Alumnus found outdoor calling at UNI
Advances in technology and social media have made it incredibly easy to stay connected with former classmates. I substitute phone calls with voyeuristic glimpses into friends’ and families’ lives, but do not have a real opportunity to reminisce, joke and truly connect. There is such a difference in hearing a familiar laugh and seeing a smile in real time.

My favorite part of my job is watching people connect. It happens at nearly every event. I will be talking with an alumnus/a about their time on campus and someone will come over and grab them on the shoulder and say, “There’s someone I haven’t seen in ages! How are you?” Then they will go into this amazing narrative about living across the hall from each other, discussing favorite memories sledding down the hill with lunch trays, or even remembering skinny dipping in Prexy’s Pond (I have heard some stories that have made me blush)! It is a true gift to watch friends reconnect and witness, even just for a moment, a near time travel back to their time on campus. I get to see these glimpses of the past, be it the memories of living in Stadium Hall to more recent memories of a proposal at the Campanile.

I was lucky enough to experience a real-time connection at an alumni event in Chicago. I was greeting UNI alumni at the door when a woman walked in with a familiar last name and face. But, in my mind, this couldn’t be my elementary school band director—she’s far too young. I started to talk with her and asked where she was from and what she did for a living. She was a retired elementary school band instructor from Waterloo. It was Ms. Whitehead, my greatly admired and adored fifth grade band teacher. It was a gift for us to reconnect. All of a sudden the gap of two decades melted. What a joy.

Leslie Prideaux  |  Director, Alumni Relations
President, University of Northern Iowa Alumni Association
DEFYING THE ODDS
UNI student Dominique Jefferson’s life was turned upside down on April 20, 2016.

EMERGING PROGRAMS
The new programs emerging on campus reflect a commitment to preparing students to succeed.

SAVING UNI ART
A group of UNI art advocates are fighting a war with the past.

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NORTH TO ALASKA

ALUMNUS FOUND OUTDOOR CALLING AT UNI
Sam Braband, ’10, says we shouldn’t “pigeonhole” his alma mater. UNI’s offerings aren’t limited to its outstanding education and business programs.

“UNI provides lots of great experiences for a wide range of graduates. It prepared me for my career in the wilderness,” Sam said.

Originally from Clive, Sam has been working for the past five months as an Alaska State Park Ranger for the Fairbanks area. He graduated from UNI with a degree in leisure, youth and human services.

Sam knew what he wanted to do from the second day he was on campus. That first day, though, was a little different. “I came in as a pre-nursing major,” Sam laughed. A meeting with an advisor from the biology department followed a dizzying first day of anatomy class. When Sam said he didn’t think the major was right for him, he was asked about his interests.

“I proceeded to describe basically what I’m doing today; I knew I wanted to work outside,” Sam said.

The advisor helped Sam switch his major the second day of class and he would go on to graduate with an emphasis in outdoor recreation.
On the Job

It was the National Student Exchange program that gave Sam his first taste of Alaska; his junior year he enrolled in outdoor studies at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau. After graduating from UNI, he took a position managing the outdoor recreation program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks before becoming a park ranger.

“It feels good to be doing what I wanted to be doing all along.”

Sam and just two other rangers oversee the northern Alaska state parks, some 250,000 acres of land north of the Denali National Park and Preserve. It’s a wilderness (“the people who actually live here don’t consider it ‘wilderness’ because it’s just their back yard”) crawling with fauna, from beavers, lynx and willow grouse to wolves, grizzlies and black bears. On occasion, the hooves of hundreds of caribou do the work of the ranger, carving out passable trails to be enjoyed by human users.

A park ranger is both a resource manager and a law enforcement officer. The theme of the job, Sam says, is never knowing what to expect.

He described a recent rather mundane morning of snowplowing trails that quickly turned to a whirlwind afternoon hunt for a bandit who had stolen gas from the Department of Natural Resources and a few other offices located within Sam’s jurisdiction. Teamwork among the rangers, state troopers and other agencies had the thief in custody by the end of the afternoon.

Another day was filled by a more unusual adventure: a six-mile odyssey through the harsh Alaskan bush to deliver a fresh outhouse to a rental cabin.

“No, that’s not something I thought I’d be doing when I graduated from UNI,” Sam chuckled. “But that’s the name of the game.”
Finding Himself at UNI

Sam found plenty of opportunities at UNI that set him on his career path. He led backpacking trips to the Grand Canyon as a student with the UNI Outdoors Program, participated in a tallgrass prairie burn and helped construct a trail system as part of a managing impacts on natural resources course.

Sam says Kathy Scholl, associate professor of leisure, youth and human services, inspired him to work with natural resources. “She was instrumental in identifying that passion in me and making it a career.”

He also found his wife of seven years, Stacy, within the confines of the Wellness and Recreation Center. "I worked at the climbing wall in the WRC and she taught Pilates classes. Of course, I had to walk past the open glass group fitness studios to get to the climbing wall," Sam said. The pair noticed each other and connected through a mutual friend.

The two caught a lecture at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center and shared their first date over a beer at Toad’s Bar and Grill on Main Street. More than 3,000 miles and about 10 years later, they and their three children have made their home among a great community in Fairbanks.

“For someone who loves the outdoors, it’s nice to know you’re on the frontier of America’s biggest wilderness — and to have it so close by,” Sam said.

Enjoying the Outdoors

Sam believes we should all do our best to appreciate the outdoors while we can. Though many of us take part by way of a simple hike, Sam is different, a bit of a self-described adrenaline junkie.

One of his more exhilarating adventures was climbing the frozen Bridal Veil Falls near Valdez, Alaska. The waterfall stands nearly 500 feet.

