

UNI // Alumni Magazine





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2022

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UNI Alumni Magazine is published once a year by the UNI Alumni Association to keep alumni and friends informed and engaged.

UNI Alumni Magazine is distributed to select alumni and benefactors of the University of Northern Iowa. Suggestions and contributions for articles are welcome. Email alumni@uni.edu or call 319-273-2355.

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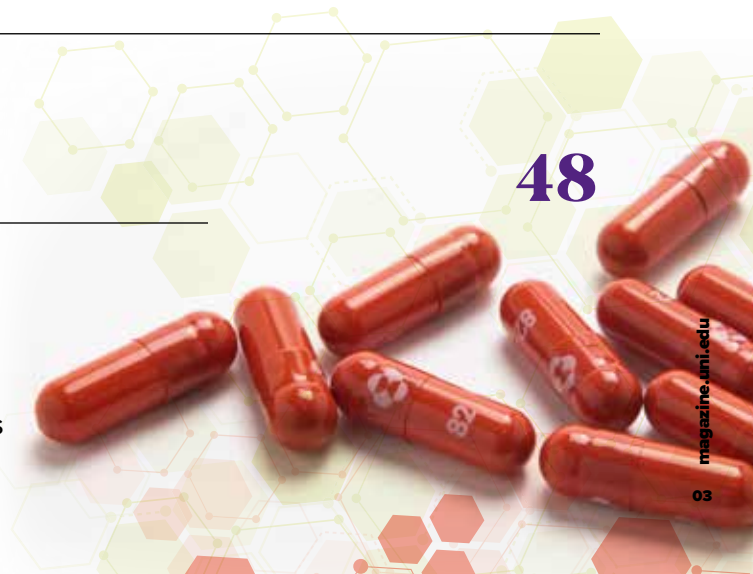
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A new perspective



The Campanile stands proudly at the center of campus, commanding the attention and admiration of all who pass. Alumni and friends are pulled to this monument commemorating the past while contemplating the future. Standing at its base, I often think about how times have changed from the laying of its first brick to today. Though the foundation and structure are steadfast, time moves forward leaving indelible effects on our lives. Perpetual change and need for adaptation filled 2021. The past two years have highlighted the crucial need of an educated and engaged citizenry.

Instead of looking up, revering the structure, I am taking a look out at what reverberates from this phenomenal campus. UNI beckons curious learners — those seeking the skills and knowledge to improve the world around them. UNI envelops these students, guiding and nourishing their curiosities and desires. Faculty and staff walk alongside, partners in their respective journeys.

I view the Campanile as a representation of the positive impacts UNI has on our communities. Our students and alumni take the skills and knowledge gained here and put them to use improving the world around them. So next time you are on campus standing at the base of the Campanile, take a minute to consider the success stories originating from this wonderful university.

Loyally,

Leslie Prideaux

Leslie Prideaux
Assistant Vice President of Alumni Relations
President, University of Northern Iowa Alumni Association

Campanile

Looking westward from the belfry of the Campanile.

Building better communities

UNI students leave campus equipped knowing they can make a positive difference in the world — **because they've already done it.**

After graduation, you likely moved. Perhaps life took you to a big city; perhaps you moved to a family farm. Or maybe it was simply to a new residence here in Cedar Falls. Wherever you call home, you became part of a community — a community with whom you share your time and talents.

A degree from UNI signifies to the world that you have the knowledge and determination to succeed after college. What is becoming apparent to those outside the Panther family is that UNI students and alumni have also learned the importance of contributing to the public good.

University of Northern Iowa students and faculty have known for generations that the best way to learn is to do — and the highest goal of learning is to serve. Community engagement is built into the learning that happens on campus, enriching scholarship, research and creative activity. Students don't wait until graduation to start making a difference — students put their skills and knowledge to work making a difference today. UNI is preparing educated, engaged citizens.

Each year, UNI students complete more than 1,000,000 hours of community service. Students discover passion for work done to promote the greater good and have gone on to build careers working to improve life in the communities they call home.

UNI students leave campus equipped knowing they can make a positive difference in the world — because they've already done it. The knowledge base and experiences gained while students provide a fertile springboard from which to build a vocation where the primary goal is not a stable paycheck, but so much more. There exists a greater purpose to UNI alumni — to serve, to improve, to make this world a better place. UNI alumni are elected to serve as mayors, school board members and members of Congress. They run food banks, coach youth sports, serve on boards of their local United Way and find countless other ways to give back.

This issue of UNI Alumni Magazine is dedicated to those who are committed to community engagement, development and empowerment. It all starts here. **UNI**



Depths of discovery

With hard hats, sophisticated analytical equipment and sheer determination, University of Northern Iowa students under the direction of a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry have been going deep below the Earth's surface to discover insights into life in outer space.

Since 2019, **Joshua Sebree** and his students have made five separate research expeditions to Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, the most recent being this past December. The trips have been funded in part by the UNI Foundation and, more recently, through a four-

year, \$350,000 grant from the Iowa Space Grant Consortium, a division of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The goal for Sebree and his students: collect and analyze samples of microscopic life and organic minerals found in the dark depths of the caves.

“We try to find field environments that model different areas in space,” Sebree, a professor of astrochemistry and astrobiology, explained. “The idea is by understanding how it is that life on Earth has evolved in these super extreme environments, that’s going to give us a better picture into what windows in the outer solar system we might be looking at for other types of extreme life.”

Sebree and his collaborators, which include faculty and students across seven academic departments, are a year and a half into the current NASA grant, which will continue to support cave trips through 2024. UNI students are one of just three groups in the world currently

studying Wind Cave and are the only to do so at the undergraduate level. Their expeditions extend to rarely explored chambers of Wind Cave, which in some areas cut more than 400 feet below the surface.

The trips are exhilarating, Sebree says, not only for the science and the unique opportunities for his students, but also the physical triumph of pushing deeper into the cave with each visit and experiencing the strange, arresting stillness characteristic of being so far underground. Sebree described crossing What the Hell Lake, an underground body of water named for the astonishment cavers felt when they initially encountered it. As the story goes, up until the 1990s, What the Hell was an empty chamber — but a rising reservoir made the lake appear seemingly out of nowhere. It’s the penultimate stop before reaching Calcite Lake, one of the deepest portions of Wind Cave.

“You go through this eight-inch squeeze while you’re balanced above What the Hell Lake — so you don’t want to fall in the water, but you’ve got to get through the hole that’s above the water,” Sebree said. “After crossing the lake, you go into a belly crawl. Then you finally get through the last couple squeezes in this big open amphitheater-type chamber, where you’ve got a giant rock in the middle and you’ve got Calcite Lake that pools around the rock making a peninsula. And it’s one of the larger chambers you get to visit in these deeper underground areas.

But it’s completely still, there are no ripples on the lake. There’s no wind blowing around. When you come into this chamber, there’s this quiet, eerie water down there. And it’s just absolutely beautiful and absolutely silent. Your headlight can’t reach the back end of the chamber where you’re looking down at the lake because it’s just so far away.”

A demanding science

Wind Cave National Park is a sprawling 34,000 acres of forest and prairie located in the southwest corner of South Dakota. While bison and other wildlife roam the surface, Wind Cave, the first cave to be designated as a national park in 1903, is best known for its eponymous subterranean passages featuring honeycomb-like calcite formations known as boxwork. With 160 miles of surveyed caverns, it is the sixth-longest cave on Earth, according to the park’s website.

Yet much of it remains unexplored. Airflow studies suggest just 10% of the cave has been charted, and a still smaller fraction of the surveyed area has been scientifically studied. That’s partly because speleology — or caving, as it is more commonly known — is demanding work. One must overcome claustrophobia, the looming threat of a misstep and the challenges of crawling more than 100 yards on your belly or squeezing through tight crevices sometimes measuring less than a foot.

To prepare for the trip, Sebree asked UNI Department of Applied Engineering and Technical Management students to construct a “cave simulator,” a device comprised

of adjustable wooden slats that allow would-be cavers to squeeze through simulated crevices they will encounter. It is just one example of cross-department collaboration that has stemmed from the Wind Cave expeditions, Sebree said.

The UNI Departments of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Biology, and Earth and Environmental Sciences have teamed up on the hard science for each of the trips, collecting and analyzing samples. And for the spring 2020 expedition, Sebree’s chemistry students were accompanied by a pair of digital media students who produced a series of short films documenting the experience. Original compositions from School of Music students score the films.

Megan Studer, a senior digital media student, has been working on the documentary shorts alongside her peers since the spring 2020 trip. Studer credits Wind Cave with inspiring a passion for filmmaking and journalism.

“It pushed me to a new level and revealed abilities I didn’t even know I had,” Studer said. “I can see myself pursuing something related to documentary filmmaking after graduation because of how comfortable I’ve become with it.”

In the documentaries, we see Sebree’s students light up as they discuss their work. For some, Wind Cave is their first research experience; for others, it’s a chance to apply the skills they’ve gained in the classroom to a new, unique environment.

“The idea is by understanding how it is that life on Earth has evolved in these super extreme environments, that’s going to give us a better picture into what windows in the outer solar system we might be looking at for other types of extreme life.”

- JOSHUA SEBREE

Pratima Raut, '20, a biology and biochemistry graduate, attended two trips to Wind Cave while at UNI. Raut is currently enrolled in a biochemistry Ph.D. program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center where she's working on pancreatic cancer research.

"These trips are the highlights of my UNI experience," Raut said. "When I came to UNI, I thought I was not made for lab or research work ... but these trips, along with my other experiences from the department, helped me realize my passion for research."

Emma Pellegrino, a junior biology and biochemistry major with future plans to enroll in a doctoral program, described Wind Cave as the experience of a lifetime. Initially reluctant to explore some of the deeper caverns, Pellegrino accompanied Sebree and another student on the most recent expedition last December.

"I had no idea what to expect, but it was just so beautiful," she recalled. "I remember sitting down to catch my breath and waiting on a rock for other people to finish up their samples ... and I was just like, 'I can't believe that I'm in this. I can't believe I'm here doing this.'"

Cave study & analysis

The Wind Cave research amounts to a large array of tests: sampling mineral content and collecting organic material from water while

performing analyses both in situ, or onsite, and later in UNI laboratories. Through the tests, they hope to learn more about how extreme life came to be in the cave and how it continues to grow and thrive.

The most visually striking analyses are the ultraviolet (UV) fluorescence measurements. For these tests, Sebree and his students shine UV lights of varying wavelengths onto rock formations to determine their mineral content. The corresponding fluorescence produces an impressive display of psychedelic colors amplified by the shadowy cave.

"Those colors indicate the different types of species that are trapped within the rocks: you can get a hot pink color, which would correspond to manganese; a bright green color, which might correspond to uranium; or a soft green color that could correspond to trapped organics. Or a lot of times you get a gentle blue, which are just air pockets that are trapped in the calcite," Sebree explained. "But each one of those colors indicates what is trapped within the calcite. And that lets us get a picture of what's in the rock ... without actually harming these delicate cave features that have taken tens of thousands of years to create."

Deeper study of Wind Cave has challenged Sebree and his team to innovate. Recognizing the need to travel light and protect expensive field equipment, they adapted the computing hardware from Lego Mindstorms kits — miniature robotic mechanisms designed for grade school Lego League competitions — to run standard water quality testing software.

From Left to Right top to bottom: Professor Joshua Sebree, Nicole Geerdes (biology), Rowan McCarthy (earth and environmental science), Professor Marek Sliwinski (biology), Steven Gomez (chemistry), David Hindman (digital media), Wil McNaughton (biochemistry), Megan Studer (digital media), Baylee Petersen (biology), Angelica Perez (biology).



"These trips are the highlights of my UNI experience. When I came to UNI, I thought I was not made for lab or research work ... but these trips, along with my other experiences from the department, helped me realize my passion for research."

- PRATIMA RAUT

"Nobody takes Legos in the cave but us," Sebree laughs. "An interesting parallel is that [the Mindstorms kits] use Mars rover software to create Lego rovers, and I'm also using that same type of Mars rover analysis software to create the programs I need to get Lego to run my scientific instruments down underground." The result means Sebree's team is nimbler in the cave while using just a few hundred dollars' worth of Lego equipment versus \$40-50,000 in field equipment.

What the students uncover about microorganisms and geologic formations in the cave will eventually be released for publication, with students receiving co-authorships alongside faculty. For now, the public



can enjoy an exhibition of their work on display at the Wind Cave visitors center and the UNI Museum.

Looking ahead to future expeditions, Sebree is excited to see more students “get bit by the field research bug.”

“I’ve watched [them realize]: ‘The science here is so cool. I don’t care if I’m claustrophobic, I’m going to go.’ And they completely switch gears just by having a little bit of an introduction. Being able to see that tells me that I’m doing right by my students,” Sebree said. “And for myself, I get to study things that are fascinating. I get to go places where few people have gone to try to see things in ways that nobody has seen before. And I get to share that experience with people who would never get to do that ever in their lifetime,” he added.

Fitness

journey

Sebree has been going the extra mile — literally — to provide his students the research experience of a lifetime.

Following the 2020 spring break trip to Wind Cave, as the lockdown in response to the COVID pandemic meant students, faculty and staff at UNI wouldn’t be returning to campus, Sebree began a fitness journey that would enable him to take his students to new depths of scientific discovery.

The journey didn’t begin with that goal in mind — Sebree, like so many during the summer of 2020, took to exercising to relieve the stress of isolation.



Joshua Sebree and his son at the largest frying pan in the world

“When things started shutting down on the social aspect — you can’t go into the office, you need to stay away from people — for my own mental sanity, I got back into bike riding. I hadn’t had a lot of spare time to ride my bike for years,” Sebree recalled.

Casual bike rides turned into longer, early morning jaunts pulling his two-year-old son behind him in a bike buggy.

Midway through the summer, Sebree and his grant partners received word that their Wind Cave proposal was funded by NASA. That meant they’d be taking students to the Lake District of Wind Cave, far deeper than they had gone on previous trips.

