



UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY'S

COLLEGE *of* HUMANITIES
and SOCIAL SCIENCES
CONVOCATION

MAY 6, 2022



COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Message From the Dean

1

Dear graduates of the class of 2022, family members, and guests,

This year, we once again celebrate graduation in a distinct and different way. I look forward to seeing all of you at the drive-thru convocation for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Also, I encourage you to attend the UVU commencement ceremonies in the UCCU Center. Both events are a time to celebrate your accomplishments and reflect upon your time spent here at Utah Valley University.

Your personal journey over the last few years has no doubt been filled with unique opportunities, some surprises, some challenges, and hopefully, some very rewarding and memorable moments. Through your hard work, determination, and grit you have successfully completed your education here at UVU. Each of you has a unique journey, and you know better than anyone else the sacrifices you have made along the way.

Your family and friends, along with your UVU family of peers, faculty, and staff, are proud of your accomplishments and delight in your success. Take a moment to recognize and thank all those individuals who have helped you during your higher education journey.

After you celebrate your graduation, it will be time to get back to work. Education cannot be a one-and-done experience. Instead, we should all strive to continue learning, growing, and working throughout our lives. The goal of our college is to prepare you for success in life by providing you with flexible intellectual tools. As you celebrate your graduation, know that you are well-positioned to further your education, your profession, and your life. Keep learning, keep growing, and keep in touch.

Our deepest, heartfelt congratulations to you, our graduating class, of 2022.

Steven C. Clark, Ph.D.
Dean
College of Humanities and Social Sciences

VALEDICTORIAN

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2



EMILY G. LINFORD

Bachelor of Science, *English*

Emily Linford is from Elk Ridge, Utah, and hopes to become an author. She says she has enjoyed diving into literature and seeing how the works of authors apply to the world and contemporary issues. While at UVU, she was recognized with the Outstanding Honors Project Award for her capstone project — a novel in progress entitled “The Transformation of Medusa.” Emily credits the honors program for shaping her experience while at UVU. She says it provided her with opportunities to take classes, attend activities, and learn a variety of amazing topics, which enriched her educational experience despite the pandemic. She also notes UVU has felt accessible and is a place where she could be challenged and yet be successful. While immersed in studies, she says she learned “so much” about creative writing and skills that help her write, edit, and be a professional in the workplace. She hopes to be published within the next five years.

DEPARTMENT OUTSTANDING GRADUATES

O.G.

3



BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

BRYNN WALLENTINE

Bachelor of Science, *Psychology*

Brynn Wallentine's hometown is Pleasant Grove, Utah. She chose UVU because of its commitment to diversity and accessibility. She says she felt at home among UVU's diverse student body and welcomed the opportunity to work alongside others with differing points of view. The opportunity for transformation fueled by a passion for lifelong learning led her to success at UVU. She says the university helped her learn to envision herself as someone who could reach her goals and gave her the motivation to not just keep going — but keep growing. Brynn values the relationships and connections she has formed at UVU. Other highlights of her education at UVU include presenting at an Evidence-Based Teaching & Learning conference in San Diego, earning a spot on the dean's list in Spring, Summer, and Fall of 2021, being awarded the Jeanene Watkins Scholarship, and earning a 4.0 GPA. Brynn enjoys cooking, reading, and playing hockey when she isn't studying. She is also particularly thankful for her mother and siblings and says, "they helped make this journey a beautiful one." Her journey is not finished. She intends to pursue a Master of Science in mental health counseling this fall.



COMMUNICATION

KAYLA BAGGERLY

Bachelor of Science, *Communication*

Kayla Baggerly, from Eagle Mountain, Utah, is graduating with a bachelor's degree in communication with an emphasis in journalism and a minor in digital media. Kayla says she decided to attend UVU because she loved its mission statement to include, engage, and achieve. While attending the university, Kayla had the opportunity hold multiple positions at the UVU Review newspaper, serving as a volunteer writer, social media manager, managing editor, and editor-in-chief. She is especially proud of earning a second-place award from the Society of Professional Journalists for her Latter-day LGBTQ+ series while at the newspaper. She was also a presidential intern in the Office of Inclusion and Diversity at UVU. Kayla currently works as a reporter for ABC4 News and hopes to be an even better reporter and published fantasy author in five years. Kayla loves playing piano, spending time with her dog and family, and exploring the world.