Asked if he considers that dangerous, Sam replied matter-of-factly, “It’s all about your sphere of acceptable risk.”

Sam’s quick to mention he even learned ice climbing while at UNI—rather than an Alaskan waterfall, it was an ice-covered silo in the middle of an Iowa winter. UNI
Friends of the UNI Permanent Art Collection and Gallery—an 18-member group of UNI alumni, students and other supporters of art—formed in August with a goal of preserving, expanding and increasing awareness of UNI’s Permanent Art Collection, a storehouse of more than 4,000-piece cross section of art history from the 15th century to the present day.

The group’s first campaign is to solicit $55,000 in funds to conserve 44 fragile works of art in danger of being lost to time. The list includes works by history’s greatest artists: Picasso, Rembrandt, Matisse and Grant Wood.

“It can be heartbreaking to look at a work of art that may be beyond repair,” said Darrell Taylor, UNI Art Gallery director and overseer of the Permanent Art Collection. “Or perhaps it’s the case that you can stabilize it, but even after stabilization it can’t be viewed in an exhibition setting.”
Taylor and the Friends group have raised over $27,000 toward a 50/50 matching grant offered by the Institute for Museum and Library Services. The present mission is the result of a previous Institute for Museum and Library Services grant that funded a condition assessment of the Permanent Art Collection’s approximately 2,400 works on paper. From that assessment, the list of 44 high-priority works was compiled based on each piece’s condition as well as status within the collection.

“There is a risk of further damage if these works aren’t conserved,” Taylor said. “There is a continual decline that will happen for works of art that are not properly pH balanced from a conservator, not properly cleaned.”

Many of the high-priority works are too fragile to be displayed openly. A piece by Alexander Calder is at risk of losing the artist’s signature. Taylor points to a 1637 Rembrandt etching, “Young Man in a Velvet Cap,” whose image is interrupted by adhesive bleeding through from the back of the piece. It severely distracts from appreciation of what made Rembrandt so great: his lines.

“I want observers to see the image as close to pristine as possible,” Taylor said. “So they can really study what the artist did rather than what somebody that came after Rembrandt did.”

Budgetary constraints make it impossible to perform the intensive conservation these pieces require, Taylor said.

“There is risk of further damage if these works aren’t conserved.” -DARRELL TAYLOR
About a year ago, Jim, ’71, and Santha, ’84, Kerns, residents of Cedar Falls and longtime art advocates, participated in a tour of the art on campus led by Taylor. What they saw concerned them.

“Some of the sculptures that we looked at are in dire need of care,” Santha said. “That’s when we started asking Darrell questions: ‘How are you taking care of this?’”

“Darrell was pretty frank that the funds are just not there to do the work that needs to be done,” Jim said. “We just thought, ‘It would be a shame to lose these pieces.’”

From there, Jim and Santha worked with the UNI Foundation, Taylor and others to launch a sustainable source of funding for the Permanent Art Collection, laying the groundwork for the Friends group. Jim and Santha said the support was overwhelming from the start.

“I haven’t been surprised at all by the support because the need is so great,” Jim said. “I’ve been pleased.”

Jim has been making pottery for as many years as he has worked for John Deere, nearly 50. Santha taught art at Peet Middle School for nearly 20 years. Both are UNI graduates with longstanding ties to the university’s art department.


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“We just thought ‘IT WOULD BE A SHAME TO LOSE THESE PIECES.’”

-JIM KERNS

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Jim and Santha speak of art as an antidote to fruitless problem solving, the genesis of creative answers to society’s most complex problems. They say the Permanent Art Collection is a vehicle to educate our community about art.

“It’s our history,” Jim said. “The art that’s represented in these collections, and throughout the world, speaks to the history of mankind and the lessons we can learn.”

Taylor says conservation will allow more art to be displayed for the public and even shared with other galleries.

“These works need to be conserved because it’s important for the legacy of this collection,” Taylor said. “So that not only students from academic year 2017-18 can appreciate and learn from a work of art, but students and scholars from 2047-48 can as well.”
“You look like a werewolf.”

When Dominique Jefferson first returned home, that was the first thing his cousin said to him. Having spent two months in a hospital in Chicago and nearly two weeks in a hospital in Iowa City, Dominique’s hair and facial hair had been neglected for far too long.

His cousin insisted he needed a haircut, and Dominique obliged that very same day.

It was a small but significant return to normalcy for the University of Northern Iowa student whose life had been turned upside down on April 20, 2016.

That night, while performing as part of the probate announcing his membership to the fraternity Omega Psi Phi for those outside the fraternity, Dominique missed a step in the routine that he had spent countless hours and countless days practicing.

Dominique knew something wasn’t right. Not long after the performance, he began to feel a sharp pain in his back. In about 10 or 15 minutes, the pain had become unbearable. He left the Maucker Union ballroom to get a drink of water and collapsed. Dominique pulled himself up and was able to take three steps towards a couch before having to crawl the rest of the way.

As he lay there on the couch, he realized he couldn’t move anything below the neck.

His fraternity brothers ended up driving him to the hospital, where an MRI revealed a blood clot on his spinal cord. The official diagnosis was a spontaneous thoracic hematoma. The doctors conducted numerous tests, but were unable to determine the cause.

Dominique had even been to a doctor twice before in the weeks leading up to that night, once for a physical required as part of his membership to the fraternity and once a few weeks later after experiencing some hip pain. He received a clean bill of health after both visits.
I can't say it was easy, because I'd be lying. But you've got to take what life gives you and just keep going. It could've been worse."

-Dominique Jefferson
"I couldn’t accept what had happened to me as my fate for the rest of my life."
As a 21-year-old college student finishing out his junior year, Dominique admitted that it felt like someone had come in and, "hit a light switch and cut everything off."

