

12-2015

## UNI Grad Student News, v13n5, December 2015

University of Northern Iowa. Graduate College.

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### Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa. Graduate College., "UNI Grad Student News, v13n5, December 2015" (2015).

*UNI Grad Student News*. 20.

<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/gnews/20>

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# UNI GRAD STUDENT NEWS

## Message from the Dean

### HEADING INTO THE FINAL STRETCH FOR FALL 2015



As we close the semester of fall 2015, many of you who are graduating will be starting a new adventure beyond UNI.

Whether it is in the workplace, further education, or other opportunities, we are confident that your experience has prepared you to thrive as you apply your advanced training to your new endeavors. I hope that in addition to your academic specialization, your graduate experience—both in and out of the classroom—has shaped your knowledge and skills in ways that allow you to better harness your strengths and talents as you pursue your career goals. The Graduate College is committed to improving programming across disciplines, providing a wide-ranging platform for students to present their scholarship and creative activity, and

creative spaces and opportunities and facilitate a broader sense of community inclusive of students, faculty, and staff. With that in mind, earlier this month I sent you the Graduate College End of Program Survey to complete. If you have already completed the survey, thank you. For those of you who have not yet had the opportunity to complete the Survey, please take the time to do so. Your feedback is important to us!

For those of you who are returning to campus for the spring semester, the end of the semester is a great time to reflect on your accomplishments as well as to set goals and plan for future success. Registration is now open for the Ninth Annual Graduate Student Symposium on April 6 with poster presentations, oral presentations, and creative performances featured. The registration form, event schedule, frequently asked questions and more information is on the Symposium website at [www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium](http://www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium).

The Graduate College will be offering professional development opportunities throughout the semester with a poster presentation workshop scheduled for January 19 and an oral presentation workshop on January 27. Look for more workshop details on January 4 in your email.

The end of the semester is also a good time to engage in self-care and to rejuvenate. Make intentional actions to care for your physical and emotional health by making time to do activities that you enjoy! Whether it is reading for fun, traveling somewhere new, or spending quality time with friends and family, I hope you will use this holiday break to recharge yourself.

Have a wonderful holiday season! Congratulations and best wishes to the graduates!

Kavita Dhanwada

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Dr. Windee Weiss, is the Chair of Athletic Training Division in the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services and is one of the Associate Deans in the College of Education. Dr. Weiss attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois for her undergraduate studies from 1992-

1997, majoring in Psychology and minoring in Athletic Training. In 1999, Dr. Weiss earned a second degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale with a Master of Science in Education in Physical Education, specializing in Sport Psychology degree. She continued her higher education at the University of Virginia, in Charlottesville, VA, where she earned a Ph.D. in Sport Psychology in 2003. The University of Northern Iowa was her first position after receiving her Ph.D. When asked what attracted Dr. Weiss to UNI, she said, "When I came to interview, the first quality that I noticed was that the faculty, staff, and administrators were so warm, friendly, and fun! Within moments of arriving for my interviews and presentations in WRC, I probably met 10 faculty that went out their way to introduce themselves to me." Additionally, Dr. Weiss felt that UNI was the "right fit" for her because she enjoys teaching and research. She wanted an institution that not only valued teaching, but also had expectations for research and scholarly work. Dr. Weiss also remarked, "I love how adventurous the School of HPELS is with regards to academic courses. We are always trying something