ENGLISH & LITERATURE

TYSON J. SWASEY

Bachelor of Science, *English Education*

Tyson Swasey is a native of Price, Utah, and the oldest of seven siblings. He is a first-generation student. He chose UVU because he said it's an environment of authentic innovation driven by passion and a love of learning. Tyson explains that while at UVU, he learned that everyone has a passion and a story. His English education major helped him understand the potential of learning and stories. He credits community-building opportunities such as winning ski passes and creating flower bouquets at an interfaith event for generating excitement for learning. He says he is most proud of his connections with his peers while at UVU. Through those relationships, he says his thinking progressed and showed him the potential outcomes of working together. At UVU, he worked for two English department journals: *Touchstones* and *Essais*. He also maintained a 4.0 GPA while working as an academic intervention aid at Carbon High during the COVID-19 pandemic. After graduation, he plans to return to the classroom as a middle school teacher. His long-term goals include becoming a school administrator.



HISTORY & POLITICAL SCIENCE

JEFF HIBBARD

Bachelor of Arts, *Political Science*

Jeff Don Hibbard hails from Pleasant View, Utah. His educational journey at UVU led to discovering a future career he was not aware of before his arrival on campus. He found that he enjoys global politics, public policy, and other political science-related fields. Jeff also had no intention of pursuing a graduate degree before homing in on his interests, but he's now preparing to apply for a master's program related to the Chinese language at a Chinese university. His 4.0 GPA may also serve to gain him acceptance into a graduate program with an emphasis on public policy. While at UVU, Jeff participated in various clubs and organizations, including the Utah International Forum, Rotaract, Foreign Policy Club, and the Chinese Club. He also assisted with UVU's Diplomatic Conference and spoke at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. He says the best part of attending UVU is the level of care provided by professors and the evidence that each student's success matters. He recommends students reach out to their professors as he did, having emailed every professor he has ever had. In his free time, Jeff enjoys reading, drawing, and sewing.



INTEGRATED STUDIES

MASON STAUFFER

Bachelor of Science, *Integrated Studies*

Mason Stauffer is from Orem, Utah. He says he had no idea what to do with his life when he entered UVU. Still, good advisors, mentors, classes, professors, and programs taught him that he enjoyed anthropology and communication. He later discovered a connection between those two subjects and national security. He combined those passions and further cultivated his love of playing the trumpet while at UVU while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. This fall, he will begin a master's program at the Institute of World Politics, with a focus on strategic intelligence. He is grateful for the UVU professors who focus on students and individual success. He acknowledges that Utah Valley University may not be as "fancy" as other colleges, but appreciates that, as it allows more funds to go toward helping gritty students succeed. In his spare time, Mason enjoys hiking, trapping, Dutch oven cooking, and playing the trumpet.

LANGUAGES & CULTURES

EMILY BRIANNA QUALLS

Bachelor of Arts, *Spanish*

Emily Brianna Qualls grew up in California, but has lived most of her life in Syracuse, Utah, with her family of 11. After changing her major four times, she was still searching for the right fit. After reflecting on her mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to Guayaquil, Ecuador, Emily realized how deeply she missed and loved the people, food, culture, and language of Ecuador. She says that learning Spanish took a lot of time and effort, but that it opened up an entirely new world for her. Emily appreciated that the classes in her major pushed her to embrace Spanish literature, history, and culture in a way she never had before. Emily married the love of her life in December of 2021 and is currently working at doTERRA as an international database author.



PHILOSOPHY & HUMANITIES

JUAN DANIEL PALENCIA

Bachelor of Arts, *Philosophy*

Juan Daniel Palencia is from Palm Desert, California. He says Utah Valley University helped him develop a studying lifestyle and become part of a community of other curious individuals who shared questions and ideas. He says that faculty in the philosophy department created stimulating and engaging dialogue, and he enjoyed their authenticity and willingness to experiment in the learning environment. During his time at UVU, Juan served as club president for the UVU Philosophy Club, was the managing editor of the Sophia undergraduate philosophy journal, and was published in the Spring 2022 issue of *Essais*. After graduation, he plans to pursue an advanced degree in philosophy and eventually become a philosophy professor. Juan says that among the lessons learned at UVU, he found that the most challenging experiences are the most rewarding because you realize what you don't know, and that is the first step to knowing yourself and where you can improve. In his free time, Juan enjoys writing songs and recording music.