"I can’t say it was easy, because I’d be lying," Dominique said. "But you’ve got to take what life gives you and just keep going. It could’ve been worse."

Much worse.

After surgery, Dominique suffered a scare—unknowingly to him at the time—when the doctors sat him up on the edge of the bed and he began to experience a massive headache. As his blood pressure began to drop to dangerously low levels, the doctors scrambled for answers, privately informing his mother that his condition was life-threatening. Fortunately, he stabilized.

But the doctors did not think Dominique would ever walk again, although they refrained from sharing that belief with him early on, for fear of the damage it would do to his psyche. Dominique had a different mindset.

Once physical therapy began, Dominique set out to push the limits of what he could do. When he first started to regain leg movement, his physical therapists expressed their disbelief.

"I was like, 'I don’t know what you thought, but I knew I was going to walk again,'" he recalled.

After nine months of physical therapy, Dominique was able to return to UNI. He can walk again, aided by a pair of leg braces that help with balance and strength, but has opted to use a wheelchair to get around campus because his pace isn’t quite where it needs to be.

Wheelchair or not, his outlook on his situation couldn’t be brighter.

"I’m breathing, I’m talking, I’m seeing right now, I’m feeling things. Eighteen months ago, all of that could’ve been cut out. Period. I could’ve been done," Dominique said. "Even when I’m rolling around in a wheelchair, I’m smiling, because I could not be here. So how could I not be grateful for my current situation, even if I’m in a wheelchair?"

In addition to physical therapy and an impenetrable positive attitude, Dominique also credits the support system of friends and family for helping him get to where he is today. One moment, in particular, that stands out to him was when his father brought him back to UNI. Dominique was nervous about the prospect of returning to school, uncertain of whether he could succeed. Before he left, his father—whom Dominique has described as "reserved" and not someone who shows a lot of emotion—said to him: "I’m proud of you."

"I felt the emotion in his voice," Dominique said. After that, "I didn’t know if I could do it, but I had to do it. It’s not about me. If I don’t, I’m letting him down. My mom, my grandma, everyone."

Even though he marvels at the progress he has made so far and how he has managed to defy the odds, for him there is still more work to be done.

"Every day," Dominique said, when asked how often he thinks about the day when he’ll fully regain all of the physical capabilities he once had.

"I think about that a lot, and maybe too much, to be honest, because there is no guarantee that I’ll ever get back to that point. I believe it’s going to happen. I want it to happen. I’m going to do everything I can for that to happen.

"At the same time, I have to live in reality, too. I wasn’t supposed to walk again. At the stage I’m at right now, if I were to stay like this the rest of my life, how could I be upset with that? But at the same time, I wasn’t supposed to walk again."

"Yet I’m walking," he said, smiling.
It was first started for the purpose of training teachers, but the University of Northern Iowa has evolved into so much more than that in the last century.

There are now more than 90 majors for students to choose from, and that number continues to grow as the university adapts to fulfill the changing needs of students.

The new programs emerging on campus at UNI reflect a commitment to preparing students to succeed in whatever careers or endeavors await them after graduation.
DIGITAL MEDIA

Few mediums have experienced as much change over the last decade as the field of digital media. As the field has continued to evolve both nationally and globally, UNI has evolved right along with it, leading to the introduction of a new digital media program last spring.

The new program consists of three majors: digital journalism, digital media leadership and digital media production.

“The industry has seen new developments and directions in the mix between artistic storytelling, exciting new digital technologies and multi-platform business models,” said Paul Torre, who is in his fifth year at UNI as an assistant professor of communication studies. “We also have tracked changes in academic programs across the country, and were eager for our program to match or exceed media programs in Iowa and the region.”

Torre believes that the media production program at UNI is one of the strongest in the state and that these changes will only serve to enhance it.

“The new digital media program combines creativity and innovation in digital media storytelling and leadership, preparing graduates for careers in an exciting and expanding field,” said Torre.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

For a lot of people, nothing embodies the American Dream quite like the entrepreneur. That person who builds something out of nothing, launching and running their own business.

UNI is doing its part to encourage more students to chase that dream, with the introduction of a new entrepreneurship minor. The minor represents a collaborative effort between the UNI Department of Marketing and the UNI John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial center (JPEC).

“The minor was created to teach students how to start businesses or become entrepreneurs within an organization,” explained Katerine Cota, associate director of the JPEC.

The new minor will look to build upon the existing certificate in the entrepreneurship program with additional coursework in marketing and the student’s chosen area of study. In that area of study, the student will create an original business plan as well as engage in experiential learning through a major project for a real client company.
Brent Dahlstrom, ’07, started by mowing lawns in high school and selling tickets out of his college dorm room when he was a freshman finance and real estate double major at UNI.

Today, he owns and develops more than 1,000 properties.
“Brent’s enthusiasm and hard work has recently paid off with the former Grand Hotel site. The project has added over $15 million in investment to the community and has been awarded the 2018 Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award from the National Community Development Association.”

—Noel Anderson, Community Planning & Development Director for the City of Waterloo

When talking about the keys to his success, Dahlstrom is quick to credit the team of people he has surrounded himself with, many of whom are UNI graduates.

“I partner on almost every one of my projects with friends and people that I’ve met along the way,” Dahlstrom said. “It makes it more enjoyable to do it together than all by myself. I want to continue to make long lasting relationships.”

He also stresses that patience is one of the most important qualities for a budding entrepreneur, having personally endured tough times with each of his own business ventures.

“If you look at all businesses, whether it’s Google or Apple or Facebook, and look at the beginnings, no one ever started and just exploded. Most of them go through financial hardships. It takes time and effort, and it takes [from] people their guts and their blood. It takes so much that no one ever sees.”