new! The faculty and administration has always been supportive of experimental courses- be it a new way of teaching or new content area. This is so incredibly satisfying for both the faculty and the students." Dr. Weiss is currently focused on motivation in sport. That is, predictors of motivation, outcomes related to motivation, and ultimately, the motivated behaviors of athletes. She is also interested in the role of significant others (e.g., parents, coaches, teammates, friends) and the sport climate (e.g., motivational climate) in relation to youth sports participants' continued commitment and enjoyment of sport. Additionally, Dr. Weiss explained that she uses the "Sport Commitment Model" as a theoretical framework and many of her published research studies have focused on: competitive level differences in relation to sport commitment, exploring additional predictors of commitment and training behaviors, types of commitment in sport in relation to training behaviors and injury onset and injury rehabilitation behaviors, and commitment to academic achievement. Dr. Weiss also described several aspirations she has for her future at UNI. As a new Associate Dean for the College of Education, she reports she learns something new every day- about the job, about UNI, or even about herself and comments that her first aspiration is to be a competent, thoughtful, and productive Associate Dean. Another personal goal of hers is to earn the rank of full Professor. Lastly, Dr. Weiss would love to create a "youth sport institute" at UNI. This is a big dream that she intends to make a reality. The institute would focus on evidence-based practices and training to not only enhance the physical performance of youth sport participants, but also (and way more importantly!) focus on enhancing motivation,

## NEW YEAR, NEW MGSA!

Now is the time to join the Multicultural Graduate Student Association! The purpose of MGSA is to provide a support system for multicultural and international graduate students at the University of Northern Iowa. Programs are designed to support the continued academic, social, and professional excellence of those students. Also, MGSA collaborates with other organizations and as a group, we attend events for the continued betterment of our membership. MGSA will be starting fresh in the New Year and you (yes, YOU) could play a BIG part in the action. There will be an interest meeting, Thursday, January 14th at 5:30 pm, place TBA. ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED ARE INVITED so please watch for your e-mail invitations.

Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/mgsauni](https://facebook.com/mgsauni) for event information and meeting dates. For all other questions, comments, or concerns, please contact MGSA at [MGSAUNI@gmail.com](mailto:MGSAUNI@gmail.com).

-Submitted by MGSA President, Lisa Smith ([lisa.n.smith@uni.edu](mailto:lisa.n.smith@uni.edu))



Cedar Falls native, Mackensie Smith, is currently pursuing a Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree at UNI. For her undergraduate studies, Smith attended Drake University, in Des Moines, Iowa, where she majored in Public Relations and minored in Politics. Smith graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism and Mass Communication in 2012.

When asked why she chose UNI's Master of Public Policy program, Smith replied, "My husband is stationed in Germany with the U.S. Army and upon moving from the U.S. in May of this year I knew I wanted graduate school to be a part of this chapter of my life." When she was looking for a distance learning graduate program, she spoke to a few people connected to the University who recommended the MPP program after she outlined her interests and goals. She did quite a bit of research of different programs across the U.S., but the timing, accessibility, subject matter, and ability to also achieve a Certificate in Public Administration made the UNI program most attractive. Smith explained that they live on a small base, so available full-time jobs in her background are rare; she knew pursuing a graduate degree would aid in her career progression instead of being at a relative standstill. Smith also remarked, "Being from Cedar Falls, UNI, has always been a part of the community and life. So, attending the University, even from afar, made me feel a little closer to Iowa." One of the biggest challenges she has experienced thus far is staying awake or waking up early to log-in to the 1 a.m.-4 a.m. weekly class on Monday nights (since Germany is seven hours ahead of Central Standard Time).

Although she often needs a large cup of coffee to get through class, Smith assuredly says she is enjoying her experience as a distance learning student. She describes the content she has learned so far as unparalleled and knows when she graduates in 2017 she will have a solid base, excellent connections, and knowledge necessary to thrive in the field of public policy and/or public administration. Smith had some advice for distance learning students, "Distance learning is inherently flexible learning, no matter if you're down the street from the university or around the world; you have options. Define what your end goal is from the beginning and then apply that to your school and program search. Also, a little general life advice: There will never be the perfect time to do anything, so if now is the time, don't delay. Make it happen and take charge of your future." Smith's short term goals for herself include dedicating a high level of study to the content, and finding an internship within the field following graduation. Her career experience so far has been in roles within the PR/marketing field, so Public Policy is an industry shift for her. Smith describes the MPP program as incredibly workable with a full-time job because it's only one class at a time, one night a week. The course load is appropriately difficult and much is expected outside of the weekly three hours together, but it's not an all-consuming program. Besides being a student, Smith is a journalist/editor/digital marketer for a myriad of online and print publications (you can check out my portfolio here), and a yoga instructor. Outside of work and school, she and her husband love to travel; it's their goal to visit as many countries as possible in Europe during their time there. She also enjoys cooking (vegetarian), running, cycling, reading, and trying the different wines and beers Germany (and Europe) has to offer.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE OPPORTUNITY