“And I’m not going to send students anywhere I can’t go,” Sebree determined. Previous trips had shown Sebree that if he and the group were to reach Lake District safely, he had to get in shape.

Over the next nine months, he covered 10,000 miles of cross-training between biking, running, hiking and kayaking.

Editor’s note: Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect views of the NASA and/or Iowa Space Grant Consortium.

“That knocked off 40 pounds of weight, and it took the diameter of my belly down from an 11-inch squeeze gap to an eight-inch squeeze gap,” Sebree said.

Sebree even brought his bike on the May Wind Cave trip following lockdown, racking up hundreds of miles cycling in the evenings the same week he and his students belly crawled for dozens of hours, navigating awkward cave squeezes to reach the Lake District.

And he hasn’t let up since.

“I’m now at the point where since that first cave adventure in 2020, I’ve gone 25,000 miles in terms of cross training distance between the biking, the hiking, the kayaking and everything else,” Sebree said. “So I’ve done the equivalent of a cross-training trip around the circumference of the Earth in preparation for going deeper into this cave.”

Sebree’s impressive health journey caught the attention of iRun, a Canadian publication that featured him on the cover of their March 2021 issue. In the article, Sebree had some advice for others looking to get active: pace yourself, set realistic goals and have fun.

“I’m not trying to push myself to be the next super-athlete,” Sebree told iRun. “I’m just trying to push myself to stay healthy — that’s my mindset. I don’t have to compare myself to others, I just want to be active and live a good life.” **UNI**

KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE



A transformational gift from Patricia and O. Jay Tomson ensures the 10-year-old UNI Center for Violence Prevention continues its important work.

Violence prevention wasn't on **Alan Heisterkamp's** mind when he began his career more than 30 years ago as a high school math teacher in the Sioux City School District. Heisterkamp, '84, had set his sights on working his way through the administrative ranks — assistant school principal, then head principal, and ultimately superintendent.

But that changed on April 20, 1999, when, along with the rest of the country, he heard the news that two high school seniors had gunned down 12 classmates and one teacher while while wounding more than 20 others at Columbine High School in Colorado.

"Time seemed to stand still," Heisterkamp recalled. He and his colleagues watched news coverage over the lunch hour in disbelief. Then an assistant principal of West High School in Sioux City, Heisterkamp fielded calls from concerned parents wishing to pull their kids out of school.

"This day would forever change the way in which schools, law enforcement officials and community leaders would think about school safety moving forward," Heisterkamp explained.

And it would alter the course of Heisterkamp's life. While parents and school administrators across the country called for tighter security measures, an increased law enforcement presence and even metal detectors, Heisterkamp felt a more proactive approach was the answer.

So devoted to this belief was Heisterkamp that he left school administration to work in violence prevention full-time — a trajectory that would ultimately lead to partnering with faculty at the University of Northern Iowa to co-create the Center for Violence Prevention (CVP). Established in 2011, the CVP has since transformed the landscape of violence prevention in Iowa and reached thousands of middle and high school students with education and training.

The center was rededicated last fall in honor of a \$2 million gift from Patricia and O. Jay Tomson, a Mason City couple who created an endowment to help sustain the CVP's work for years to come. Henceforth, it will be known as the Patricia A. Tomson Center for Violence Prevention.



Alan Heisterkamp

Understanding Violence Prevention

Violence manifests in various ways and is more common than many believe.

Sexual Violence

Sexual activity when consent is not obtained or not freely given

- + More than 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetimes

Bullying

Physical, verbal, relational/social and damage to victim's property

- + About 1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied on school property
- + More than 1 in 6 high school students reported being bullied electronically in the last year
- + Nearly 14% of public schools report that bullying is a discipline problem occurring daily or at least once a week

Teen Dating Violence

Physical or sexual violence, psychological aggression and stalking

- + 1 in 11 female teens experienced physical dating violence in the last year
- + 1 in 15 male teens experienced physical dating violence in the last year

A Center is Born

The origins of the CVP date back to 2000, a decade before it was formally established.

It was then that **Annette Lynch**, a professor in the textiles and apparels program, and **Michael Fleming**, professor of family studies, were at the forefront of an emerging national conversation around sexual assault on college campuses.

At that time, advocates across the country were demanding that men take on a greater role in assault prevention and accountability. Voices on the UNI campus were joining the call for change.

“That conversation of how to engage men in this work as allies, recognizing the work that’s been done by women and supporting that work, building upon that work — that was an important conversation happening during that time,” Fleming explained.

“From a student perspective, in 1999 there was a clear call coming into my office in Women’s and Gender Studies that we needed to increase efforts to address gender violence on our campus,” said Lynch.

In response, Lynch partnered with students, faculty and staff to improve prevention and victim services at UNI. Lynch invited **Jackson Katz**, the founder of the Mentors in Violence

Prevention program (MVP), to the UNI campus to train faculty and student affairs, police and athletic department staff from UNI, Iowa State University and the University of Iowa. Created in 1993, MVP is a “mixed-gender, multi-racial prevention program” that was the first program of its kind to activate bystanders in preventing sexual harassment, assault and relationship abuse, according to the MVP website.

With a groundswell of support growing at UNI, Lynch and Fleming collaborated to secure two grants totaling over \$800,000 from 2000-2005 through the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). The funding helped establish MVP at UNI, as well as prevention programs in communication studies, athletics, student affairs and public safety.

Following the success of that work, in 2007 UNI became one of four institutions in the country awarded a \$1 million grant through the DOJ’s Office of Violence Against Women’s Flagship Initiative. With the flagship grant, Lynch and Fleming took their work to greater scale, leading an effort across Iowa’s Regent universities to educate students, train campus police and — for the first time — revise policies to be more responsive to sexual and gender-based violence. A \$700,000 renewal of the Flagship DOJ grant in 2010 set the stage to establish the center the following year.

2011-21 Impact

MENTORS IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION



38,500+

Secondary school students in engaged in MVP Strategies

8,500+

UNI students participated in MVP classroom modules

500+

UNI students, faculty and staff received training and certification in MVP Strategies



195+

Secondary school coaches participated in training program



47

High schools partnering with CVP to implement bullying and gender violence prevention programming



“The bells were going off. I just knew that the impact could be much broader if the intervention started in secondary schools and continued through an individual’s college years.”

- ANNETTE LYNCH

In the spring of 2007 Heisterkamp left education to work full-time with the Waitt Institute for Violence Prevention, a nonprofit founded by businessman, philanthropist and Sioux City native **Ted Waitt**. Heisterkamp credits a presentation from Darrell Scott — father of Rachel Scott, a 17-year-old who was the first victim of the Columbine shooting — with inspiring him to make violence prevention his life’s work.

“It was a leap of faith,” Heisterkamp said of the decision to join the Waitt Institute for Violence Prevention. “We had four kids and I was walking away from a good-paying job. But I was asking myself the questions: How is this school going to be safe for my children? For all students? So that was a turning point.”

Over the next several years, Heisterkamp worked with the Sioux City School District to implement and evaluate Jackson Katz’s MVP program with secondary school students. Heisterkamp and his collaborators discovered that the peer-based, bystander approach was incredibly effective. Through MVP, high school juniors and seniors are trained in prevention strategies and then become mentors to their younger peers, leading workshops alongside school and MVP staff. The workshops focus on guided discussions and problem-solving activities around scenarios that depict harassment, bullying and other forms of gender violence.

“We began to see the culture and the climate of the school slowly, but surely improve,” Heisterkamp commented.

It was Katz who connected Heisterkamp to Lynch and Fleming, hoping that UNI could partner with Alan’s work in secondary schools to make a bigger impact throughout the state.

“I said to Alan ... ‘you belong here.’ The bells were going off,” Lynch remembered. “I just knew that the impact could be much broader if the intervention started in secondary schools and continued through an individual’s college years.”

A deep partnership formed, and Heisterkamp began making regular seven-hour round trips from Sioux City to Cedar Falls.

“I would sleep on Michael’s couch in his basement,” laughed Heisterkamp. “We didn’t have a lot of models to point to in terms of violence prevention, so working together to collect the little bit of data that we did have was the birth of the CVP.”

MVP continues to be a main focus of the center, but programming has expanded to include Coaching Boys Into Men — a partnership with the Iowa High School Athletics Association to promote healthy relationships and prevent sexual and dating violence — and a series of statewide symposia around issues such as “Men’s Leadership and Accountability Around #MeToo.”

And partnerships with Swedish and Scottish organizations — including Sweden’s Ministry of Education and Scotland’s National Violence Reduction Unit — have taken the CVP model international.



O. Jay and Patricia Tomson

Tomson Scholars

While most of its programming is focused on Iowa school districts, the CVP has been a resource for UNI students as well. Over the past 10 years, more than 8,500 UNI students have participated in MVP trainings, and dozens more have experienced the center through their coursework.

A 2016 gift from **Patricia** and **O. Jay Tomson** provided funding for students to work more closely

with the center to gain hands-on experiences with victim services and violence prevention organizations throughout the state and beyond. In five years, 58 students have completed internships coordinated through the CVP and funded through the Tomson Scholars program.

For **Sara Naughton**, '20, being a Tomson Scholar was one of the most memorable experiences of her master's program in women's and gender studies. The scholarship gave

Naughton the chance to intern with Cedar Valley Friends of the Family, where she assisted the organization with research on disability access to services related to violence prevention.

"The Tomson scholarship allowed me to get the most out of that internship, which really shaped my professional and personal goals," Naughton said. "It was definitely a highlight of my experience and cemented for me that I'm in the right work."

Following graduation, Naughton returned to her home state of Pennsylvania to become the community impact manager of data and evaluation at United Way of Erie County. One of the initiatives she supports is the community schools model, which channels resources into high-need schools to alleviate poverty, reduce educational achievement gaps, and address risk factors for violence prevention.

"Getting to know really effective programs like Mentors in Violence Prevention and Coaching Boys Into Men, has really helped me in this position — to search for and understand what it means to be data-driven and effective," Naughton explained.

Speaking at the CVP rededication event last fall, the Tomsons said the center's "life-changing" work and the success of their scholarship program inspired them to establish an endowment to support the CVP. Their gift will provide operational support as well as sustained funding for the Tomson Scholars program.

Patricia Tomson, '86, who obtained her master's degree in counseling from UNI, spoke of her passion for keeping children safe. A retired family therapist, she spent decades advocating for children and other survivors of abuse.

"You prioritize the things that give you purpose," Patricia said. "This work gives me purpose."

Reflection and the Road Ahead

Celebrating the CVP's 10-year anniversary has given Heisterkamp, Lynch and Fleming the chance to reflect on their work, as well as the changing nature of the field of violence prevention. In interviews, each noted prevention has made great strides, but challenges remain.

"We're better off than we were 20 years ago addressing these issues in meaningful ways. In part because we're giving the students the platform to say something. And they are taking the microphone."

- ALAN HEISTERKAMP

Heisterkamp remarked that the digital space has been a new and constantly evolving frontier in prevention. He explained that CVP regularly updates and adapts its lessons on social media literacy, sexting and other concerns of teens being online.

"These were not lessons and activities in classes that we were teaching 20 years ago," Heisterkamp said. "So that has been a big shift: the frequency, and the ease with which

bullying, harassment and violence can occur through social media."

Lynch commented on the CVP's resiliency over the years, and the "many seeds that have been planted" by the center — from MVP work with the UNI Army Reserve Officer Training Corps to partnerships with victim services groups nationally and internationally.

"With the support of the Tomsons, the Waitt Institute, Verizon and other funders, the work and impact of the CVP has stretched beyond my wildest imagination from writing that first grant," Lynch said. "And we continue to grow our vision."

Fleming has noticed a marked shift in the conversation on healthy relationships and men's role in violence prevention.

"Now there's so much happening, so much awareness in the community," Fleming said. "It's great to be a voice in the choir, versus being more of a soloist out there."

But we still have a long way to go, no doubt," he added.

For Heisterkamp, the mission that compelled him 20 years ago — to make schools safer — is still guiding the work. And he's optimistic about the road ahead.

"We're better off than we were 20 years ago on addressing these issues in meaningful ways," he said. "In part because we're giving the students the platform to say something. And they are taking the microphone." **UNI**

El valor de la representación

Northern Iowan en Español gives voice to Spanish-speaking students

Tucked away in the basement of Maucker Union, in The Northern Iowan newsroom, a team of students are writing a new chapter in the history of UNI's on-campus newspaper — and forging a more inclusive future.

For the first time ever, stories are being reported in Spanish, thanks to a new column of the newspaper called The Northern Iowan en Español.

“This work is about building a more inclusive community and empowering Spanish-speakers to have their own space on campus,” said **Nixson Benitez**, a junior digital journalism major and executive editor of The Northern Iowan.

After joining The Northern Iowan as a staff writer last spring, Benitez

immediately pitched the idea of a Spanish language column in the newspaper.

“When I first came to UNI, to a predominantly white institution, I knew I wanted to find a way to serve my community as a Central American and a Spanish-speaker,” he said.

“Service looks different for everyone, and this is the way it came about for me. I wanted to provide an outlet for Spanish-speaking students, and their families, to stay informed and feel connected. Now, they can feel welcomed in their own language and feel like they have a place here.”

Then-news editor **Elizabeth Kelsey**, a TESOL/Spanish double major, helped Benitez get The Northern Iowan en Español off the ground.

“

I wanted to provide an outlet for Spanish-speaking students, and their families, to stay informed and feel connected. Now, they can feel welcomed in their own language and feel like they have a place here.”

- NIXSON BENITEZ



“I was really excited when Nixon approached me about this,” Kelsey said. “For me, as someone who’s so involved in the Spanish language and the newspaper, this idea never occurred to me. That was a wake up call for me, when I realized we needed to be serving this community better. It’s also been a great chance to merge my love for Spanish and journalism into an experience that’s taken my learning beyond the classroom — where we’re able to make a tangible impact on the community.”

Initially, Benitez and Kelsey worked to translate existing articles from English into Spanish, with assistance from Spanish professors. But eventually, Benitez published his first original story in Spanish, and The Northern Iowan en Español took off.