“I don’t think I ever thought I’d be where I am today,” said Dahlstrom when asked if this is what he envisioned for his career when he was attending UNI.

As an undergraduate, he assumed he would end up working at Principal or Wells Fargo after graduation. This was before the housing market crash that would affect a vast number of his classmates. When he opted to strike out on his own, rejecting the more traditional career path that was perceived to be “safer” at the time, there was no shortage of doubters.

“Never let someone tell you you can’t do it. I was told by so many people for a very, very long time that what I was doing was not smart, too risky, that I would regret it. I never listened to those people.”

In addition to his real estate developments, Dahlstrom is also involved in a number of other business ventures—including Dolly’s Tickets, Dolly’s Party Bus and Dolly’s Taxi—but has ceded control of the day-to-day operations to his business partner.

His focus remains squarely on real estate, including Panther Builders, a custom home building service based in the Cedar Valley. Started five years ago with the initial goal of building a few houses each year, Panther Builders now builds close to a hundred homes each year.
On a chilly fall morning, Marin Parsons walked up to the Communication Arts Complex at UNI and marched inside, her strawberry-blonde ponytail bouncing with each step. She was greeted by a trio of students gathered just inside the door but paused only long enough to wave before continuing on her mission to the elevator that will take her to the second floor. She stood on her tiptoes to press the call button and stepped inside the elevator.

When the doors opened on the second floor, Marin stepped out into the lobby of the Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic. There Marin was greeted by Lisa Daringer, ‘16, and escorted down the hall to a small room full of toys and activities. The pair will spend the better part of the next hour engaged in play.

At three years old, Marin’s speech is a handful of spoken words along with several signs. She has come to the Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic twice a week for speech therapy services for the last year and a half. Marin doesn’t realize the play she looks forward to each week is structured to help develop her speech.

Lisa is a graduate student pursuing a master’s degree in speech pathology and Marin’s speech clinician for the semester. Inside the therapy room Marin stands, shaking a green bottle of bubbles.

“Marin, what do you want?” asks Lisa, signing words as she says them. Her goal is to have Marin identify and communicate what activity she would like to do next.

“Want bubbles?” asks Lisa again, stressing each word as she signs them.

Marin signs, “Want bubbles,” and smiles. “Open the bubbles,” Lisa narrates. “Let’s blow bubbles. Are you ready? Here we go!” Marin hovers in front of Lisa, who is sitting on the floor holding the bottle of bubbles. Occasionally Marin manages to blow a bubble on her own, though not today. Today she is just as interested in the bottle and
bubble wand as she is the bubbles. "Shut the bubbles. Open the bubbles. In goes the stick," Lisa continues to narrate, following Marin's lead.

The game continues until Marin signs, "All done."

Sitting on the other side of a two-way mirror watching the encounter is Marin’s mom, Sarah Parsons, MA ’05. She and her husband, Todd, sought out speech therapy for their youngest daughter, knowing that communication was a struggle.

"Communication is key to life. It’s your connection to other people and helps you navigate the world," said Sarah. "Todd and I understand Marin better than others do, but what happens when she goes off to school? What if she needs something from a teacher or wants to share her thoughts with a friend?"

It was these worries that drove the parents to contact the Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic for help.

"We are a little different than most outpatient clinics," said Suzanne Dripps, BA '04, MA ’06, director of the Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic. "We are student based. You don’t have to have a doctor’s referral to come here. We do have doctors refer patients here, but a parent or spouse could call and say, ‘I have some concerns with my loved one,’ and they could come and be evaluated."

This difference made it easy for the Parsons to get Marin evaluated for speech services.

The Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic serves clients who range in age from 16 months old through adulthood.

For Molly Thuente, ’16, and in her second year of the graduate program, the variety of clients has proved beneficial in helping her know what type of work she’d like to do once she’s completed her degree.

"I’ve always thought I really wanted to work with kids, but I’ve actually really enjoyed working with the adults I’ve had this semester. I was always nervous working with the adult..."
population because I didn’t have a lot of experience working with adults that have either some sort of communication need or disability. But working with our supervisors and getting the opportunity to work in those areas makes me a lot more confident.”

Students pursuing a master’s in speech therapy are required to complete 400 clinical hours before they graduate. Undergraduate students in their last semester also have the opportunity to serve the clinic.

In addition to clients of various ages, student clinicians get experience in different areas of speech therapy—from expressive language or using a communication device to working on fluency or swallowing. Clients may have a speech sound issue, an intellectual disability, a traumatic brain injury, have suffered a stroke or have some other form of acquired aphasia.

Dripps also places students out in the community, helping speech language pathologists in the schools or clinic directors in hospitals or skilled nursing facilities. Many of the graduate students go on to work professionally in the state of Iowa.

For the Parsons family and many others in the Cedar Valley, the Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic offers much-needed services.

“We’ve been thankful to have had three outstanding speech language pathology students who have worked with Marin,” said Sarah. “Watching Marin’s language skills blossom has been a joy and a relief. It reaffirmed our decision to bring her to the clinic. Every student we’ve encountered has been a complete professional.”

"Communication is key to life. It’s your connection to other people and helps you navigate the world."

- SARAH PARSONS
Discover where you belong

RaiseMe
Do you know a current high school student? Let them know they can begin earning scholarships at UNI throughout their high school career by following UNI on RaiseMe. RaiseMe is an online platform and app that allows students to earn scholarship dollars based on achievements throughout high school, such as getting good grades and being involved. Dollars can be awarded as scholarships throughout a student’s academic career at UNI. Students can follow UNI and start earning today! Visit finaid.uni.edu/raiseme for Iowa resident and non-resident qualifications.