The Service and Leadership Council will be offering a Day of Service for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in the Maucker Union Ballroom from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Monday, January 18, 2016. Volunteers will be packaging 20,000 rice and bean meals to be donated to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. This event will also feature guest speakers and a hunger simulation. Participants will receive a free t-shirt, and lunch will be provided. Register for the MLK Day of Service at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mlk-day-of-service-tickets-19468516858>.



Dr. Tom O'Shea, a native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is a two-time graduate from the University of Northern Iowa. In May 1999, Dr. O'Shea was awarded two undergraduate degrees, a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts in Management with an emphasis in Human Resources Management. In May 2001, he earned his Master of Arts degree in Postsecondary

Education: Student Affairs from UNI and in November 2013, Dr. O'Shea completed his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Iowa State University. Currently, Dr. O'Shea is the Department Director for the Physician Assistant Graduate Program in the Carver College of Medicine at the University of Iowa. A large portion of his job focuses on the administration and oversight of all student services for the department. While administration and oversight of operational administration are additional duties. Dr. O'Shea's career path has always been focused on higher education. He had the opportunity to work on many different college campuses in the area of student affairs and business operations. In each of these areas, he had a 60/65% role in student affairs management and a 35-40% role in operational support administration. He has

continued to gain valuable insight into the operations of academic and student service offices on a college campus. Dr. O'Shea's expectations were to be employable upon graduation. He wanted to make sure that he could go into any functional area of student affairs on any type of college campus. With this, he wanted to also make sure that he would make a difference and assist with student success. Dr. O'Shea stated that "UNI provided me with so many experiences at the undergraduate and graduate levels that made all of my professional goals possible. These experiences, coupled with the outstanding education I received as an undergraduate and graduate student helped me be successful. UNI truly was a place to merge inside and outside classroom experiences to mold me into who I am today!" Dr. O'Shea said the many faculty and staff at UNI, such as Connie Hansen, Assistant Director of Student and Alumni Engagement, influenced him greatly during his time as a student. When asked what advice Dr. O'Shea has for current UNI graduate students, he said to get involved on campus, get to know everyone, and learn just as much outside of the classroom as you do inside the classroom. To learn more about the Physician Assistant Program at Iowa, visit <http://www.medicine.uiowa.edu/pa/staff/>

Aside from work, Dr. O'Shea loves to travel and play volleyball whenever he gets the chance. He also enjoys spending time with his family and his Brittney Spaniel puppy Auggie.

## TIPS TO PREPARE FOR THE 2016 SPRING SEMESTER

The spring semester is fast approaching and graduate students are preparing for new courses, planning to attend conferences and/or anticipating graduation. After you have spent some time unwinding and mentally preparing yourself for the upcoming semester, use your winter break to get ready to make the most of your spring semester. Follow these tips to get a jump on the New Year:

- Relax. Take a break from your studies by spending some quality time doing things you enjoy or taking a vacation. This will help rejuvenate and refresh your mind so that you are better able to focus when you return to the next semester!
- Double-check your course registration on MyUNiverse. Make sure you are in the right courses for the correct number of credits and that the credits are being applied to your degree. Complete any items in your "To Do List" before classes begin.
- Check your UNI email regularly over break. Make sure your UNI email forwards to your personal email if that is what you prefer. All official university correspondence (including opportunities for assistantships/scholarships) are sent to your UNI email.
- Organize and file your work from the past semester. If you haven't already, develop a systematic way to store your notes, handouts and papers for future reference. If possible, back up your resources electronically and take care to save your syllabi as well.
- Buy or rent your books as soon as you can. Once you receive the information about what books you will need, buy or rent them. If you buy early, you might get a used book at a cheaper price. Be sure to save your receipts in case you drop the class. For more information, <http://niowa.verbacompare.com/>
- Register to participate in the Ninth Annual Graduate Student Symposium on Wed., April 6, 2016. Current graduate students and December 2015 graduates are invited to participate. The symposium features poster presentations, oral presentations, and creative performances. Prize money will be awarded! For more information, including the registration form, guidelines, and frequently asked questions, visit the Symposium website (<http://www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium>). **The registration deadline is Feb. 12, 2016.**