“It really just exploded after that,” Benitez said. “We had so many people reach out and say they appreciated the article, and a lot of others requested that we put an English version of the story onto our website. It’s eye-opening for a lot of people who wished they could read the Spanish article. It gives them a chance to see how language barriers affect communities, and I think that’s a big part of working towards inclusivity.”

Since then, The Northern Iowan en Español has continued to grow its presence on campus, and in his new position as executive editor of the newspaper, Benitez is working to hire a dedicated Spanish editor and more Spanish writers.

“I definitely want to continue to grow this, and build on the success we’ve had so far,” he said. “And if someone

wants to report in another language, like French, we encourage that, too. We want to give everyone a space to share their story.”

Christopher Martin, ‘03, faculty advisor for the student newspaper, says this is just one way the university is working towards inclusivity, by empowering students to make their voices heard.

“Nixon has done a great job reaching out to Spanish language students at UNI, and it’s been a really cool thing to be a part of,” he said. “I think it says something about where we are as a university — a place that welcomes multilingual

“We had so many people reach out and say they appreciated the article, and a lot of others requested that we put an English version of the story onto our website. It’s eye-opening for a lot of people who wished they could read the Spanish article. It gives them a chance to see how language barriers affect communities, and I think that’s a big part of working towards inclusivity.”

- NIXSON BENITEZ

students and provides opportunities to amplify their voices. This is a place where we’re working towards inclusivity on a number of levels. I’m excited to see where it goes.”

Looking forward, Benitez hopes the work being done at The Northern Iowan en Español will encourage others to create change in their own way.

“In five years, I think this will speak volumes to the standards we’ve set up in the newsroom, and the way we want to communicate with people,” he said. “Beyond that, I feel like I’ve made my own place on campus. Now, I want to pay it forward, and empower others to do the same thing.” **UNI**





Transforming lives

As a first-generation college graduate whose unexpected path led from Chicago's Southwest Side to a career in science and academia, UNI's new Provost **José Herrera** understands the power of small changes to transform lives.

Herrera, 53, grew up in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood in the shadow of the hulking Cook County jail complex. His parents encouraged Herrera to work hard and stay away from the violence that was an ever-

present menace. A college degree never really came up.

But small nudges at the right time helped set Herrera on a path to uncover his potential. As the new provost, Herrera hopes to help improve UNI's ability to provide those transformational moments for students.

"Very small changes in the structure of educational systems can have a rather large effect on

the success rates of students," he said. "It's these small nudges that change a person's trajectory — maybe only three or four degrees, but over time that means a huge difference in where you end up in this world."

Improving measures of success for all UNI students and increasing the number of Panthers enrolled each year will be Herrera's focus. He plans to start by listening to faculty, staff, students and community.

"I think I am a collaborative leader open to new ideas," Herrera said. "I'd like for smarter people than I to be around the table. When we make a collaborative decision, I think we're more likely to get it right more often than not."

Helping make UNI a more inclusive place is also a top priority.

"We want things to be equitable. So the likelihood of my success and another person's success is just about as equal as we can get it. That doesn't necessarily mean that everyone gets the same thing. We have to make sure that students get what they need in order to be successful."

- JOSÉ HERRERA

UNI President **Mark A. Nook** said Herrera has hit the ground running. "It's been wonderful welcoming José to our campus," Nook said. "From

day one, he has really engaged our campus and surrounding community. He has been listening carefully and learning about our needs, challenges and opportunities as an institution. José is engaged in the work of enhancing our impact on the people, industries and communities we serve, and to making UNI an even better institution committed to the success of our students, faculty and staff."

A PATH TO COLLEGE

The first trajectory shift in Herrera's life came in grammar school when a teacher suggested he apply for a spot at Whitney Young High School. The then-brand-new public magnet school, now well-known in Chicago for its stellar academics, counts former First Lady Michelle Obama (a senior when Herrera arrived) among its famous alums.

Herrera did more than just succeed there, graduating early at age 15. It was an outcome he believes never would've happened if he'd attended his neighborhood high school. The school was an epicenter of gang violence. Several of Herrera's close friends lost their lives to that violence during his grammar school years.

"It was by the grace of God (that it wasn't me)," Herrera said. "I was always one bad decision away from not existing."

Herrera settled on Northern Illinois University (NIU) for college. He won a scholarship and worked as a residence assistant to pay his own way, sticking with school even

in the face of pressure to return home and help in a restaurant his family had started.

"I come from a family of working-class people that really struggled to get by back when it was much easier to be able to afford college," Herrera said. "Today college is a very different calculation for families, and certainly for students in lower socioeconomic tiers, regardless of their color, but particularly for Black and Brown students. These are the kinds of decisions that really serve as barriers to getting into places like UNI. We want to help."

Originally a computer science major, Herrera switched to biology after seeing a professor's dynamic lecture light up a lecture hall and realizing science was something he could do, too. He graduated magna cum laude in 1988 and then completed an NIU master's degree in biology.

An NIU professor encouraged him to apply for a National Science Foundation fellowship, which Herrera won, setting him on a research path. "That made the difference between me going into science or not," he said.

He earned his microbiology doctorate at Kansas State University in 1996.

He met his wife, Becky, there while serving as a teaching assistant in an autotutorial biology class. The couple has three children and celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in January. **UNI**

RACING TO THE FUTURE

Outdoor track & field complex gets an upgrade

UNI is on the cusp of becoming the only Missouri Valley Conference member capable of hosting both the indoor and outdoor track championships.

A facility upgrade planned for the Mark Messersmith Outdoor Track and Field Complex will impact more than 25% of UNI's current student-athletes and benefit thousands of users annually including UNI students, local businesses, private groups and the general public.

The improvements will boast one of the finest indoor/outdoor track facilities in the entire conference, making it a prime spot to host upcoming championships.

A first-class facility for training and competitions opens up the opportunity to host more events even beyond the MVC Outdoor Championships. It helps UNI maintain competitiveness in the MVC and across the country.

Renovations would enhance the student-athlete experience and heavily impact recruiting for future Panthers.

“An improved outdoor track facility will allow our student-athletes an opportunity to excel and maintain a high level of success in the Missouri Valley Conference and across the country,” said UNI Head Cross Country/Track & Field Coach **Dave Paulsen**, '04, '06.

The outdoor track and the supporting subsurface located at the Mark Messersmith Outdoor Track and Field Complex must be replaced due to multiple areas failing in quality and reliability. The current track is no longer fit for NCAA Division I athletic competitions.

Additional upgrades to the facility include steeplechase pit replacement, improvements to the hammer throw area and a new javelin throw area.

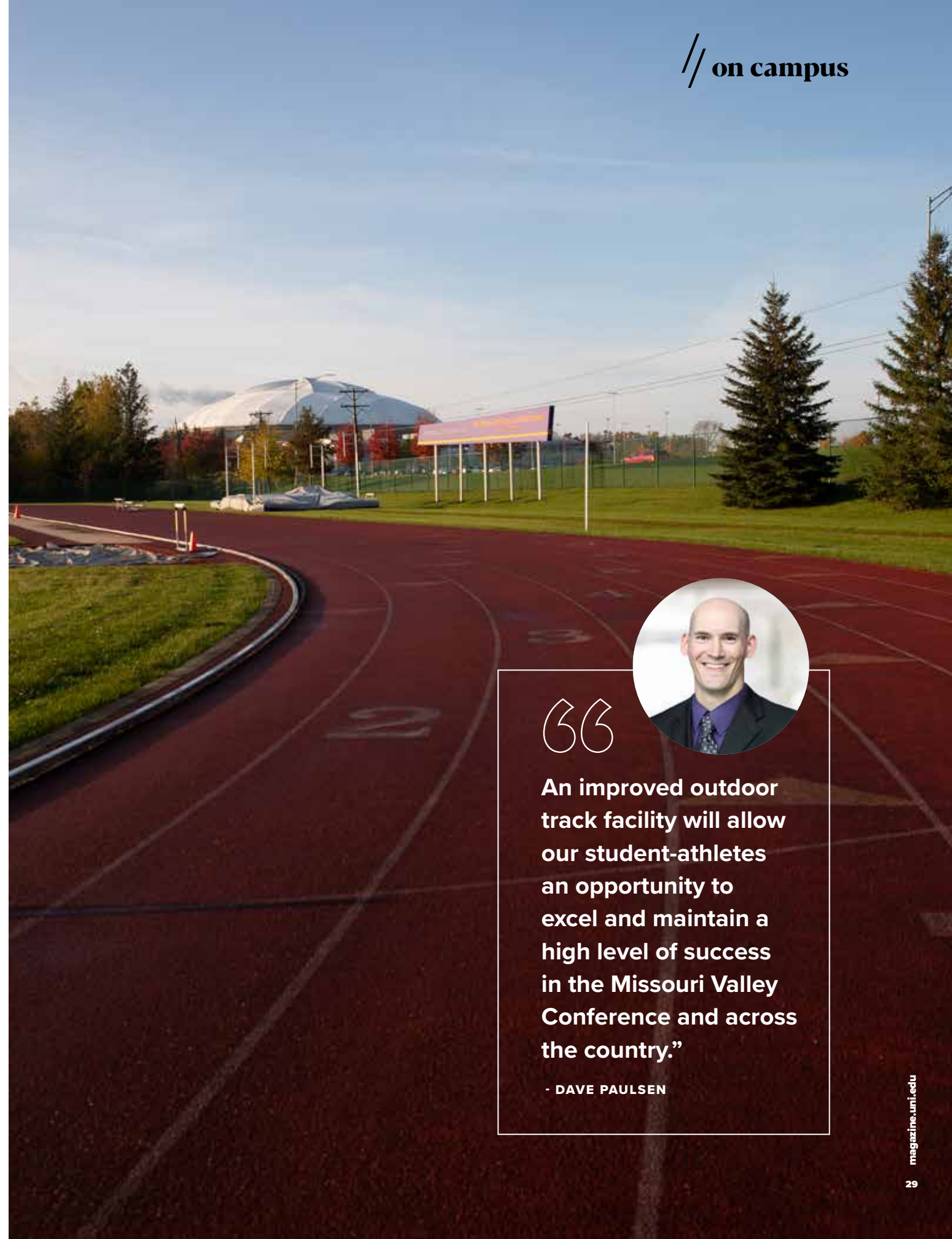
Updates to the long jump, triple jump, discus, shot put and pole vaulting areas are also included in the renovation.

Projected costs are expected to be \$1.46 million.

The Mark Messersmith Outdoor Track and Field complex, located northeast of the UNI-Dome, originally opened in 1998. It features an eight-lane, 400-meter track with event areas for long jump, triple jump, discus/hammer throw, javelin, shot put and pole vault.

Since the complex opened, it has hosted four Missouri Valley Conference Outdoor Track & Field Championships.

Anyone looking to support the project can visit SupportThePanthers.com or contact Jamar Thompson at jamar.thompson@uni.edu or (319) 273-7817. **UNI**



An improved outdoor track facility will allow our student-athletes an opportunity to excel and maintain a high level of success in the Missouri Valley Conference and across the country.”

- DAVE PAULSEN



Celebrating Black entrepreneurs

Britni Perkins, '20, likes to help others by bringing them joy. In 2019 she turned her passion into a business and launched Blessings 2 Celebrate. She offers party planning, rentals and favors. Perkins founded the business because she believes every blessing should be celebrated and every person deserves to show their happiness through their celebration.

Like many entrepreneurs, she was motivated by her passion but was looking for some keys to unlock the next level of potential for her business. That's when she turned to the Cedar Valley Black Business & Entrepreneurship Accelerator (BBEA).

The accelerator is a 24/7 Black Leadership Advancement Consortium (24/7 BLAC) program that aims to provide critical and intensive financial and sustainability support to accelerate growth and development for new and existing minority owned businesses in the Cedar Valley. **Reshonda Young**, program director, explained, "The program takes business owners that are within the first one to three years of operation through an accelerator that teaches them about customer

discovery, marketing, customer acquisition, financing and other areas of business structures. We pair them with a mentor who walks with them through the 16-week program and into the alumni program that follows."

"Before starting the BBEA program, my business was already established. However, I really didn't have any business order in my finances, marketing, nor did I have a business model. Now I have all of those resources. I have an updated business model canvas, which has details of my customer market segments. I am evolving a marketing strategy that fits what was taught in class, and I have a QuickBooks system set up," emphasized Perkins.

The BBEA is a new opportunity for Cedar Valley business owners, now halfway through it's third cohort this fall. The free program is supported by the University of Northern Iowa John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC). The program also functions with collaborative efforts from Grow Cedar Valley, Iowa C.O.R.E. and Red Cedar.

Lindi Roelofse, who serves as academic program manager,

T. Wayne Davis Chair in Entrepreneurship of the UNI JPEC and BBEA instructor, said., "It is such a privilege to see BBEA participants look out for each other. In chort after cohort now we see peer-to-peer support, sharing ideas, win-win partnerships strengthening one another. Britni is a great example of this as she thoughtfully assembled and constructed the business model canvas that was right for her and her beautiful family. Her award as one of the bright shining stars of BBEA is well deserved."

Perkins commented, "Lindi Roelofse and **Laurie Watje** (director of JPEC) have both been phenomenal help to me and my business, Blessings 2 Celebrate. All of the lectures were thorough, and they provided great hands-on help even through Zoom. They have been such a great help that I am strongly considering going back to UNI to achieve my graduate certificate in entrepreneurship!"

Blessings 2 Celebrate can be found on Facebook. Perkins was named a 20 Under 40 recipient by the Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier in 2021. **UNI**

"Before starting the BBEA program, my business was already established. However I really didn't have any business order in my finances, marketing, nor did I have a business model. Now I have all of those resources."

- BRITNI PERKINS

Project planet

The largest environmental AmeriCorps project in the state, based at the University of Northern Iowa, is getting bigger.