The Common Application
With instant access to more than 700 colleges and universities around the world, the Common App is a seamless way to manage the application process. Visit UNI’s page at www.commonapp.org/school/university-northern-iowa.

uni.edu

UNI Day of Giving
04.04.18
#LivePurpleGiveGold

#LivePurpleGiveGold for the 2018 UNI Day of Giving

Join the Panther Nation Wednesday, April 4 for the Day of Giving. These 24 hours are an opportunity to share why you live purple and make an impact by giving gold! More information will be available at dayofgiving.uni.edu.

‘Nothing Compares’ to UNI at the Iowa State Fair

UNI will host an interactive exhibit at the Iowa State Fair from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 9, through Sunday, Aug. 19, in the Varied Industries Building. UNI Bookstore will sell UNI clothing, Panther gear and memorabilia. Join us at the fair!
You never know where you might spot a Panther!

Want your UNI photo to appear in our new Panther Polaroids section? Use the hashtag #PurpleforLife when posting to your social media pages, or email photos to us at unitoday@uni.edu.
1. Jim and Nancy, ’58, Glawe enjoyed the view from the UP Rooftop Bar at the Current Iowa restaurant at a gathering of Quad Cities alumni and friends in September.

2. This little cutie, UNI class of 2034, is ready to cheer the Panthers on to victory.

3. Teachers and staff at Kennedy Elementary School in Dubuque celebrate a Panther Friday wearing their finest UNI gear.

4. Jeffrey Muleya, ’04, and Scott Peacock, ’04, get ready to cheer the Panther men’s basketball team on in Chapel Hill, NC, as the team prepared to take on the North Carolina Tar Heels.

5. Zach Fairlie, ’12, Amanda Donovan, ’11, and Alyssa Buckley, ’12, catch up on campus happenings at a UNI Kansas City Alumni Club reception with special guest Ben Jacobson, head UNI men’s basketball coach. The Kansas City Alumni Club won the visit from Coach Jake because of their high level of participation during UNI’s Day of Giving in April.

6. Beth Happe, ’82, and Lindie Truitt, ’03, show their Panther pride ahead of UNI Football’s game at Iowa State.

7. The Purple Storm Trooper was on hand to enforce fun at the Welcome Back Bash at Homecoming 2017. He’s pictured with Jerry Jauron, ’90.
UNI 2017 HERITAGE HONOURS & DISTINGUISHED AWARDS

Front Row: Roberta Yoder, John Burns representing Pauline Barrett, Suzanne Shontz, Don Erusha
Back Row: Greg List with the Iowa Broadcasters Association Foundation, Brent Dahlstrom, Jan Bittner, Scott Bittner, George Lee Stigler

The President’s Distinguished Awards Celebration recognizes alumni and friends of the University of Northern Iowa who have made a significant impact on the university or in their professional career. The awards include the UNI Alumni Association’s Heritage Honours Awards and the President’s Philanthropy Awards. This year’s honorees include:

**HERITAGE HONOURS AWARDS**

- **George Lee Stigler, ’72**  
  Alumni Achievement Award
- **Suzanne Shontz, ’99**  
  Young Alumnus Award
- **Roberta Yoder, ’71 & ’13**  
  Alumni Service Award
- **Jan and Scott Bittner**  
  Honorary Alumni Award

**PRESIDENT’S PHILANTHROPY AWARDS**

- **Brent Dahlstrom, ’07**  
  Emerging Philanthropy Award
- **Pauline Barrett**  
  Purple and Gold Award
- **Don Erusha**  
  Faculty and Staff Award
- **Iowa Broadcasters Association Foundation**  
  Corporation and Foundation Award
The UNI Alumni Board is made up of at least 25 members serving three-year terms. If interested in serving, please contact Leslie Prideaux at leslie.prideaux@uni.edu.

Front Row: Kai Takatsuka ’04, Kay Smith ’70 ’77, Beth Primrose ’66, Bonnie Malone ’53, Connie Peters ’73, Sue Baker ’83 ’01, Jason Lau ’99 ’02, Teresa Matson ’76

Middle Row: Debora Blume ’94, Drew Conrad ’93, Christine Robovsky ’98, Vernon Avant ’78, Jerry Glazier ’77, Lindsay Wagoner ’04, Megan Stull ’08, Michele Haupt ’83

Back Row: Jake Rudy ’11, David Boyer ’90, Grant Erwin ’07, Kevin Mote ’87, Jerry Harris ’89, Willie Barney ’96 ’01 ’07, Nicole Juranek ’00 ’04, Jeffrey Hoppenworth ’73, Dustin Toale ’16

(Not pictured, Dan Fick ’85, Virgil Goodrich ’67 ’74, Steve Jackson ’96, Kelly Neiber ’85 and Allison Rickels ’01)
1950s

'51 Bernard Brommel, BA. Kalamazoo, MI, had a chapter titled Sensemaking in Dialysis published in the book “Organizational Autoethnographies: Power and Identity in Our Working Lives.” It is based on his experiences with four years of dialysis and having treatment in eight states.

'51 Bill Page, BA. Muskegon, MI, celebrated his 70th wedding anniversary and 90th birthday. After retiring from a long career in education he is enjoying serving his community and promoting activities that support integration of different ethnicities.

'53 Harlan Phillips, BA. Bella Vista, AR, was a coach at Adel High School 1953-1955 and then embarked on a career as a special agent with the FBI 1955-1981. He served as a contract investigator with the FBI until retiring in 2017.

'59 John McGirI, BA. Saint Paul, MN, attended law school after graduation and finished near the top of his class thanks to UNI preparing him very well. After 46 years of successful law practice he continues to appreciate his education from UNI.

1960s

'63 Joanne (Ervin) Hill, BA, MA. '66, Olympia, WA, retired after teaching English/AP for 30 years and moved from Sarasota, FL, to Olympia, WA. She and her husband, Mel, volunteer together serving the area’s homeless and hungry population.

