissa (Schneider) Barrett**, BA, Dubuque, is a victim witness coordinator with the Dubuque County Attorney's office.

**'18 Christopher Tims**, MA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. He is a teacher and head wrestling coach at Waterloo East High School.

**'18 Abigail Van Patten-Freeman**, BA, MA '21, Tipton, is pursuing a doctorate in counselor education and supervision at the University of Iowa. She is a mental health counselor at Green Counseling Services.

## 2020s

**'20 Cade Olmstead**, BA, Ankeny, is a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of English at the University of Vermont. He was previously a U.S. Fulbright researcher at the University of Ljubljana Institute of Philosophy at Slovenian Academy of Sciences Arts.

**'20 Britni Perkins**, BA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. She is a secretary with the Waterloo Community Schools and owner of Blessings 2 Celebrate.

**'21 Aladdin Dafalla**, BA, accepted a position with the Permanent Mission to the United Nations of the State of Qatar.

**'21 Peter Johnson**, BA, is the Executive Director at Midwest Partnership Economic Development Corporation.

**'21 Josh Wilson**, BA, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2022. He is a senior publicist at Otter PR.

**'22 Nilvia Reyes-Rodriguez**, BA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2022. She is the director of community impact and engagement at Cedar Valley United Way.



## What's new with you?

Let us know how you're doing, what you're doing and how we can keep in touch!

Update your information at [csbs.uni.edu/alum-updates](https://csbs.uni.edu/alum-updates).