Green Iowa AmeriCorps, run by UNI's Center for Energy and Environmental Education, recently received a \$1.1 million federal grant that will fund thousands of statewide community environmental service projects. It's the largest grant in the program's 13-year history, which will allow it to partner with more organizations statewide and hire more national service members than ever before.

The three-year grant from AmeriCorps will support 114 service members who will partner with 24 organizations across Iowa to carry out projects in residential energy efficiency, environmental education, land restoration and water quality.

"The program will further highlight the environmental issues that the state of Iowa faces, while also providing boots-on-the-



"Our AmeriCorps members will successfully address identified environmental community problems in Iowa, including the financial burden created by high energy costs, lack of energy efficiency resources for residents and school districts, and increasing water quality and quantity issues impacting Iowa communities."

- CARMEN FINKEN

ground, paid experiences for individuals to be a part of as AmeriCorps members," said **Carmen Finken**, '14, program manager for Green Iowa AmeriCorps. "Our AmeriCorps members will successfully address identified environmental community problems in Iowa, including the financial burden created by high energy costs, lack of energy efficiency resources for residents and school districts, and increasing water quality and quantity issues impacting Iowa communities."

Service members across the state will provide free residential energy efficiency services, plant trees, remove invasive species, clean rivers, educate K-12 students on the environment and much more, while gaining valuable experience contributing to the overall health and sustainability of the state. Projects typically focus on three areas: residential energy efficiency, land restoration and water quality testing, and sustainability efforts in K-12 schools.

It's an employment opportunity that can lead to life-changing experiences. Current member and University of Iowa graduate student **Erica Dodge** helps teach a sustainability class to all the 8th grade students at the Clear Creek Amana Community School District, which is located seven miles west of Iowa City.

"Green Iowa has been a vital experience for me. It has allowed me to gain experiences I would have never gotten," Dodge said. "By being a part of this program I feel that I am differentiating myself from other future teachers and making myself more marketable when I graduate. It is not only giving me teaching experience, but also field experience in a subject I love."

At the end of the 2020-2021 program year, AmeriCorps members completed 600 energy audit assessments for Iowa households, 400 weatherization retrofits for households or public

AmeriCorps members in Decorah, gathered for a regional spring retreat, taking a hike along one of Decorah's beautiful hiking trails



AmeriCorps summer members in Cedar Falls working together to install a garden for a homeowner through the Garden in Every Lot program

Two AmeriCorps members canoeing down the Raccoon River, cleaning up trash



A group of AmeriCorps members posing in front of the trash they cleaned out of the river that day

structures and 450 educational programs completed with 4,500 educational participants. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage 2,750 volunteers who will be engaged in 380 service projects related to energy and environmental stewardship.

“Green Iowa AmeriCorps is one of the longest-standing, farthest-reaching and most impactful community engagement programs at the University of Northern Iowa,” said **Eric Giddens**, former energy programs manager for UNI’s CEEE. “We are very proud of the work that Green Iowa AmeriCorps members have done across Iowa over the last decade to improve energy efficiency in homes, make schools more sustainable and implement land and water conservation projects.”

The grant will be the third three-year funding package Green Iowa AmeriCorps has received since starting in 2008. The previous three-year grant will wrap up in August and engaged almost 320 members in thousands of statewide projects, including 59 UNI students and thousands of volunteers.

Many of the energy efficiency projects in the previous three years focused on low-income households, while school presentations on sustainability reached 12,000 Iowan students. The Land and Water Stewards branch of Green Iowa AmeriCorps conducted 750 educational presentations and 150 education programs related to water quality monitoring.

The start of a new grant period will also mark a welcomed return to normal for the program, which was upended by the abrupt onset of COVID-19 two years ago. The global pandemic prompted a sharp pivot in programming, as members helped serve communities by delivering meals to home-bound seniors, packaging meals at local food banks and pantries, answering calls at crisis centers, assisting with childcare for first responders and creating and distributing face masks.

“A lot of our educational programming took a hit, as several camps and other volunteer opportunities we were set to help out with were cancelled due to COVID,” Finken said. “However, we’re excited for the summer program and the ability to engage members in more in-person, hands-on work in their communities. We received an outpouring of applications for the summer term, with folks indicating their desire to be in-person, outside and engaged in meaningful service work.”

Green Iowa AmeriCorps is actively recruiting members both statewide and nationally. Positions are supplemented with a monthly living allowance, healthcare coverage, child care assistance, federal loan deferment, loan interest accrual repayment, professional development funding and a scholarship at the end of service. Interested applicants should email GIACrecruitment@gmail.com for more information or apply at greeniowaamericorps.org/open-positions. **UNI**



SAVING A
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As the ice gave way below his feet and plunged **Jeff Tamplin** into the frigid waters of the Cedar River, one thought flashed through his head: I'm going to die.

A split second later, Tamplin caught himself on the ice with his elbows. Crisis averted. Tamplin has found creeping across partially frozen ice to be a necessary part of checking wood turtles while they hibernate. It's all part of this University of Northern Iowa professor's 20-year quest to save the local turtle population from extinction.

This work is vitally important. Wood turtles are a state-listed endangered species in Iowa, and their nesting habitats and survival rates have been under pressure from human interference and climate change. That's why the federal government has poured millions of dollars into research into research on the effects of this interference and how to mitigate its impacts.

This work, which won a \$220,000 grant earlier this year from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services which is part of almost \$2 million awarded to Tamplin's work, is part of the outsized role UNI plays in conservation of wood turtles, both in the state and beyond. Tamplin is the top expert in Iowa, and his work in Iowa may have implications for the protection of wood turtles on a national scale.



“Wood turtles are a **dwindling species** that are having trouble with **alteration of habitat** & increased precipitation.”

- JEFF TAMPLIN

“This has been a long-term project trying to assess their behavior across their range and what we can do to keep them from going locally extinct.”

The grant started in 2014 as a partnership between four states — Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. The most recent round of funding Tamplin received was a portion of a larger \$1 million grant awarded to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. That grant was also a portion of the overall funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services — a total of \$7.4 million awarded to 17 projects across the nation focused on protecting species and their habitats.

“Tamplin is a key player in a multi-state wildlife recovery effort aimed at increasing survivorship of this endangered species. This work brings national recognition in the field of conservation to UNI,” said **Theresa Spradling**, head of the Department of Biology. “Tamplin's research gives our students valuable experience in scientific practices that will serve them well when they move into professional fields.”

Wood turtles typically reside further north and east than Iowa, but a small segment of the population lives in the North Cedar River and the Shell Rock and West Fork

of the Cedar River. Tamplin has studied the local population for 20 years, trekking out to the Cedar River in winter and summer, using radio tracking to collect data on population numbers, spawning locations and hatchling survival rates. For the next three years, he will head across the border to Minnesota to study turtle populations there for the first time.

He will report his findings to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Iowa and Minnesota DNRs, informing them of how many wood turtles were killed, what he thinks the cause of death was and how the loss of life might be prevented. Oftentimes, the news is grim.

“Usually what I tell them is ‘oh, every single nest was wiped out by a flood this particular week,’” Tamplin said.

Wood turtles have highly specific nesting requirements — they need a sandy, gravelly beach, highly oxygenated water and specific, colder temperatures during winter. As humans have fragmented and altered natural habitats, finding these conditions has become increasingly difficult, which is why the wood turtle is a state-listed endangered species and is on a petition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to become a federally listed endangered species.

“Should the wood turtle be listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, it is possible that Dr. Tamplin’s data, collected in Iowa, could form the foundation for the designation of critical habitat throughout the range of the wood turtle within the United States,” said **Karen Kinkead**, wildlife diversity coordinator for the Iowa DNR. “To my knowledge, no other scientist has studied this species to the level of Dr. Tamplin.”

This funding cycle, which will end in 2024, Tamplin will use radio transmitters to track 20 wood turtles, studying and assessing the continued destruction and interference in the wood turtles nesting success that has caused a decrease in the number of juveniles hatched each year and poses an existential threat to the species.

“We call it a ghost population,” Tamplin said. “It’s mostly older adults at or near the end of their lifespan. They reproduce almost every year, but almost none of their eggs and hatchlings ever make it to maturity.”

Other threats include an increased number of predators — mainly the result of the booming population of local racoons, which can chew the head off of wood turtles. Wood turtles are also a popular target for poachers. Their intelligence makes them highly desirable pets. Wood turtles can be trained to navigate a maze and have a strong homing ability that allows them to return to specific feeding and nesting sites.

The grant-funded project will not only provide the U.S. Fish

and Wildlife service with data to determine if the species should be federally protected, but it will also install needed mitigation measures to protect the threatened spawning habitats of wood turtles. These include nesting and foraging habitat creation, restoration, and protection, installation of barriers to



reduce road mortality, and studies to identify potential locations for new restoration efforts.

In the past, Tamplin has hired graduate students to assist with this work, but this grant cycle, he set aside \$22,000 of the grant funding to hire undergraduate students to help with the research. It’s

demanding work that Tamplin said takes a particular kind of person.

“It’s tiring. We cover lots of ground walking out there with heavy equipment and huge boots and you’re wading in and out of rivers. You’re always wet, you’re always either too hot or too cold or there’s too many bugs,”

Tamplin said. “So you need students who can handle that and deal with the bad days. And there’s also great days out there where you’re just like, ‘oh, I’d almost pay somebody to do this. But instead they’re paying me.’”

It’s a field research experience into the world of what Tamplin refers to as “muddy-boot biology.”



“You’re actually out there wading in streams and rivers,” Tamplin said. “And you’re testing hypotheses based on your ideas and the data you collected.”

Many of Tamplin’s students are driven by a desire to care for animals. Several have gone on to become veterinarians and others have earned Ph.D.s. All told, at least 28 biology undergraduates and five graduate students have worked on the project.

But the experience of Tamplin’s research goes beyond classrooms and careers — it offers a window into nature.

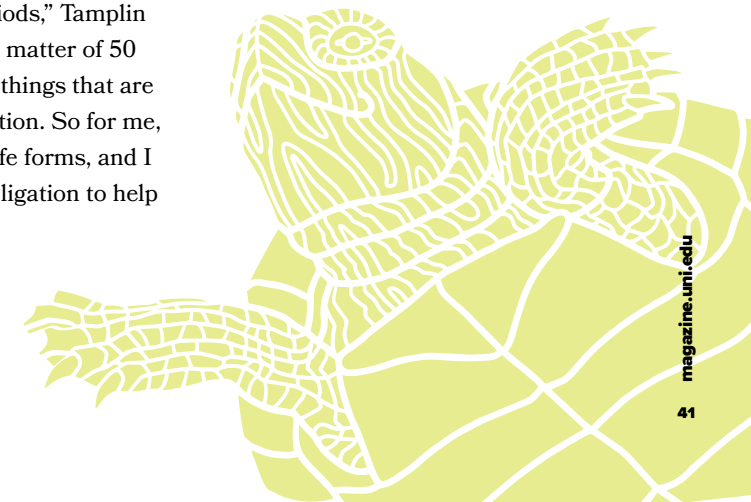
“Just about two weeks ago in the snow, we found a place where a coyote chased a turkey for probably 200 yards and it looked like the turkey got away,” Tamplin said. “We’re always learning something about being out in nature. And to me, it just inspires me.”

This love of nature extends into his research. Tamplin’s work is motivated by a deep respect for the biological success of the wood turtle and a moral obligation to rescue a species that is being driven to extinction by causes almost exclusively tied to human activity.

“This species has been here for at least 18 million years. It survived four glaciation periods, it survived prior global warming periods,” Tamplin said. “And then, in a matter of 50 years, we are doing things that are causing their extinction. So for me, I care about other life forms, and I think we have an obligation to help them persist.” **UNI**

“So for me,
I care about
other life forms,
& I think we have
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help them persist.”

- JEFF TAMPLIN





Preserving Faith

What makes a church a sacred place? Is it the physical four walls? A collective purpose? A space for spiritual gathering, respite, togetherness, healing?

These questions were pressing for a group of neighbors in the Walnut Neighborhood, adjacent to downtown Waterloo, as they watched the continued deterioration of the beloved Faith Temple/Walnut Street Baptist Church.

The needs of the community were no less than when the current structure was built in 1908. Its Baptist congregation,

one of the largest in Iowa, moved to a new structure in 1971 and the building was sold to Faith Temple Baptist Church. In 2000, the church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and in 2010, it held its last service.

And there it sat, watching over the community in its little triangular lot. In 2016, the community decided to do something about it.

The Iowa Heartland Habitat for Humanity purchased the historic church, on behalf of the Walnut Neighborhood



Development Coalition. Planning has since been underway on how to properly restore its iconic architecture and utilize the space mindfully by the neighborhood and surrounding communities, thanks to the guidance of key members from the coalition and the University of Northern Iowa.

Drew Conrad, '93, Karla Organist and the team at UNI's Institute for Decision Making (IDM) have been integral to the process. Thanks to their oversight, alongside funding from the Office of the Provost, the coalition was able to hire a community consultant with strong ties to Waterloo. **Matthew Gilbert** will now lead the charge of gathering input from Waterloo residents, with help from local organizers like **Laura Hoy**, from the Walnut Neighborhood Association; **Ali Parrish, '20**, from the Iowa Heartland Habitat for

Humanity; and **Sharina Sallis**, corporate social responsibility manager from CUNA Mutual Group (among many others).

Gilbert commented that the coalition, which meets regularly at the graciously accommodating Boys and Girls Club of the Cedar Valley, "has blossomed into something really beautiful."

Several UNI professors have also been involved in the process. As coordinator of UNI's interior design program, **Gowri Betrabet Gulwadi** is enthusiastic about the possibilities of the beautiful space and potential for future projects and participation.

With the help of local architects, who were able to supply the church's original plans, her students have been working towards creating a 3D model to help conceptualize the revitalization.



From top left to bottom left: Gowri Betrabet Gulwadi, Gary Gute, Sharina Sallis, Laura Hoy, Karla Organist, Angela Waseskuk, Matthew Gilbert, Shuaib Meacham and Drew Conrad

The possibilities for student participation and programming support has only grown from there. “It’s such a big part of our students’ learning experiences,” said **Gary Gute**, ‘83, director of the UNIFlowLab. “To learn about the history and culture and community right where they’re learning it? This is our role as educators; to help co-create with students lived experiences where they can learn and grow.”