'68 Floyd Winter, MA. Cedar Falls, was named one of the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier’s 8 Over 80.

'69 Tom Nordstrom, BA. Venice, FL, was honored by the CCIM Institute with the 2017 Susan J. Groeneveld, CCIM, Visionary Award. In order to be eligible recipients must be nominated by a minimum of 10 individuals in the commercial real estate industry.

1970s

'70 Nancy Powell, BA. Lewes, DE, received the Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award from the American Foreign Service Association. During her career she served as ambassador to Uganda, Ghana, Pakistan, Nepal and India, as well as in leadership positions in Washington, D.C. including deputy assistant secretary for Africa and director general of the Foreign Service.

'71 Robert Bullis, BA, MA ’72. Davis, CA, was inducted into the University of California, Davis Athletic Hall of Fame 10/28/2017 after serving the campus for 32 years.

'72 Karen (Schneiter) Williams, BA. Del Mar, CA, retired from teaching after 32 years. She was most recently with San Diego Mesa College and previously worked 13 years in the publishing field.

'74 Cheryl Mullenbach, BA. Panama, released her fifth nonfiction book for young readers titled “Torpedoed!” It recreates the events surrounding the sinking of the passenger liner Athenia in WWII told through the eyes of two children who survived the attack.

'76 Alan Opheim, BA. Iowa City, received the Corridor Business Journal’s Financial Executive of the Year Award in the government/education entity category.

'78 Mark Royer, BA. Round Rock, TX, retired 9/1/2017 after 33 years with Farmers Insurance. He and his wife, Helen, plan to do volunteer work and spend more time with family.

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'79 Ronald Kelderman, BA, Cedar Falls, retired in July 2017 after 38 years with Viking Pump, Engineered Products Co. and Donaldson Company.

1980s

'81 Joseph Otting, BA, Las Vegas, NV, was sworn in as comptroller of the currency, a regulator who oversees federally chartered banks.

'82 Sam Ella (Roberts) McDonald, BA, Waterloo, IA, was named one of the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier’s 8 Over 80.

'85 Clark Christensen, BA, Atlanta, GA, is the senior finance manager with The Coca-Cola Company.

'85 Dale Emmert, BS, Cedar Falls, led the changeover from the 70-year-old Simpson Furniture Co. to Art Van Furniture.

'85 Ruth Watkins, BA, was selected as the 16th president of the University of Utah. She most recently served as senior vice president for academic affairs at the institution. She graduated from UNI with a BA in speech-language pathology, and earned an MA and PhD in child language at the University of Kansas.

'86 Uynthia (Parsons) Duncan, BA, MA ‘92, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier’s 8 Over 80.

'86 Deb Vangelow, BA, Sugar Land, TX, was named one of the Top 50 Best Teachers by the LPGA in partnership with the Women’s Golf Journal. She was selected for this new award out of more than 1,700 certified professionals worldwide. She was also recognized by Golf Digest as one of the Best Teachers In Your State (Texas) for 2017-2018.

'89 Susan (Christensen) Clark, BA, Clive, received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2017 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Expo.

1990s

'91 James Hoelscher, MPP, BA ‘91, Cedar Falls, was elected to the board of the Professional Developers of Iowa and will serve a three-year term which began 11/1/2017.

'91 Lynell O’Connor, BA, Williamsburg, was named the 2017 Iowa Secondary Principal of the Year by the School Administrators of Iowa.

'92 Brian Hughes, MM, MM ‘93, Dubuque, received the 2017 American Prize in Wind Conducting in recognition of his work with the Quad City Wind Ensemble.

'94 Kevin Timlin, BA, Jackson, MO, is the executive director of International Education and Services at Southeast Missouri State University. He earned his EdD in international higher education from the University of Minnesota in May 2017.

'96 Richard Stanley, MBA, Nashville, IN, was elected partner with Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP. He is a member of Taft’s intellectual property and litigation group and focuses on patent prosecution and litigation in the mechanical and electrical arts.

'98 Gregg Lutz, BA, Chaska, MN, joined the Allianz Life Asset Liability Management Team in Oct. 2016, and in Aug. 2017 was named team leader, guiding processes for a $110 billion portfolio.

'99 Krissi Diers, BA, New York, NY, received the 2017 Broadway League Award for Outstanding Achievement in Road Marketing. She is currently the executive director of marketing for the marketing division at Broadway Across America.

'99 Tiffany (Smith) Tentinger, BA, Cedar Falls, is married to Phillip A. Tentinger and they have four children - Christian, Haleigh, Peyton Mae and Connor Matthew.

'99 Mary (Noga) Theilen, BA, Columbus, WI, was promoted to personal lines president with American Family Insurance, which is the company’s largest division.

2000s

'00 Blake Murray, BA, Saint Paul, MN, is a senior database administrator with RSM US.

'01 Jill (Brees) Barr, BA, Spencer, was crowned Mrs. Iowa America 2017 in June and represented the state at the national competition in Las Vegas in August.

'01 Gabe Berger, BA, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. He is currently an operations manager with Peters Construction Co.

'01 Greg Ebeling, ASC, Pella, was named the 2017-2018 Iowa Superintendent of the Year by the School Administrators of Iowa.
'01 Tara (Chensvold) Estep, BA, MA '08, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. She is currently principal at Hansen Elementary. 

'01 Diane (Meyer) Mahan, BA, Kansas City, MO, is with the Department of Defense, Marine Corp Community Services. 

'02 Leslie (Harting) Nixon, BA, Cedar Falls, was promoted to trust officer of the Cedar Valley and North Region with MidWestOne Bank. 