FACULTY & STAFF AWARDS

F&S.

10



KIERA DAVIS

*Associate Director, Master of Clinical Mental Health
Counseling Program
Dean's Award of Excellence for Staff*

Kiera Davis hails from Lindon, Utah. Kiera earned an associate degree in accounting with high honors and plans to pursue further education in accounting and whatever else may pique her curiosity. She has been at UVU for eight years, serving in various administrative support roles for the Office of the President, the College of Science, and the behavioral science department. She currently serves as the associate director of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. She says the best part about working at UVU is that “my colleagues are my work family.” Kiera is the proud mother of a 12-year-old and is a 15-year yoga enthusiast.



JEFFREY NIELSEN

Instructor, *Philosophy & Humanities*

Dean's Award of Excellence for Faculty Service

Jeffrey Scott Nielsen, MA, is a native of Brigham City, Utah. He is working on his Ph.D. (ABD) from Boston College and has a Master of Arts in philosophy (with distinction). He also earned a Bachelor of Arts in German with an emphasis in economics (Cum Laude) from Weber State University. His experience includes University Lecturer of Philosophy. He teaches courses in ethics, applied ethics, and critical thinking. He also coaches the Utah Valley Intercollegiate Ethics Team and has taken them to nationals multiple times. He is the organizer and director of the Utah High School Ethics Bowl and the Director of the Utah Institute for Public Deliberation. He enjoys working at UVU because he loves teaching students and working with intelligent and creative colleagues. His advice to graduates is to "never forget to be fully present to the moment you are in and to the people you are with. Remember, it's not what happens to you but how you respond that will determine the happiness in life."



TODD SPENCER

Assistant Professor, Behavioral Science

Dean's Award of Excellence for Faculty Scholarship

Todd A. Spencer is a native of Slaterville, Utah. He earned a Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University in human development and family science. He also holds a master's degree from Oklahoma State University in marriage and family therapy and a bachelor's degree from Weber State University in child and family studies. While in Oklahoma, he served as a faculty member and clinic director. He joined UVU in 2019 as a faculty member teaching within the Marriage and Family Therapy Master's program, serving as its first clinic director. He is also licensed as a marriage and family therapist. His many awards at UVU include a Faculty Excellence Award nomination and Flexible Learning Award nomination. His work has appeared in nine peer-reviewed publications and 12 published book chapters and has been presented at national and regional conferences dozens of times. He says the best part of working at UVU is the university's commitment to the student experience. He also calls the culture of collegiality among faculty a "dream come true."

FACULTY SENATE AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

The Faculty Senate Awards of Excellence recognize full-time and adjunct faculty who have made significant contributions to UVU's mission through demonstrated excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. We are pleased to pay tribute to the selected faculty who teach within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

13

FAE



ELIZABETH FAWCETT

Assistant Professor and Program Director, Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Program

Elizabeth B. Fawcett graduated with a Ph.D. in marriage family and human development from BYU, where she also earned a bachelor's degree summa cum laude in psychology. She is a higher education fellow and a licensed marriage and family therapist. She joined UVU in 2017, and before that, taught graduate and undergraduate students in on-campus, online, and hybrid courses. She served as the MFT program director and vice president of academic affairs for Argosy's Salt Lake campus. She received two Best of State Awards for curriculum development and academic administration during that time. In 2014, the Utah Association for Marriage and Family Therapy selected her as the recipient for its annual Advancing the Profession Award. She also served as the MFT clinical director at Northcentral University, working with master's and doctoral students across 48 states and 14 countries. She chaired the Commission on Accreditation for MFT Education in 2021, and currently serves on the Utah MFT licensing board. She and her husband, David, are the parents of four wonderful sons.