# Second Annual Elect Her—Panther Women Win!

January 23, 2016  
10:30am to 4:00pm  
Maucker Union Ballroom

- ◇ Hear from elected officials
- ◇ Learn important leadership skills
- ◇ Network with others interested in women in leadership, administrators, faculty and community leaders
- ◇ Participate in breakout sessions

Register NOW at

[Pantherwomenwin2016.eventbrite.com](http://Pantherwomenwin2016.eventbrite.com).

Follow us for updates at

[Facebook.com/pantherwomenwin](https://www.facebook.com/pantherwomenwin).

*New breakout sessions!*

**Refreshments and lunch provided!**

Questions? Contact Rachel at [gregoryr@uni.edu](mailto:gregoryr@uni.edu) or Kerri at [kerri.robinson@uni.edu](mailto:kerri.robinson@uni.edu).

This event is sponsored by the Political Science Department with additional funding provided by AAUW-Cedar Falls.

Elect Her—Campus Women Win, a collaboration between AAUW and Running Start, is the only nationwide program that encourages and trains young women to run for student government on their campuses. During this training, Elect Her provides students with research and information about women and politics, inspiring local speakers, and interactive campaign exercises.

 **Elect Her**  
PANTHER WOMEN WIN  
AAUW • RUNNING START

## CEDAR VALLEY FAMILY STEM FESTIVAL – LYUDA GRYGORCHUK



The third annual Cedar Valley Family STEM Festival took place on Thursday, Nov. 12 at the Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center in Waterloo. The festival's goals were to promote, inspire and engage youth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities and to

introduce children and parents to STEM careers in their local communities. Around 2,700 people attended the Festival. More than 70 organizations throughout Cedar Valley and across the state featured interactive STEM exhibits and activities for all ages. Children and their families had the opportunity to operate a robot, use a welding simulator, conduct science experiments, learn about small animals, explore the nursing field, and much more.

Lyuda Grygorchuk, an international student from Ukraine pursuing her Master's in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Public Relations, is the graduate assistant for the Northeast Iowa Family STEM Hub Festivals at UNI. As the graduate assistant for the program, Lyuda helped with coordinating, planning, and implementing the event and along with other STEM events.

Of the experience, Lyuda said, "I have worked as an event manager for a few

years before starting this job but the Cedar Valley Family STEM Festival was the biggest event I have ever coordinated. I am very grateful for having a chance to work for a program that makes a difference in the Cedar Valley and inspires children to explore the field of STEM as well as help parents see future career options for their children. It is such an unbelievable experience to see kid's excitement, desire to learn and try new things, and see them leave with inspiration and a deeper understanding of what STEM is."

Northeast STEM Festivals Region is one of six Iowa STEM Regions guided by the Governor's STEM Advisory Council and dedicated to building a strong STEM education foundation for all Iowans. For more information on the Cedar Valley Family STEM Festival, check out <http://www.neiowastem.com/stem-festivals/cedar-valley-family-stem-festival.aspx>. For more information on STEM UNI, visit [www.uni.edu/stemed](http://www.uni.edu/stemed).

## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN FOR UNI – RACHEL GREGORY

Rachel Gregory learned about the American Association of University Women (AAUW) through the Elect Her program. Elect Her is a training program that provides the necessary skills for women in leadership positions, specifically elected offices. Rachel and her colleague Kerri Robinson, a Research Development Specialist from UNI's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, learned that the framework for the Elect Her program was from the national AAUW organization and secured a grant to start an AAUW chapter on UNI's campus.