'02 Nick Pfeiffer, BA, Tiffin, was named the director of marketing and communications for the Iowa City/Coralville Convention and Visitors Bureau. He also serves as the club leader for the Corridor Alumni Club. 

'03 Marcus Pitts, BA, Ankeny, received the Deal of the Year Award in the under $5 million category at the 2017 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Expo. 

'03 Ryan Scott, BA, Dubuque, is president of Scott Theatre Laboratory, a professional theatre company. He is currently creating a piece for the Song Revue form on the subject of recovery from mental illness combined with a classic method of cursive handwriting. 

'04 Justin Lossner, BA, Norwalk, received the Deal of the Year award in the more than $5 million category at the 2017 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Expo. 

'04 Justin Wiese, BA, Bettendorf, was named the 2016 Iowa Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year by the Iowa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. 

'04 Sarah (Jamerson) Zimmerman, BA, Cedar Rapids, was named one of the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City area’s 40 under 40 by the Corridor Business Journal for 2017. She is currently partner at BerganKDV. 

'05 Jen (Swanson) Hummel, BA, Waukee, is a customer service director at Robert Half Management Resources. 

'06 Dustin Whitehead, BA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. He is currently director of sales and leasing-Midwest with Lockard Companies. 

'07 Brian Aronson, BA, Hudson, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. He is currently the assurance manager for BerganKDV. 

'08 Megan (Keefe) Hannam, BA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. She recently started a new company called Megan Hannam Design and Construction, a design/build approach for sustainable, functional and affordable remodeling or new construction projects. 

'09 Andrew Morse, BA, Cedar Falls, was named assistant to the president for board and governmental relations at UNI. 

'09 Mark Watje, BA, Cedar Falls, his father, Kevin, and a group of strategic investors, purchased the assets of Wayne Industrial Holdings and formed Curbtender, Inc. on 10/20/2017. The company manufactures garbage trucks and street sweepers. Mark will serve as the president of Curbtender, which employs approximately 90 people. 

2010s

'10 Dema Kazkaz, BA, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. She is currently president of the Masjid Alnoor Islamic Center. 

'10 Lynsie Maynard, BA, Cedar Falls, was named the 2017-2018 Outstanding Elementary Art Educator by the Art Educators of Iowa. 

'10 Michelle (Breen) Smith, BA, West Des Moines, is a senior specialist for P&C Loss Reserves at Nationwide Insurance. 

'11 Brett Caviness, BA, Mountain View, CA, was named one of Coldwell Banker’s 30 under 30 for 2017. He is currently a broker sales associate in Menlo Park, CA. 

'11 Jamie (Pope) Cornish, BA, Waukee, is a manager in the FP&A group with Athene USA. 

'11 Nick Fohey, BA, Marion, works with the commercial mortgage lending group at Aegon Asset Management. 

'11 Megan Horn, BA, MBA ’17, Waterloo, is marketing director at Far Reach, a custom software development company. 

'11 Adam Oleary, BA, Muscatine, is senior manager for strategic programs at The HON Company. 

'11 Emily Schnurr, BA, Van Meter, received the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award from Northern Arizona University in 2017.
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‘11 Ras Smith, BA. Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. He is currently a state representative and is with Communities in Schools.

‘11 Kelsey (Mueller) Tyrrell, BA, Des Moines, is the director of global education programs with World Food Prize and was recently named to the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council.

‘12 Michelle (Meyer) Buddenberg, BA, Ossian, received her MBA with a human resources management emphasis from Upper Iowa University in July 2017.

‘13 Kevin Light, BA. Gowrie, is an invoicing coordinator with Renewable Energy Group.

‘13 Dylan Lowe, BA. Tama, received a 2017 financial award from the Rural Iowa Primary Care Loan Repayment Program, which was established to address critical physician shortages in Iowa. He graduated from Des Moines University with a medical degree 5/26/2017.

‘13 Brian Martin, BM. Norwalk, has been performing frequently in the Des Moines area with various groups. He was also recently accepted into UMass Amherst’s MM program in jazz composing and arranging.

‘14 Adam Bolander, BA. Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. He is currently the group circulation director for the Waterloo Courier and multiple publications in the Mason City area.

‘14 Keyah Levy, MA. Evansdale, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. She is currently an assistant director with the Center for Multicultural Education at UNI.

‘14 Collin Nelson, BA. Des Moines, received the Rising Star Award at the 2017 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Expo.

‘15 Xiaoming Cai, MBA. Guangzhou, China, works in procurement with HBSC to support the supplier relationship management program.

‘15 Emilio Sanchez, BA. Chicago, IL, moved to Chicago in June 2017.

‘15 Ryan Schaben, BA. Saint Louis, MO, is the membership and marketing director at Forest Hills Country Club in Chesterfield, MO.

‘15 Alyssa Turcsak, BA. East Lansing, MI, works at Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project.

‘16 Cayle Boatman, BA. Bloomfield, is the marketing and sales coordinator at ISCO, which is a pipeline company.

UNI and University Book & Supply, Inc. signed a letter of intent for the university to purchase the bookstore in December 2017. The transaction is expected to be complete by Feb. 27, 2018. The name will change to UNI Bookstore, and the business will continue to offer a special alumni collection at panthersupply.com/alumni.asp.

Stop by the UNI Bookstore today!
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unibookstore.com
'16 Courtney Clark, BA. West Des Moines, is a delivery coordinator with Keyot. She works to find talent to help clients reach their goals and also mentors recent graduates as they transition to the work force.

'16 Kaleb Junker, BA. Minneapolis, MN, is a marketing officer with First Minnesota Bank.

'16 Gina Weekley, BS, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2017. She is currently the director of youth development for the Family YMCA of Black Hawk County.