JESSICA PAULY

Assistant Professor, Communication

Jessica Pauly hails from Lincoln, Nebraska. She earned a Ph.D. from the Brian Lamb School of Communication at Purdue University. She also holds a master's degree in communication from the University of Kansas and a bachelor's degree in communication studies from Nebraska Wesleyan University. Her varied life experiences include working in New York City in the fashion industry and holding various roles with university administration at KU and Purdue. Since arriving at UVU, she has continued to seek opportunities to apply her skills within the broader community and feels these experiences enhance her classroom pedagogy. Dr. Pauly is grateful for her partner, two “nutty” kids, and a diva dachshund.



MICHAEL WEEKS

Lecturer, *History*

Michael Weeks is a native of Provo, Utah. He received a Ph.D. in history from the University of Colorado, Boulder, holds a Master of Arts from Northern Arizona University, and a Bachelor of Arts in social science with a teaching credential from San Jose State University. Before arriving at UVU in 2017, he was a visiting assistant professor of history at Our Lady of Lake University in San Antonio, Texas, and taught high school for many years. At UVU, he enjoys his role as a history lecturer. His areas of expertise include U.S. history, environmental history, the modern American West, and Utah history. He has participated in the Environmental Ethics Symposium Executive Committee as a Higher Education Academy Fellow and has served as a Service-Learning Fellow. He also served on the CHSS and Social Sciences Teaching Committee and as a faculty mentor in project-based learning. Michael lives with Sacha, his wife of 23 years, and Sienna, a rambunctious border collie.



KATHERINE HANNEMAN

Lecturer, English & Literature

Katie Hanneman is from Rockton, Illinois. She completed her master's degree in literature at Utah State University and holds a bachelor's degree in English education with a minor in sociology. Before arriving at UVU in 2018, she taught composition and literature at Utah State for nearly a decade. She loves Utah Valley University for its “multifarious” student body. Hanneman says there are many different perspectives in every classroom, and each enriches the discussion and encourages empathy and understanding. When she's not sharing her passion for the written word in the classroom, you will find her gardening or on a great escape to Southern Utah. She is married with two sons and a daughter, who mean the world to her.

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

ADE

17

The UVU Presidential Award of Excellence recognizes employees who advance the mission, values, and action commitments of the university. We are pleased to pay tribute to an award recipient from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.



JESSI HILL

Associate Professor, Behavioral Science

A native of Miami, Florida, Jessi Hill is an associate professor of psychology at UVU. She is also the chair of the behavioral science department. Jessi earned a doctorate in developmental psychology from Florida State University and a master's degree in visual cognition and human performance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research on perceptions of women in leadership within Utah prompted the creation of the USHE Women's Leadership Exchange (UWLE), which she co-directs with Dr. Nancy Hauck and Dr. Liz Hitch. Jessi says that the best parts of working at UVU are the people, the chance to make a difference in the community, and the freedom to be innovative and creative in her work. Jessi and her husband, Samuel, have seven children. She is teaching herself magic, writes poetry, dabbles in photography, is a classically trained pianist, plays the guitar, reads science fiction and fantasy, and enjoys hiking.



GREG JACKSON

Associate Professor, Integrated Studies, Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement

Greg Jackson is originally from Rancho Cucamonga, California, and is a professor of integrated studies and national security studies at UVU. He earned a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in French studies from Brigham Young University and a Ph.D. in history from the University of Utah. Greg is the creator, host, and head writer of the U.S. history podcast "History That Doesn't Suck," which regularly trends among the top 10 history podcasts and top 200 across all categories in the United States. Greg earned the Faculty of the Year award from UVU in 2021, and the Dean's Award of Excellence for teaching in 2020. "The best thing about UVU is our grit," Greg says. "We have students and faculty who aren't afraid to try new things, step outside the lines, and outwork anyone. That's exactly the kind of crowd I like to run in." Greg is married to UVU Associate Dean of Health Sue Jackson, and they have three children. He enjoys serving his community as a Lehi City Planning Commissioner and Boy Scouts of America merit badge counselor. He also enjoys half marathons, cycling, rock climbing, and playing guitar.

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