The students within Associate Professor of Literacy **Shuaib Meacham**’s class have learned this all too well. As part of their fall 2021 semester curriculum, they interviewed various members of the Waterloo community to discuss their outreach initiatives and hopes for the church project. The students were particularly inspired by African American researcher and historian **Charles Pearson**.

“There is a rich history in the Cedar Valley, even on this campus, that’s not well documented,” commented one student. “As future educators, we want to help tell our students about the history of their own community.”

And faculty are learning right alongside. Associate Professor of Public Health **Disa Cornish** was asked to be a part of the committee, and quickly realized the importance of the work, “I have an incredible privilege to sit back and listen and learn. Education doesn’t stop at the classroom door.”

In addition to these lessons being learned across the UNI campus, Gilbert and team reiterate that the main focus of the project has and will always tie back to the community. “We are in the phase of outreach where we need the hard truth about what’s going on with this building and what does the community want,” said Gilbert. “So we’re asking, ‘Hey, what do you want to see in the building? What would you dream of if you could have a building in Waterloo that had everything on your wishlist? What would that look like?’”



Ceiling detail



Integration of a circular architecture concept towards back of the church



Remnants of religious foundation



“This is our role as educators; to help co-create with students lived experiences where they can learn and grow.”
- GARY GUTE

Sanctuary displaying two-story church

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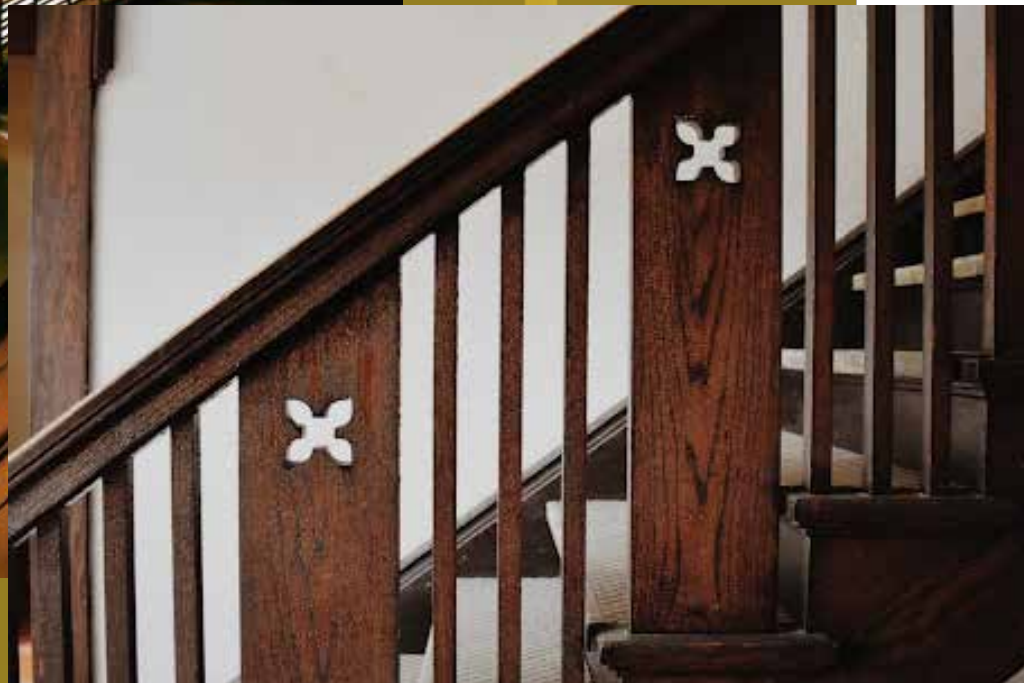
- MATTHEW GILBERT



Close-ups of stained-glass



Front door detail



Sturdy wooden handrails featuring flower-like carvings

Much of the feedback they’ve heard thus far has centered around the idea of youth programming, so they’ve been eagerly connecting with Waterloo youth through outreach to schools and community events like National Night Out, a Fall Light Show and a recent Community Brunch. Instead of handing out surveys, the group has engaged youth through artistic activities that help highlight their impressions of what the church should be utilized for or represent.

Gilbert is quick to point out, however, that they’re still keeping all options open. With this, they’ve also been in touch with business-minded organizations like the Cedar Valley Black Business &

Entrepreneurship Accelerator, historical preservation groups like Waterloo Preservation Commission and passionate locals like Pearson.

“We looked at the church as a key point to get the Black experience,” said Pearson, who hopes the church can be a launchpoint for a future Iowa African American Heritage Trail.

There is a rich history to the church itself, of course, but also the land it sits on, particularly for the Black community. Just two years after the church was built, in 1910, a significant number of Black railroad workers were brought in as strikebreakers to the Waterloo area,

and relegated to 20 square blocks in Waterloo, an area that includes the land the church sits on.

The years after were fraught with ongoing problems in housing, education, employment and systemic racism.

In 1966, Waterloo was subject to protests over race relations between the white and Black communities. Despite being a northern city, Waterloo was unofficially segregated at the time, as 95% of its Black population lived in North Waterloo.

This history is still fresh in the minds of many of Waterloo’s Northside residents, particularly since the issues are still very real today. In 2018, the Cedar Falls-Waterloo area was named by a 24/7 Wall Street report to be the worst place in America for Blacks to live.

These findings and others are what continues to drive the church coalition to be strong ambassadors and advocates for the community. “It really has to be more relationship building,” remarked Gilbert. “People have to start to really build that sense of trust.”

And so, the coalition continues to plan and strategize, alongside the community, on what the Faith Temple/Walnut Street Baptist Church can grow to be. A symbol of hope, a catalyst for change and a place of togetherness. A beacon of light that — with a lot of hard work, listening and understanding — can provide hope and faith for a better, stronger future. **UNI**



Stopping a virus

UNI alum and process chemist **Patrick Fier**, '09, is leading pharma giant Merck's large-scale production efforts on what could be a life-saving breakthrough: **A drug to stop COVID from spreading in people exposed to the virus before they need to go to the hospital.**

The drug — Molnupiravir — received FDA emergency use authorization in December. For those at most risk of developing severe COVID-19, pharmacists can now prescribe one pill twice a day for five days to stop the coronavirus in its tracks — before an exposed, vaccinated or unvaccinated person gets sick enough to require hospitalization. The drug can stop a person who tested positive for COVID from getting sicker. It kills off the SARS-CoV-2 virus by causing errors that prevent the virus from replicating.

Nearly 30 generic drug makers will make a low-cost, generic version of the antiviral pill in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and distribute it to 105 less-developed countries under a deal backed by the United Nations.

"To take [the drug] as a prophylactic could be a huge game-changer, especially as the virus is mutating and potentially escaping immunity," said Fier, 34, a Bettendorf, Iowa native who now lives in Monroe Township, New Jersey, near Merck's headquarters.

The breakthrough science with global life-saving potential represents quite a journey for Fier, who transferred to UNI from Scott Community College. He was recently named one of the nation's top 12 rising stars in chemistry by the American Chemical Society, which called him a "manufacturing magician."

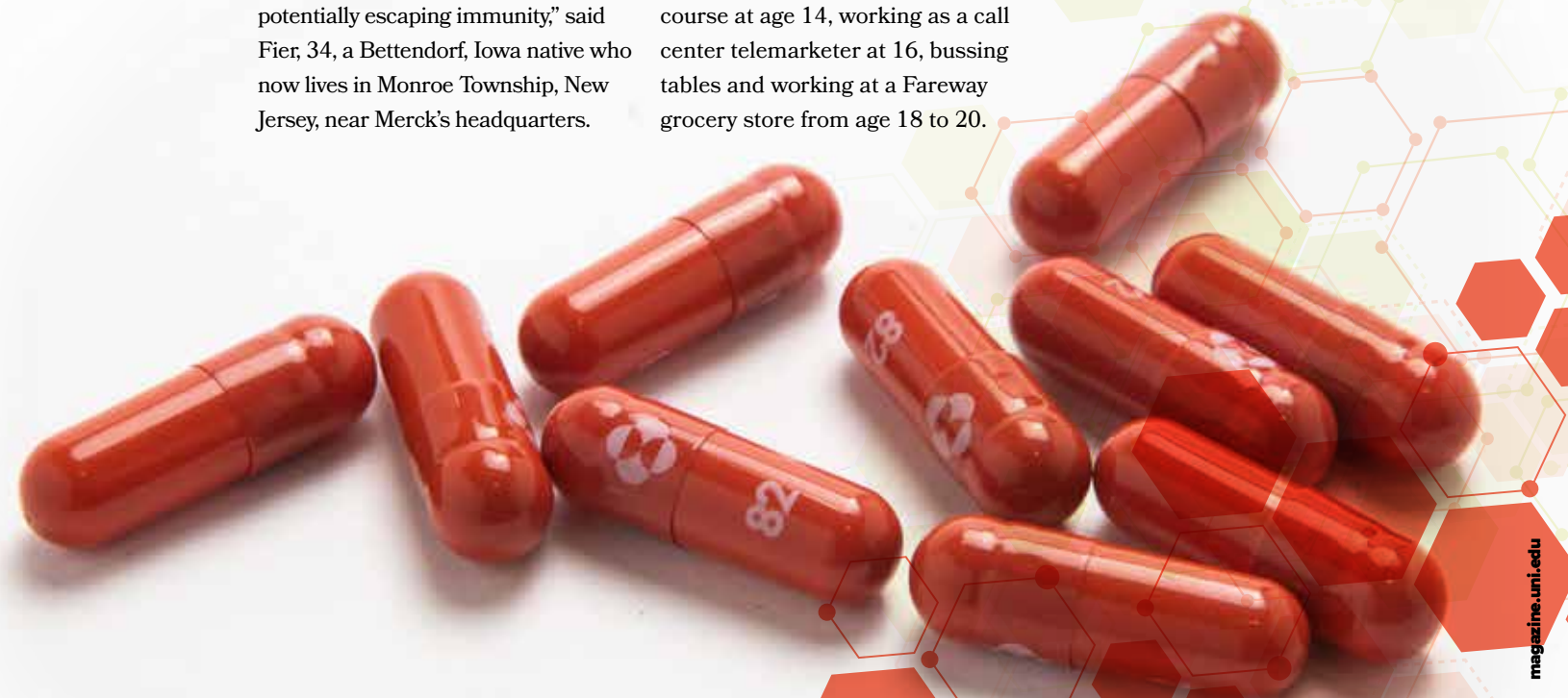
"[His] ability to identify the intersection between what's important and what's achievable is uncanny," Fier's doctoral mentor, John Hartwig, a chemistry professor at the University of California, Berkeley, told Chemical & Engineering (C&E) News. "More chemistry is invented by him on Friday afternoons than by most people all week."

Fier had worked odd jobs since he was a tween, including delivering the Quad City Times newspaper in seventh grade, caddying at a golf course at age 14, working as a call center telemarketer at 16, bussing tables and working at a Fareway grocery store from age 18 to 20.

All the while, Fier maintained his lifelong fascination with how the body works and with solving complex problems. He enjoyed TV shows such as "House" and "Scrubs." So he enrolled at Scott to study pre-med.

When he transferred to UNI, Fier loaded up his schedule with classes in physics, calculus, biology and organic chemistry so he could graduate on time. The UNI organic chemistry class proved transformative. Fier bought his organic chemistry textbook early and started reading it a week before the class started. He read the entire 1,200 pages in two weeks, and ended up tutoring his fellow students in the class.

The textbook opened his eyes to real-life examples and a deeper understanding of the molecular-level details of how medicines work and how they're made.



“I changed my major to chemistry,” said Fier, who graduated with a bachelor’s in chemistry/biochemistry.

Fier credited UNI Professor **Martin Chin** with serving as his mentor, showing him how to conduct lab research and organic chemistry, and encouraging Fier to attend graduate school.

Chin said he noticed Fier’s attention to detail and problem-solving skill early on.

“Pat’s real strength and interest is in organic synthesis,” Chin said. “I have been extremely impressed by Pat’s ability to think of and suggest different synthetic pathways to our target molecule. It [was] not uncommon for us to go back and forth during our discussions to the point of filling a few pages of possible reaction pathways.”

“Pat really loved solving puzzles especially in the synthetic area of making new molecules or improving ways to make existing molecules,” Chin said.

Fier took Chin’s advice, and earned his Ph.D. in organic chemistry at the University of California at Berkeley in December 2014.

Yet Fier found himself once again searching for his niche, since most organic chemistry Ph.D.s want to go into academia. His answer came when he read Merck and other pharma companies’ research — and it resonated.

He figures out the very complex problems he had always dreamed of solving: How do you take simple chemicals and convert them into a drug? Fier comes up with chemical reactions that convert common things into more valuable things.

His expertise proved the perfect answer to the fastest-spreading pandemic of a lifetime.

In June 2020 as COVID-19 spread like wildfire worldwide, Fier led Merck’s high-pressure effort to make Molnupiravir on a large scale — to find a way to produce 500,000 kg each year compared with a typical 500 kg first-run of an active pharmaceutical ingredient when a pharmaceutical company launches a new drug.

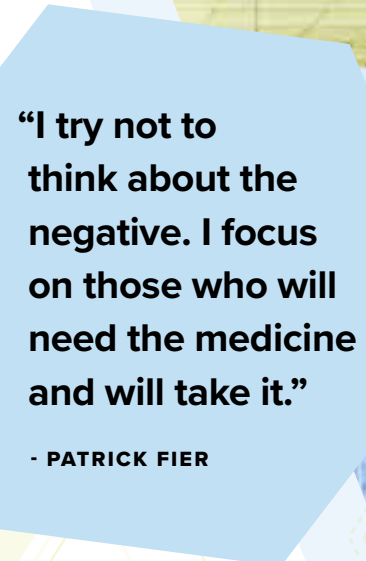
The challenge fit Fier’s strengths perfectly.