'17 Elliot Boisjolie, BA. Algona, is a logistics account manager at Worldwide Logistics in Urbandale.

'17 Brittney Luth, BA. Jesup, is a program manager/administrator of a large-site living facility for adults with intellectual disabilities through Exceptional Persons, Inc.

'17 Chelsea Roehm, BA. Davenport, is a project manager with Fidar Technologies in Davenport.

'17 Rachel Storlie, MM. Spring Grove, MN, was appointed as an alumni guest lecturer in music at Luther College for the 2017-2018 academic year.

'17 Michelle Temeyer, BA. West Des Moines, joined BCC Advisers as a financial analyst.

'17 Erik Veliz, BA. Cibolo, TX, is enrolled at Texas Tech University School of Law.

Marriages


'08 Jessica (Weiler) Korf, BA, married Ben Korf, BA '12, on 5/7/2016.

'10 Vaughn Gross, BA, married Jenni (Jorgensen) Gross, BA '14, MA '17.

'11 Kelley (Raymon) Stoen, BM, MM '13, married Ethan Stoen on 4/1/2017.

'12 Jake Lewis, BA, married Kaitlyn (Devine) Lewis, BA '15, on 8/12/2017.

'12 Ryan Murphy, BA, married Kourtney Campbell on 4/29/2017.


'13 Rachel (Tish) Rose, BA, married Jorgen Rose, BA '14, on 10/7/2017.

'16 Hannah (Lodge) Mead, BA, married Brent Mead, BM '17, on 6/17/2017.

Births

'06 Jesse Hach, BS, and Lindsay (Guenther) Hach, BA '11, Grimes, twin sons Wyatt David and Ryder Benjamin born 11/25/2016.

'08 Jessica (Weiler) Korf, BA, and Ben Korf, BA '12, Norwalk, daughter Ellie Sophia Korf born 7/2/2017.

'10 Bennett Blake, BA, and Kirstin (Gomez) Blake, BA '16, Atlantic, son Brogan Dean Blake born 5/20/2017.


Deaths

'49 Nancy (Lauer) Gleason Benton, BA, died 9/3/2017 in Cedar Falls.

'53 Bonnie (Johnson) Paris, BA, died 4/6/2017 in Sparta, MO.

'54 Marvin Van Sickie, BA, died 5/4/2017 in Indianola.

'55 Jack Roorda, BA, MA '59, died 12/28/2016 in Cedar Rapids.

'58 Judy McCleary, BA, died 7/24/2017 in Houston, TX.

'60 Kenneth Caquelin, BA, MA '64, died 7/24/2017 in Cedar Falls.

'61 Gene Ebner, BA, died 2/20/2016 in Sioux City.

Update your contact information

We don’t want to lose touch! Remember to update your contact information using the form on the Alumni Association website @ unialum.org.
Explore new territory. Rediscover favorite destinations.

- **POLAND, EAST GERMANY & WORLD WAR II**
  - **June 5 - 17, 2018**

- **BREATHTAKING BORDEAUX**
  - **July 16 - 24, 2018**

- **MAJESTIC FRONTIERS**
  - **August 16 - 27, 2018**

- **ESSENCE OF EUROPE**
  - **September 23 - October 4, 2018**

- **CHRISTMAS MARKETS ON THE RHINE**
  - **November 24 - December 1, 2018**

For trip details, visit [UNIALUM.ORG/ALUMNI-TRAVEL](http://UNIALUM.ORG/ALUMNI-TRAVEL).
FREE WEBINARS!

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FEBRUARY 21
Emergence of the ‘Me’ Enterprise: A Blueprint For Leadership

FEBRUARY 28
From Silicon Valley to Swaziland

MARCH 7
Job Search & Career Free Tools Resource Book

MARCH 14
How to Make Yourself Promotable: 7 Skills to Help You Climb the Career Ladder

MARCH 21
The Warrior, the Strategist and You

MARCH 28
Control Your Retirement Destiny: How to Achieve Financial Security

Offerings are subject to change.

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May 7 — Cedar Rapids
May 8 — Quad Cities
May 14 — Sioux City
May 15 — Omaha - Council Bluffs
May 21 — Des Moines
May 22 — Waterloo

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Cedar Rapids-Iowa City Corridor Alumni Club
Central Iowa Alumni Club
Chicago Alumni Club
Denver Alumni Club
Kansas City Alumni Club
Omaha-Council Bluffs Alumni Club
Twin Cities Alumni Club

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY
19 – UNI Day at the Capitol
22 – College of Business Administration students in Des Moines

MARCH
1-4 – Men’s Basketball MVC Tournament
8-11 – Women’s Basketball MVC Tournament

APRIL
4 – Day of Giving #LivePurpleGiveGold
7 – Sigma Phi Epsilon 25th Anniversary Reunion
14 – UNIAA Board of Directors Meeting
19 – Traditions Keeper Ceremony and GradFest
21 – Theatre UNI in Des Moines Post-Show Event
26 – Twin Cities Business Alumni Event

MAY
7 – Panther Caravan-Cedar Rapids
7 – Twin Cities Wind Symphony Event
8 – Panther Caravan-Quad Cities
13 – UNI Glee Club in Chicago
14 – Panther Caravan-Sioux City
15 – Panther Caravan-Omaha-Council Bluffs
21 – Panther Caravan-Des Moines
22 – Panther Caravan-Waterloo

JUNE
23 – Denver Alumni Club Event at Mile High Stadium

For more events and details, visit unialum.org.

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SAVE THE DATE!
UNI’s Homecoming is Oct. 15-20.

If you recognize anyone in these photos or can tell us what year they were taken, contact Sarah Parsons at sarah.parsons@uni.edu or by calling 888-UNI ALUM.