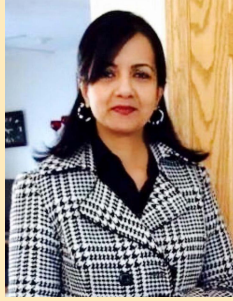
To start a chapter of the AAUW, Rachel and Kerri submitted an online application to the Student Involvement Center, which was approved by a Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG) senatorial vote. Shera Steere, Vice President of AAUW for UNI and NISG graduate senator, worked as the group's representative throughout the process. AAUW for UNI members will also be applying for national recognition from the AAUW in January. National recognition would provide students with free e-affiliate membership to the AAUW.

Rachel and Kerri also reached out to the Cedar Falls Branch of the AAUW, and the local branch was interested in their work at the university. Rachel and Kerri hope to implement a mentoring program between members of the Cedar Falls Branch and AAUW for UNI students in the future.

Upcoming AAUW for UNI activities include the Women in Politics film series, beginning December 7 at 7:30 p.m. in the State College Room of Maucker Union, featuring the film "Miss Representation." Elect Her takes place on January 23, 2016 from 10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on the Old Central Ballroom of Maucker Union. Students can register at <https://pantherwomenwin2016.eventbrite.com>.

AAUW for UNI has variable monthly meetings on campus. All graduate and undergraduate students are welcome to join AAUW for UNI, regardless of sex or gender identity. Interested students can contact Rachel at [gregoryr@uni.edu](mailto:gregoryr@uni.edu).

## New Graduate College Secretary: Rubina Chowdhury



Rubina Chowdhury began her new position as Secretary II for the Graduate College in October. She is originally from Bangladesh where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Science (Nutrition and Psychology), and later earned an Associate's degree in Information Processing from Hawkeye Community College (HCC). She relocated to the United

States in 1988 following her marriage to Mohammad Iqbal who is currently a Professor of Geology in the Department of Earth Science at UNI. Rubina and Mohammad first lived in Ohio and then relocated to Indiana University in Bloomington, IN where Mohammad completed his graduate studies. In 1994 they moved to Cedar Falls with Mohammad joining the UNI faculty. Rubina said, "It's been over 20 years since I have lived here, so it became my second home." Her daughter, Tasnia Iqbal is pursuing her pre-medical undergraduate studies at the University of Iowa.

Rubina's work experience is diverse. While a HCC student, she worked for the Waterloo Center for the Arts and following her graduation she was employed by the Black Hawk Mortgage Services in Waterloo. In 2006, she became a Marketing Assistant and Member Services Representative at the UNI Credit Union. In addition to her marketing and administrative duties, she organized and staffed all the annual campus orientations such as the Graduate Student Information

Meetings, International Student Orientation and the New Faculty Orientations. In her capacity in providing financial services to student, faculty, and staff she became very interested in working at UNI having experienced the UNI culture. According to Rubina, "Then it became my dream to find a job at UNI." Her dream came true in that she interviewed and was hired for the Secretary II position in the Graduate College. She reflected, "I am really enjoying working here with my supportive supervisors and co-workers and especially enjoy helping student and the faculty.

Rubina enjoys spending time with her family and traveling, including visiting her mother, sisters, and brothers in Bangladesh. Volunteerism is very important to her. She serves as the Iowa Representative for the Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI) which is headquartered in Connecticut. Rubina stated, "I truly believe that no child should be deprived of education, no matter whether they are rich or poor." DCI is a non-profit organization working to protect child rights and help families out of the poverty cycle through education, healthcare, and income generating opportunities. DCI currently supports development initiatives in partnership with implementing organizations in the countries of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Nicaragua. To learn more about DCI contact Rubina.Chowdhury@uni.edu or visit [www.distressedchildren.org](http://www.distressedchildren.org).