As Fier looks back at his UNI experience, he said he appreciates the atmosphere that let students get to know their professors and peers.

And as he steps onto the global stage amid a hugely political issue, he said, “I try not to think about the negative. I focus on those who will need the medicine and will take it.” **UNI**

“I try not to think about the negative. I focus on those who will need the medicine and will take it.”

- PATRICK FIER





Upon arriving as Sioux City's new parks and recreation director in 2014, one of the first projects University of Northern Iowa alum **Matt Salvatore**, '02, tackled was creating a new city park.

But not just any city park. The \$6 million Cone Park is a winter recreational area complete with a 700-foot snow tubing hill and refrigerated ice skating rink, Salvatore said. Now in its fifth year of operation, the park draws families from a 120-mile radius.

Creating "something fun and unique for the community" like Cone Park is part of what drew Salvatore to UNI's Recreation, Tourism and Nonprofit Leadership (RTNL) program. (The program was known until 2020 as the Leisure, Youth and Human Services major.)

Purpose over profits

Recreation, Tourism and Nonprofit Leadership alums make lasting changes to their communities

"I was very fortunate because UNI has one of the best parks and recreation curriculums around," said Salvatore, who'd originally planned to become a teacher. "I figured as a teacher I would wind up spending my summers in some capacity with parks and recreation, so I just thought, 'Why not make a career out of it and work 12 months out of the year doing something I absolutely love doing?'"

"So I was very fortunate to have that education available to me at UNI to fall back on. The classes that I took, the professors that I had" were absolutely invaluable, he said.

Alumni say the program is a hidden gem that has fueled their careers in a diverse array of fields.

"I love working in the nonprofit sector because I'm able to plan events that deepen connections to a global cause," said **Annie Simmons**, '20, event and volunteer coordinator for Blessman International, a Christian nonprofit that works to help families in the Limpopo province of South Africa.

Other RTNL alums are working at nonprofits across the country like the Muscular Dystrophy Association to help improve people's lives.

"Because of my education, I get to serve children in foster care in my community," said **Emma Dill**, '20, development director at Cedar Valley Angels, the Cedar Falls chapter of a national nonprofit.

UNI professor **Kathleen Scholl**, department head for the Department of Health, Recreation and Community Services, which includes

the RTNL program, has literally written the book on leadership in recreation, parks and leisure services — one that is now in its fourth edition.

She says what makes the division unique is its focus on "building the livability of communities" across a range of different disciplines.

"These community and nonprofit agencies are often now on the front lines of providing after-school care, food and nutrition assistance, as well as addressing impacts of homelessness and community emergencies. Our graduates are there leading the way."

— KATHLEEN SCHOLL

"In these changing times, the skills and knowledge we are offering our students are more important than ever. It is exciting and rewarding to see our graduates making a difference in their communities," Scholl said.

The emphasis on community service is a big part of the program's appeal, many alums say. Scholl said the RTNL degree

prepares graduates for leadership, managerial and staff positions in a variety of community, health and human services, and nonprofit settings. A core set of classes culminate in students participating in a required internship.

"RTNL students are actively engaged in learning via group projects, community endeavors and their internship," said professor **Christopher Kowalski**, '07. "We believe this helps prepare them to be successful in a variety of fields and at all levels."

RTNL students are also being prepared for the expanded roles that recreation agencies and nonprofits now provide. In many places, these entities have expanded to fill gaps in America's social service net, facing a variety of new and unique challenges along the way.

"In many parts of the country — both rural and urban — your local park district or library have transformed in recent years to become interconnected wellness hubs and multiservice centers," Scholl said.

"Park and recreation agencies as well as many nonprofit organizations are finding themselves extending their services well beyond community-based recreation programming," Scholl says.

"These community and nonprofit agencies are often now on the front lines of providing after-school care, food and nutrition assistance, as well as addressing impacts of homelessness and community

The five focus areas

1. Community recreation

correlates most strongly to leisure services and programming found in community facilities such as municipal recreation centers and local parks.

2. Tourism

is an important economic driver by making significant contributions to job creation as well as improving the social and cultural livability of a community. This includes managing any potential impacts of tourism.

3. Nonprofit leadership

connects to youth and human services, as many organizations integrate critical community services with philanthropic and governmental agencies.

4. Therapeutic recreation

addresses the needs of individuals with illness or disabling conditions by using recreation and other activities to improve quality of life and well-being.

5. Outdoor recreation

professionals strive to protect our natural and cultural resources while providing sustainable recreation access and outdoor education experiences.



emergencies such as flooding, extreme weather or wildland fire evacuations. Our graduates are there leading the way.”

On the nonprofit leadership side, UNI alumni are working hard to ensure these agencies have the resources they need.

Kari McCann Boutell, ‘11, has had a passion for philanthropy since middle school. After graduating from UNI’s RTNL program, she earned a graduate degree in philanthropic studies from the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy and worked as a director at the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque.

She is now president of the Iowa Council of Foundations, a group of about 70 community, private, family and corporate foundations and grantmakers.

“An accomplishment I’m most proud of is the public policy agenda that we’ve adopted as an organization and the impact we’ve been able to make on the state and federal levels advocating for tax policy and charitable giving incentives,” she said.

UNI alum **Emily Hanson**, ‘13, spent six years as director of the Waterloo Schools Foundation, a nonprofit that serves more than 11,000 students and 1,600 staff in the Waterloo Community School District.

“I think one of the things I’ve been most proud of has been the foundation’s partnership with the district to increase equity, diversity

and inclusion in our schools,” she said. “We’re a minority majority district. Over 40 languages are spoken in Waterloo schools and so being able to offer services and to fund things ... that are going to impact kids all across our district has been really exciting.”

“The great thing about being an RTNL student is your major is so broad it allows you to try out different skills,” she said. “I think sometimes students say, ‘This is what I want to do and I’m not going to try anything else.’ But in reality, that’s where you have some of your most impactful experiences.”

Hanson said as a student she spent a summer interning at a nursing home. It wasn’t something she ever planned to do, but still uses skills she learned that summer in her work, she said.

She is now executive director of the Black Hawk County Gaming Commission, overseeing the distribution of about \$4 million in community grants each year.

Like other RTNL students, Salvatore originally wanted to become a different sort of public servant altogether — a classroom teacher.

“I went to UNI for education, because it has one of the best education curriculums around. I actually changed my major halfway through my junior year,” he said, eventually graduating with a bachelor’s degree in Leisure, Youth and Human Services.

His two paid internships — working with the ground crew at Iowa Cubs

games at Principal Park as well as the assistant to the Des Moines’ parks and recreation director — proved equally invaluable, even if he joked he probably “got five days off that entire summer.”

His university teachers and advisors “encouraged me to do something different (with his internships); to gather different experiences, so I did (just that).” And what valuable experiences they were. “I got very lucky. I couldn’t have gotten where I am today without those educational experiences from UNI.”

It also didn’t hurt that his father, Tony, had worked for 30-plus years as the parks and recreation director in Fort Dodge, Iowa — Salvatore’s hometown.

“I wouldn’t have gone into the field without his influence,” Salvatore said. “By recommending my first summer job, he intentionally started me down my career path.”

After graduation, he worked for roughly 10 years leading the parks and recreation departments at both Sheldon and Ida Grove, Iowa — “I was the custodian, running programs, cutting grass, you name it.”

After serving briefly as the recreation manager in Des Moines, he assumed his present duties in Sioux City, a community of 80,000-plus residents.

UNI’s educational values, the hands-on internships he tackled, and the years spent serving residents in smaller towns “all really helped me get to where I am today,” he said. **UNI**



Industrial Technology Center Modernization project to begin

Construction on the University of Northern Iowa's Industrial Technology Center (ITC) modernization project is expected to start in May. The \$44.8 million project was approved by the Iowa Board of Regents in September.

Designed to better prepare students for Iowa's workforce and provide experiences in engineering technologies, construction and manufacturing, the modernization includes the expansion of new technology-rich classrooms and state-of-the-art labs that will provide needed space for student training and allow for the future development of new programs.

The ITC houses UNI's Department of Applied Engineering and Technical Management, which includes Automation Engineering Technology, Construction Management, Electrical Engineering Technology, Graphic Technology, Manufacturing Engineering Technology, Technology Education, Technology Management and a graduate program.

UNI sees increased freshman class, record-high graduation rates

UNI saw the size of its incoming class of first-year students grow for the second straight year, as well as all-time high graduation rates for its most recent graduating class. This fall's new freshman enrollment increased by 5% over

last year to 1,554 students and increased by 6% over the fall 2019 freshman class. Graduation rates for UNI students are also at record levels and are uniquely strong — nearly 20 percentage points higher than those of similar universities.

UNI Foundation marks second consecutive record fundraising year

For the second consecutive year, the University of Northern Iowa broke its record for highest annual fundraising total in history, raising \$43.1 million.

Total fundraising from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 increased nearly 12% over the previous fiscal year. Success was due in part to record giving from corporations and foundations,

with \$10.7 million of the UNI Foundation's fundraising coming from these organizations. In all, 9,300 alumni and donors gave to support UNI.

"Each gift from the Panther family is making a better student experience and a strong UNI for generations to come," said **Jan Bittner**, outgoing chair of the UNI Foundation Board of Trustees.



Family Business Conference supports Iowa family-owned businesses

In November, the UNI Family Business Center held its first Iowa Family Business Conference in Des Moines — a one-day event designed to connect, educate and provide helpful resources to Iowa family businesses.

More than 130 Iowa family business members from across the state attended breakout sessions led by **Craig Culver**, board chairman for Culver's Restaurants, and **Tom Hubler**, CEO of Hubler for Business

Families, Inc. — who also served as keynote speakers — as well as eight family-owned business experts.

With a mission to strengthen the viability and success of family-owned businesses, the UNI Family Business Center focuses on consulting through education and awareness, offering leadership and skill development, ecosystem building and networking opportunities, and a platform for peer learning.

UNI co-authors federal legislation on educator preparation

A two-year, national effort led by the University of Northern Iowa and three national education organizations resulted in federal legislation introduced in December that creates a future vision for the federal role in educator preparation.

The EDUCATORS for America Act provides for more than \$1 billion in grants to states and institutions focused on forging new pathways for educators and expanding grants and public service loan forgiveness. Woven throughout each section is a focus on equity and the diverse needs of educators.

"This represents a monumental step forward in the effort to grow, retain and diversify our nation's educator workforce," said President **Mark A. Nook**. "With our roots in educator preparation, UNI appreciates the opportunity to help advance national policy to invest in our nation's educators and through them the quality of education our children receive."



Tallgrass Prairie Center establishes native plants along Iowa roadsides

The UNI Tallgrass Prairie Center's work to value and restore tallgrass prairies throughout the state continued last year, with one program distributing enough seed for 1,290 roadside acres.

The TPC's Iowa Roadside Management Program last year distributed enough seed for 40 Iowa counties to plant along

roadsides. The program itself serves 47 counties and 12 city roadside vegetation programs, which create adaptable weed-resistant plant communities to enhance rainfall infiltration, slow runoff, trap sediment, reduce erosion and create habitats for pollinators, birds and other wildlife. For more information visit tallgrassprairiecenter.org.

1950s

'50 Audrey (Guenther) Ercolini, BA, North Sioux City, SD, is enjoying her new apartment complex with a pool, teaching bridge for the last five years at a senior center, reading and watching old movies.

'56 Joann Beardmore Scott, 2 yr Cert., BA '62, Huxley, retired in 1998 after 42 years of teaching and is excited to have a granddaughter attending UNI.

'57 Janet (Pattee) Chu, BA, Boulder, CO, published a book titled “Butterflies of the Colorado Front Range: A Photographic Guide to 100 Species.”

'59 Gus Pappas, BA, Farmington, NM, retired from teaching in 1991 and has been married to Mary Frances (Brackin) Pappas, BA '58, for 61 years.

1960s

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

'65 James Grier, BA, Hawley, MN, was inducted into the Waterloo West High School Academic Hall of Fame 9/10/2021. He is recognized as a foremost expert on the bald eagle.

'67 Linda (Lauck) Shoemith, BA, Bettendorf, is retired and enjoying the senior years with a ukulele club, church and the community. She retired from teaching math at Scott Community College.

'67 Reginald Shoemith, BA, Bettendorf, retired as principal from Davenport Central and was an administrator and teacher at Scott Community College.

1970s

'70 Lyle Luckow, BA, Grimes, is enjoying retirement after more than 32 years as a claims adjuster and litigation specialist and more than nine years as a legal administrator and investigator. Working out, traveling, reading and memories of days at UNI fill his days.

'70 Al Wilke, BA, Odebolt, taught at Odebolt Arthur for nine years and retired from the Swanson Insurance Agency after 40 years. He has been married 53 years and has nine grandchildren.

'71 Steven Ainsworth, BA, MA '75, Pensacola, FL, entered his 51st year of teaching music to students. He is an adjunct professor at Pensacola Christian College.

'71 Dianne Fagner, BA, Des Moines, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Iowa Chapter of the National Association of Social Work in Oct. 2020.

'73 Linda (Wulf) Peeters, BA, Eldridge, retired in May 2012 after teaching special education for 39 years in the Davenport Community Schools.

'74 Scott Moline, BA, Ankeny, was named Iowa State Chairman by the State Funeral for World War II Veterans.

'77 Steve Gogel, BA, Waterloo, retired 12/3/2018 after more than 37 years as an orthopedic physician assistant.

'78 Dick Fridley, BA, Hampton, after serving as a sports writer and photographer for several newspapers he switched to news. He is the regional news editor for The Sheffield Press and The Pioneer Enterprise of Rockwell.

1980s

'80 Sue (Weiss) Green, BA, Cedar Falls, donated a kidney to her cousin 12/7/2020.

'81 Diane (Eichman) Langner, BA, Ankeny, retired as the benefits manager at Des Moines University after more than 25 years in human resources.

'82 Julie (Moeller) Jensen, BA, Marion, retired from educational administration with Grant Wood Area Education Agency in 2019. Her career also included time with Linn Mar schools and the Iowa Department of Education.

'82 Nancy (Koch) Thomas, BA, MA '84, Saint Charles, MO, used her Spanish degree and certification in international commerce to work with many business professionals in Latin America. She is now a professor.

'83 Kirk Anderson, BA, MA '85, Mission Viejo, CA, was named one of the 100 Most Influential People of 2020 by the Orange County Register. He is program administrator for Juvenile Hall School and created the first distance learning model for incarcerated youth in OC during the pandemic.

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

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

'85 Troy Becker, BA, MA '90, MA '00, ASC '08, Cedar Falls, was named the 2021–2022 Northeast District High School Athletic Director of the Year by the Iowa High School Athletic Directors Association.

'85 Dan Fick, BA, Coralville, became the chief medical officer for Hy-Vee 7/9/2021. He also remains a clinical professor of family medicine and part of the provider group for the Executive Health Program at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

'85 Angie (Williams) Looney, BA, Washington, earned an MA in strategic communication from the University of Iowa in May 2020.

'85 Brenda (Peterson) Neville, BA, Cambridge, was appointed to the Board of Directors of the American Transportation Research Institute. She is the president and CEO of the Iowa Motor Truck Association.

'85 Susie (McIntee) Schwieger, MA, Waterloo, retired from UNI in Aug. 2021. She worked in career services for 18 years and was the director of graduate student life from 2007–2021.

'85 Ruth Watkins, BA, Salt Lake City, UT, is president of Strada Impact.

'87 Lynette Phyfe, BA, MA '91, Winnipeg, MB, after serving as the interim director of the University of Manitoba's distance education program for three years, she transferred to the department of social work as faculty and curriculum development specialist.

'89 Brett Baker, BA, Fulton, MD, was appointed as the inspector general of the US

National Archives and Records Administration on 8/2/2021.

'89 Brian Becker, BA, Cedar Rapids, was named successor for the role of managing partner & CEO with RSM US LLP effective 8/31/2022.

'89 Ann Berns, BA, Prairie Du Chien, WI, received the 2020 Distinguished French Teacher of the Year award from the American Association of French Teachers in Wisconsin and the Teacher Merit Award from the Wisconsin Association of Foreign Language Teachers in 2017.

1990s

'90 Sherri (Van Wyhe) Behrendt, BA, Boone, was president, CEO and owner of Vantec, Inc. She sold the company to Angstrom Automotive Group will remain managing director of Vantec and VP of sales for Angstrom Automotive Group.

'90 Sarah Robinson, BM, Bloomington, IN, earned a doctorate degree in music education from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University Dec. 2019.

'91 Stacey (Clark) Eggleston, BA, Chandler, AZ, is senior vice president of client excellence with AccessHope.

'92 Chad Butterfield, BA, Shawnee, KS, is chief executive officer for the Greene County Medical Center.

'92 Korina (Dolen) Carlson, BA, MA '99, La Porte City, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a 10–12th grade Spanish teacher at Union High School.

'93 Aimee (Weld) Hospodarsky, BA, Monticello, was named the 2021 School Counselor of the Year by the Iowa School Counselor Association. She represented the state at a nationwide virtual gala.

'93 Brent Scogland, BA, Bettendorf, credits his production management degree for his success as a realtor and has been named one of the Top five Favorite Realtors in the Quad Cities for eight years.

'93 Kenton Swartley, MA, Cedar Falls, was named the 2021 NE Iowa STEM Teacher of the year. He is the community partnerships and STEM facilitator for the Cedar Falls Schools.

'93 Darin Wipperman, BA, MA '95, Lancaster, NH, published a book titled “First for the Union: Life and Death in a Civil War Army Corps from Antietam to Gettysburg.”

'94 Noreen (Colbeck) Bush, BA, Cedar Rapids, was named the 2021–2022 Iowa Superintendent of the Year by the School Administrators of Iowa.

'94 Rob Houlihan, BA, Cedar Falls, is director of network engineering at Ting Internet.

'94 Shannon Risk, BA, Niagara Falls, NY, is the chair of the department of history at Niagara University and was inducted into the New York Academy of History in 2018.

'94 JC Sanford, BA, Northfield, MN, released his new CD “Imminent Standards Trio, Vol. I” on 7/23/2021.

'94 Jeffrey Weekley, BA, Marina, CA, leads the Research IT team at UC Santa Cruz, where he is also pursuing a PhD in engineering.

'96 Tatum (Teut) Buse, BA, MBA '01, Marion, was named one of the 2021 Women of Influence by the Corridor Business Journal. She is the chief financial officer at Collins Aerospace.

'96 Scott Doherty, BA, Irvington, AL, was interviewed by the trade magazine The Locksmith Ledger International about how his experience as a locksmith helped him as a podiatric surgeon.

'96 Amy (Slickers) McGovern, BA, Waterloo, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a talented and gifted teacher at Lou Henry and Lowell Elementary Schools.

'97 Jason Knittel, BA, MA '04, ASC '14, EdD '19, Dysart, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. He is a 9–10th grade history teacher at East High School, Waterloo.

'97 Jennifer (Cameron) Paulsen, MA, Cedar Falls, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the Iowa Council of Teachers of English. She is a teacher at Holmes Junior High.

'97 Nicole (Lux) Roder, BA, Rock Valley, earned a masters degree in educational leadership from Viterbo University and is the middle school/high school principal at Rock Valley Schools.

'97 Shane Zimmerman, BA, Urbandale, is president and CEO of Two Rivers Bank & Trust.

'98 Jake Lundgren, BA, Polk City, was promoted to chief operating officer with Knapp Properties.

'98 Greg Sadler, BA, Newalla, OK, was a candidate for the Oklahoma Senate District 17.

'99 Rebecca (Helm) Wilson, BA, Clive, was named the 2021 Iowa STEM Teacher of the Year for the South Central Region.

'99 Megan (Donahue) Youngkent, BA, Cedar Falls, received the 2021 Golden Plaque Award for Distinguished Coaching Golf from the Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union.

2000s

'01 BJ McGinn, BA, Boone, was named 2021 Athletic Director of the Year by the

National Junior College Athletic Association. He is the athletic director at DMACC.

'01 Sammy Spann, MA, Toledo, OH, received the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Judith Herb College of Education at the University of Toledo. He is the associate vice president and dean of students at the University of Toledo.

'02 Jason Buhrow, BA, Norwalk, was named chief data officer for Hy-Vee.

'02 Brian Flynn, BA, Pleasant Hill, was promoted to area sales manager for Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska with Motorola Solutions.

'02 Amy (Johnson) Luck, BA, Perrysburg, OH, was promoted to partner with RCO Law.

'02 Angela Wittmer, BA, Cedar Falls, was named the 2020 Iowa Middle School Counselor of the Year. She is a school counselor at Holmes Junior High.

'02 Stacey (Tschantz) Yoder, BA, Hudson, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a 7th and 9th grade math teacher at Holmes Jr. High in Cedar Falls.

'03 Steve Bruere, BA, Norwalk, received the 2020 Industry Impact Award from the Iowa Commercial Real Estate Association.

'03 Jane (Kelly) Cline, BA, Waverly, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for

Outstanding Teaching. She is a 2nd grade teacher at North Cedar Elementary, Cedar Falls.

'03 Jesse Henderson, BA, MA '06, Waterloo, is nearing completion of a double master's degree in public policy.

'03 Chris McGahan, BA, Los Angeles, CA, is a spokesmodel for Comfort Republic.

'03 Marcus Pitts, BA, Ankeny, received the 2020 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Association's awards for Deal of the Year over \$35 Million and Broker of the Year.

'03 Guy Sims, EdD, Philadelphia, PA, was appointed chief diversity and inclusion officer of The Free Library of Philadelphia 12/14/2020.

'04 Kevin Kann, BA, MA '13, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. He is the Iowa development director for the American Cancer Society.

'04 Justin Lossner, BA, Norwalk, received the 2020 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Association's award for Deal of the Year over \$35 million.

'04 Michelle Nielsen Ott, BA, Peoria, IL, received a number of accolades in 2021: ATHENA Young Professionals Award, 40 Leaders Under 40, 25 Women in Leadership Award and the

Community Leader Award. She is an assistant professor and librarian at Bradley University as of 11/30/2021.

'04 Jaimen Pangborn, BA, Cedar Rapids, was named one of the Corridor Business Journal's 40 under 40 for 2021. She is the director of program development with the Zach Johnson Foundation.

'04 Ashley (Atherton) Thompson, BA, UNK '04, Ames, was featured as the cover story in the May 2020 issue of Business Record Iowa as part of their Rural Health and Healthcare Issue. She is the system director of government and external affairs for UnityPoint Health.

'04 Brandon Wood, BA, Chandler, AZ, is a business development manager with CareVet.

'04 Jesse Wozniak, BA, Pittsburgh, PA, published a book titled "Policing Iraq: Legitimacy, Democracy and Empire in a Developing State."

'05 Shay (Forsyth) Caley, BA, Denver, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. She is vice president retail market manager for Denver Savings Bank.

'05 Ryan McGeough, BA, MA '07, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/

Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. He is the department head of Communication and Media at UNI.

'05 Bryce Paulson, BA, Robins, is vice president of technology at Aflac, Premier life, Absence & Disability Solutions.

'05 Brandon Schoborg, BS, Hudson, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. He is executive vice president with Cardinal Construction.

'06 Jennie Morton, BA, MA '08, Cedar Rapids, celebrated five years as owner of Herringbone Freelance, which specializes in marketing for engineering and tech firms.

'07 Belinda (Martinez) Batang Esguerra, MPP, San Mateo, Philippines, started a new online learning program on family ministry and is studying to improve relationships with others.

'07 Pam (Davey) Bellows, BA, Parkersburg, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a 4th grade teacher at Aldrich Elementary, Cedar Falls.

'07 James Cory, MBA, Wheeling, IL, was promoted to vice president of operations with Pangea Money Transfer.

'07 Drew Lietzow, BA, West Des Moines, was promoted within executive

communications at Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

'07 Bryn Lowe, BA, Los Angeles, CA, was promoted to associate at CO Architects.

'08 Jay Hardinger, BA, Midvale, UT, is a commercial/small business loan underwriter with Zions Bank.

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

'08 Eric Hrubes, BA, MA '10, Cedar Rapids, was promoted to director of partnerships at CLC under Learfield IMG College.

'08 Becky White, BA, Cedar Rapids, is excited to have son Cameron attend UNI in 2021.

'09 Melissa (Kilfoy) Anderson, BA, Lakewood Ranch, FL, is leading Medtronic's medical surgical division supply chain team.

'09 Nola (Aigner) Davis, BA, MA '11, Ankeny, was named one of the 40 under 40 by the Des Moines Business Record for 2021. She is the public health communications officer for the Polk County Health Department.

'09 Molly Hanson, BA, Des Moines, was named one of the 40 under 40 by the Des Moines

Business Record for 2021. She is the conservation and community outreach specialist with RDG Planning & Design.

'09 Deric Manrique, BA, New York, NY, was promoted to vice president of premium sales with New York Islanders & Elevate Sports Ventures.

'09 Kimberly (Fleming) Mayer, BA, Saint Ansgar, earned a masters in teaching from Morningside College and is in her 11th year of teaching.

'09 Krystal (Campbell) Mikkilineni, BA, Clive, was recognized by M&A Advisor as an Emerging Leader for 2021, named one of the five 2021 Rising Star Semi Finalists by the International Women's Insolvency and Restructuring Confederation and named to the 2021 Class of the American Bankruptcy Institute's 40 under 40 program. She is an attorney with Bradshaw, Fowler, Proctor, & Fairgrave, P.C.

'09 Hanna (Mayhew) Thuesen, BA, Cedar Falls, was named the 2021 Iowa Outstanding Elementary Art Educator of the Year by Art Educators of Iowa. She teaches at Southdale Elementary School.

'09 Michelle Yoshimura Smith, BM, Des Moines, was named one of the 40 under 40 by the Des Moines Business Record for 2021. She is a vice president and business initiatives consultant with Wells Fargo.

2010s

'10 Yulia Dannen, BA, Chapin, received the 2021 Deb Dalziel Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award from the Iowa Small Business Development Center.

'10 Shaun Juan, MA, San Diego, CA, won awards at the 2019 and 2020 Indica in High Times Cannabis Cup Oregon with Deschutes Growery.

'10 Amanda (Firman) Lynch, BA, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. She is the director of fortified life with Western Home Communities.

'10 Lydia (Van Der Beek) Zerby, BA, Ames, is the consumer insights and engagement manager with the Iowa Soybean Association and leads the Iowa Food & Family Project.

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

'11 Johannah (McCammant) Nanke, BA, Waterloo, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a 9th and 11th grade English teacher at West High School.

'11 Andy Steichen, BA, Gretna, NE, was promoted to vice president of sales with McKesson.

***11 Kristine (Reeves) Thompson, BA**, West Des Moines, was named one of the 40 under 40 by the Des Moines Business Record for 2021. She is the director of marketing with the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

***12 Dalton Boettcher, BA, MACC *13**, St Louis Park, MN, was promoted to financial director for accounting policy with Allianz Life Insurance Company.

***12 Scott Breon, BA**, Sunnyvale, CA, was promoted to finance manager of deal analysis at YouTube and focuses on content deals with the music industry.

***12 Alex Davey, BA, MA *16**, Byron, GA, is an environmental health specialist III with the Houston County Health Department.

***12 Joshua Engelken, BA**, Des Moines, received his second Des Moines Register Star Award for professionalism in journalism in March 2021.

***12 Reilly (Zlab) Martin, BA**, West Linn, OR, is the US program manager for Open Contracting Partnership.

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

***13 Adriana (Hofstadter) Yarrington, BA**, Warren, MI, is

the Families Together Building Solutions pathways to potential supervisor with Orchards Children's Services.