## *Congratulations to the Fall 2015 Graduates*

**Fall Commencement:**  
**Saturday, December 19, 2015**  
**11:00 a.m. McLeod Center**  
**All Undergraduate and Graduate**  
**Students.**





9th Annual

# Graduate Student Symposium

April 6, 2016

Registration is now open!

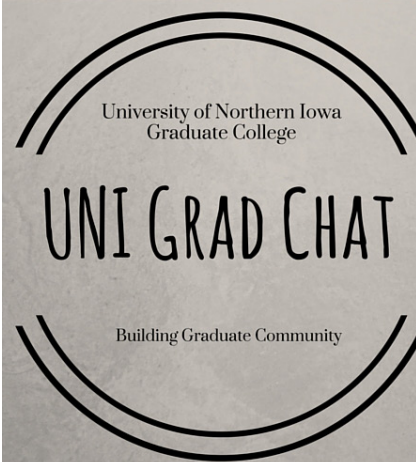
Sign up at <http://grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium> today!

- Create a poster presentation, oral presentation, or creative performance to showcase your research in a conference environment.
- Gain presentation experience.
- Build your CV or résumé.
- Network with other graduate students and faculty.
- Prize money will be awarded in each category!

Questions? Email [gradlife@uni.edu](mailto:gradlife@uni.edu)

## SPRING 2016 IMPORTANT DATES FOR THESIS & DISSERTATION WRITERS

- January 11** Instruction Begins
- January 11** Preview must be scheduled and  
– **March 11** completed
- March 25** Thesis/dissertation due to the Graduate College to be eligible for Spring graduation
- April 1** Application for Spring graduation due through the Student Center to avoid late fee and to ensure inclusion in the commencement program
- May 6** Final deadline for application for Spring graduation; Notification of completion of research paper/comprehensive exams due from departments to Graduate College and Registrar's Office
- May 7** Commencement



Join UNI Grad Chat on Facebook!

Connect with Graduate students

Explore new opportunities

Socialize and Network

Questions? Email [gradlife@uni.edu](mailto:gradlife@uni.edu)

## ASHA CONFERENCE:

The American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) held the 2015 National Convention on November 12-14th in Denver, Colorado. It is the premier annual professional education event for speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. The event brought together more than 12,000 attendees and provided "unparalleled opportunities" to hear the latest research and gain new skills and resources to advance in the profession. Twelve graduate students and three alumnus from UNI's speech-language pathology graduate program presented their research at the convention:

### **Abbie Gacke and Meaghan Mercer**

"A Speech-Language Pathologist's Role in Feeding and Swallowing in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit"

### **Jaime Vandelaar**

"Refractoriness of the Transit Reaction: Respiratory & Aerodynamic Response"

### **UNI Alumni Kari Lien**

"Speech Resonance Values for Childhood Dual-Language Learners of English & Spanish"

**Blaire Schoon, Katie Decker, Caitlin Bielenberg, Shelby Wirth, Abi Menuey, Mackenzie Keeney, and Casandra Johansen** presented

"Memory & Cognitive Training with Typically Aging Seniors in Individual and Group settings: Implications for Prevention"

### **\* Glendolyn Neely and Eleanor Poe**

"Lingual Dysfunction in Advancing Parkinson's Disease Predicts Reduce Swallowing Quality of Life" (*\*Meritorious Poster Submission*)

### **UNI Alumnus Kayla Chesnut, Emily Marx, and Janis Matthys**

"The Use of Scripted Storybooks to Train Is Verbing and Third Person Singular Structures"

Along with congratulating the ASHA presenters, the Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders and the UNI Graduate College would like to wish the best of luck to the May 2016 graduating class (pictured below) as they embark on their internships for the Spring Semester!



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## GRADUATE COLLEGE STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To submit articles for consideration in the UNI Grad Student News, fill out the online submission form found at <http://grad.uni.edu/online-submission-form>. With any questions or concerns feel free to contact the Graduate College staff listed below.

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