***14 Becca Baldwin, BA**, Arvada, CO, is a global proposal writer with Janus Henderson Investors US.

***14 Austin Hedstrom, BA**, Ankeny, received the 2020 Iowa Commercial Real Estate Association's award for Deal of the Year over \$35 million.

***14 Sheila Hollingsworth, MA**, Waterloo, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a 1st grade teacher at Irving Elementary.

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

***14 Emily (Rollman) Perry, BA**, Alleman, is the graphic artist for NorthPoint church in Johnston.

***14 Tyler Perry, BA**, Alleman, is the family services coordinator for Des Moines Habitat for Humanity.

***15 Margo (Sturges) Kockler, BA**, Clear Lake, is a marketing coordinator for Hot Spring Spas of Iowa and Minnesota.

***15 Paul Ochoa, BA**, San Antonio, TX, works for IBC Bank but is still focused on breaking into news media.

***15 Tirzah Roussell, BA**, Delhi, is a law associate with Bradshaw, Fowler, Proctor &

Fairgrave, P.C. and practices on the Bankruptcy and Reorganization Practice Group.

***15 Emilio Sanchez, BA**, Chicago, IL, is an account executive with McGarry Bowen.

***15 Dan Swift, BA**, West Des Moines, was promoted to director of investments at LCS Real Estate.

***15 Andrea Thoene, BA**, Ankeny, earned her MBA from Drake University 12/12/2020 and is manager of marketing with Landus Cooperative.

***15 Alyssa Turcsak, BA**, Lansing, MI, is the fundraising coordinator at Constellation Cat Cafe.

***16 Tessa Bratrud, BA**, Mason City, was promoted to social media coordinator for the state with MercyOne System Office.

***16 Tim Ferry, BA**, Austin, TX, is a piano teacher and owner/operator of Never Board Games LLC, an independent board game publishing company.

***16 Brianna Lewerke, BA**, Minneapolis, MN, is the social media content lead for Locker Room at Betty Labs.

***16 Brandon Schiltz, BA**, Cedar Rapids, was promoted to supply base manager at John Deere.

***16 Jake Westpfahl, BA**, Waterloo, is an adjunct instructor at UNI, Hawkeye Community College and Wartburg College.

***17 Hannah Burds, BA**, Bellevue, is the marketing project manager at Mi T M in Peosta.

***17 Emma (Swensen) Ferry, BA**, Austin, TX, is a digital account manager with ATD Partners and manages local band, Hudson Road.

***17 James Gibbons, BA**, Muscatine, celebrated 10 years of sobriety on 10/10/2020.

***17 Cassie (Evers) Grimsman, BA**, Kansas City, MO, is a talent acquisition and onboarding partner at ValueHealth.

***17 Seth Hersom, BA**, Laurens, is on the economic & valuation group at KPMG.

***17 Ryan Kramer, BA**, Waterloo, is a material replenishment specialist with John Deere.

***17 Kelly Noltner, MM**, Cedar Falls, performed the role of Chrysothemis in "Elektra" by Strauss with Dramatic Voices Program Berlin in the Summer 2021 virtual program.

***17 Brandon Qualley, BA**, Des Moines, was promoted to assurance senior associate at EY.

***17 Emily (Vander Werff) Scholten, BA**, Pella, is a product specialist on the marketing team at Pella Corporation.

***17 Jordan Voorhees, BA**, West Des Moines, is the impact people coordinator with CliftonLarsenAllen, overseeing

campus recruitment, on boarding and employee relations for offices in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines.

***17 Kailey Wilson, BA**, Polk City, got engaged to Chad Gilmer *17.

***18 Kayla Beck, BA**, Manly, is an environmental specialist with Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

***18 Eugene Cheok, BA**, Mont Kiara, Malaysia, is co founder and head of operations of MercuryPay.

***18 Renae Drey, BA**, Cedar Falls, received the 2021 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a 1st – 2nd grade teacher at St. Patrick's Catholic School.

***18 Zak Jenn, BA**, Waverly, is a sales representative with AgencyBloc and realtor with Vine Valley Real Estate.

***18 Dirk Johnston, BA**, Des Moines, received his Certified Financial Planner designation Dec. 2020 and is now a financial advisor with Legacy Financial Group.

***18 Megan Petersen, BA**, Des Moines, is a marketing and communications assistant for Wright Service Corp.

***18 Zach Robles, BA**, Northfield, OH, is associate territory manager at Coloplast Interventional Urology.

***18 Christopher Tims, MA**, Waterloo, was named one of

the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. He is a teacher and head wrestling coach at Waterloo East High School.

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

***18 Jamal White, BA**, Boston, MA, is senior human resources business partner for Global Gillette and North America Equality & Inclusion for Procter & Gamble Company.

***18 Griffin Williams, BA**, Dubuque, is a data integration developer at Flexsteel Industries.

***19 Nicole Auel, BA**, West Des Moines, was promoted to operations manager for Pet Parents in Ankeny.

***19 DaQuan Campbell, BA**, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2021. He is the We Arose Co-op founder and Waterloo Urban Farmers Market manager.

***19 Damon DeGraw, BA**, Oelwein, enjoyed some exciting trips after graduation. He earned his commercial insurance license in 2020 and is with Federated Insurance.

***19 Zum Gwamna, BA**, Ankeny, is the campus talent acquisition specialist with Pella Corporation.

***19 Dustin Hager, BA**, Cedar Rapids, is a technology solutions associate with RSM US LLC.

***19 Melissa (Black) Louck, BA**, Eldridge, was promoted to NetSuite business applications senior associate with RSM US LLP.

***19 Johnny See, BA**, Mount Vernon, is an analyst with Prairie Capital Advisors.

***19 Ben Vaske, BA**, North Liberty, is senior supervisor of manufacturing and operations at Collins Aerospace.

2020s

***20 Danielle Anderson, BA**, West Des Moines, is a talent acquisition specialist with WorldWide Logistics.

***20 Keegan Crawford, BA**, Waterloo, is a treasury management officer at Banklwa.

***20 Justin Dahl, BA**, Milwaukee, WI, is a digital analyst with BVK, an agency specializing in healthcare, education and tourism.

***20 Stef Graser, BA**, Milwaukee, WI, is an associate product manager with FIS Global.

***20 Katelyn Kramer, BA**, Peosta, is a tax associate in the RSM Dubuque office.

***20 Branden Lewerke, BA**, Mason City, started a remote position with Cameo as a lifecycle marketing associate.

***20 Maya Magaraci, BA**, Ventura, CA, was promoted to paid social lead with Liliko'i Agency.

***20 Jesse Meyer, BA**, Cedar Falls, was named the 2020 Civilian Employee of the Year for the Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office.

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

***20 Ryan Vogel, BA, MACC *21**, West Des Moines, is a member of the FSO assurance staff at Ernst & Young.

***21 Katie Christensen, MA**, Denison, was named the 2021 Iowa Outstanding Middle School Art Educator of the Year by Art Educators of Iowa.

***21 Mike Lim, BA**, Cedar Falls, is an informational technology specialist in the health and medical industry.

***21 Miranda Stambaugh, BA**, Northwood, is a graphic and web design administrator at First Citizens Bank in Mason City.

Marriages

'07 Carissa (Stout) Dreier, BM, married Derek Dreier 7/4/2020.

'09 Kimberly (Fleming) Mayer, BA, married Casey Mayer in Aug. 2020.

'11 Maria (Zeller) Edwards, BA, married Josh Edwards 3/21/2020.

'11 Alissa (Riegler) Watkins, BA, married Tyler Watkins on 6/26/2021.

'12 Samuel Evans, BA, married **RaeAnn Swanson Evans, BA '13, MA '15,** in June 2017.

'14 Tyler Perry, BA, married **Emily (Rollman) Perry, BA '14,** in May 2014.

'15 Tanner Kockler, BA, married **Margo (Sturges) Kockler, BA '15,** 11/2/2019.

'15 Paul Ochoa, BA, married Alyssa (De La O) Ochoa on 11/30/2019.

'15 Aaron Ottmar, BM, married **Alyssa (Adamec) Ottmar, BA '16, BM '16,** on 6/13/2020.

'16 Tim Ferry, BA, married **Emma (Swensen) Ferry, BA '17,** on 6/10/2017.

'16 Erin (Mulder) Hodge, BA, married Ayden Hodge on 6/20/2020.

'17 Jenna (Ryan) Letsch, BA, married **Nick Letsch, BA '17,** on 4/12/2018.

'17 Emily (Vander Werff) Scholten, BA, married Andrew Scholten in 2020.

'19 Elizabeth (Burgmeier) Goedken, BA, married **Matt Goedken, BS '20,** in Aug. 2020.

Births

'09 Kelly (Campbell) Dunbar, BA, and Stacey Dunbar, Cedar Falls, son Emery Lane born Dec. 2020 and joined siblings Lakelyn and Luka.

'09 Megan (Cook) Jahnke, BA, and Jordan Jahnke, Burt, daughter Sophie born March 2021.

'10 Delwyn Borntreger, BA, and **Sarah (Becker) Borntreger, BA '15,** Hiawatha, son Carter James born 1/15/2020.

'10 Sadie (Bajet) Hruby, BA, and **Rob Hruby, BA '11, MA '20, ASC '20,** Tiffin, son Solomon born in 2017 and daughter Naomi in 2020.

'12 Samuel Evans, BA, and **RaeAnn Swanson Evans, BA '13, MA '15,** Tiffin, son Martin Leroy Evans born Aug. 2018.

'12 Ryan Murphy, BA, and Kourtney Murphy, Council Bluffs, son Jonathan Murphy adopted June 2021.

'13 Nicole (Combs) Lehman, BA, MA '15, and Joshua Lehman, Waverly, daughter Hadley Sophia Lehman born 1/30/2021.

'13 Melissa (Mogan) Vining, BM, and Kyle Vining, Jamaica Plain, MA, daughter Julia born Dec. 2020.

'14 Tyler Perry, BA, and **Emily (Rollman) Perry, BA '14,** Alleman, welcomed children Naomi (2016), Eli (2018) and Valor (2019).

'17 Nick Letsch, BA, and **Jenna (Ryan) Letsch, BA '17,** Littleton, CO, daughter Caroline Grace born 1/24/2020.

Deaths

'49 Lewis Boeck, BA, died 11/4/2020 in Cedar Falls.

'51 DeWaine Silker, BA, died 11/4/2020 in LaCrosse, WI.

'52 Harold Burshtan, BA, died 10/13/2020 in Wheaton, IL.

'53 Gordon Henry, BA, died 11/12/2020 in Newberry, SC.

'59 Susan Rock, BA, MA '62, died 11/14/2021 in Washington Island, WI.

'62 Keith Larson, BA, died 4/9/2020 in Northfield, MN.

'62 Bonnie (Debower) McKean, BA, died 1/20/2021 in Bonita Springs, FL.

'69 Donn Schafer, BA, MA '90, died 11/3/2020 in Charles City.

'70 Duane Schaefer, BA, died 1/30/2021 in North English.

'71 Beth (Luchtenburg) Bunger, BA, died 3/2/2021 in Casa Grande, AZ.

'71 Diana (Wicks) Johnson, BA, died 9/26/2020 in Zearing.

'79 Monica Haag, BA, died 10/16/2020 in Waterloo.

'79 Karen (Stoever) Hansen, BA, died 8/27/2020 in Buckeye, AZ.

'92 James Smith, BA, died 4/9/2021 in Independence.

Panther Football loses two longtime leaders

Don Erusha, died 8/3/21. Erusha came to the State College of Iowa in 1963 as an associate professor of physical education and as an assistant football coach under Stan Sheriff. He retired from coaching at UNI in 1977 but has continued to assist UNI football in various volunteer capacities.

Dennis "Denny" Rimmert, '60, '66, died 2/15/20. Rimmert returned to his alma mater as an assistant football coach in 1964 and continued through 1988. He continued his work at UNI as an associate professor in what is now the Department of Kinesiology.



Alumni Board

FRONT ROW: Connie Peters, '73; Kevin Mote, '87; Kay Smith, '70, '77; and Drew Conrad, '93.

BACK ROW: Michele Haupt, '83; Doug Whittle, '73; Laurie Krumm, '83; Eric Hackman, '12; Dylan Keller, '14, '16; Jerry Harris, '89; Dustin Toale, '16; Joe Murphy, '06; Debora Blume, '94; Kevin Saville, '87.

NOT PICTURED: Vernon Avant, '78; Renae Billings, '05; Courtney Chabot Dreyer, '94; Victoria Crouse, '07; Jerry Glazier, '77; Elizabeth Hackbarth, '08, '11; Ben Hammes, '08; Steven Jackson, '96; Jason Lau, '99; Beth Primrose, '66; Coree Smith, '98; Therese Stevens, '12; and Bryant Wallace, '96.



2021 Distinguished Awards Recipients

FRONT ROW: Hon. Joan L. Larsen, '90, Alumni Achievement Award; Carol, '53, and Robert (not pictured) Deppe, '53, Purple and Gold Award; Joanne and Lane Reeves, Honorary Alumni Award

BACK ROW: UNI President Mark A. Nook; Megan Stull, '08, Alumni Service Award; Skylar Mayberry-Mayes, '12, Young Alumnus Award; Jeff Scudder, '03, Emerging Philanthropist Award; Gallagher Family Foundation, E.J. Gallagher III, president, Corporation & Foundation Award

NOT PICTURED: Angeleita Floyd and Scott Cawelti, '65, '68, Faculty and Staff Award



University of Northern Iowa

Alumni Association

205 Commons / Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0284

#PurpleForLife

For more information on planning visit uni.planmylegacy.org to find a library of resources including:

- + Estate planning starters
- + A guide to making your will
- + Information on charitable gift annuities and other income gifts
- + Ways to donate real estate
- + What to do in the first 48 hours after you lose a loved one
- + Making the most of your retirement assets

For more information on how you can make plans to support UNI contact:

JANE HALVERSON

Senior Director of Gift & Legacy Planning
jane.halverson@uni.edu
319-273-4665
uni.planmylegacy.org

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- + Can be changed as needed
- + Allows you to be far more generous than you thought possible
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