

*Honors Program Graduation Ceremony Spring 2020 – Congratulations to all students, family, parents, and friends.*

Dear Honors Program Faculty, HP Mentors and Community: **Honoring Joseph Schwartz and Gia Zhuang as Outstanding UCCS Honors Program Portfolio Awards Spring 2020.**

Thank you for helping us since 2007 when the Honors Program (HP) started at UCCS. Today HP is launching our **first Outstanding UCCS Honors Program Portfolio awards.**

UCCS Honors Program (HP) portfolio concept has always been there since its inception (2007), yet in 2016 HP-faculty decided that UCCS Honors Program will have their own portfolio focussed on Gray Matter and Complex Systems, and the concept has been developed since then slowly for almost four years. HP faculty has worked together with the UCCS Kraemer Family Library to create an opportunity for our students -- that of creating a digital collection which will provide longevity to these portfolio-ideas -- and serve as many samples of Gray Matters for the future to come. Thank you to HP Faculty, Mentors and Community. I wanted to specially thank Ms. Mary Rupp who came to me after one of those CUE meetings almost two years ago, and simply mentioned/asked: have you considered digital collection in the Library for your portfolios? Thus paving this path.

*When I will be asked why two outstanding awards this year -- one is barely at most 6 pages and other one is roaring 60 densely packed pages? I will tell you that that is what we are focussed on -- there are no reasonable page limits for Gray Matters as Complex Systems. One is short stories of exquisite (futuristic) kind with unexpected events happening directly playing delicately with your mind and heart. The other outstanding work is a very difficult analysis of Khot's conjecture, an important P vs NP deftly organized as pearls of wisdom simplified in easy to understand precise writing for us to understand. One generates complexity and unexpected emergence, the other simplifies complexity and represents outstanding understanding of complex material.*

Congratulations Gia and Joseph. Normally we will celebrate your success during HP-Graduation ceremony which was scheduled for April 17th -- today it is *only* online --- still it feels the same -- outstanding! Thank you.

In continuing the celebration of all students who are candidates for UCCS Honors Program graduation, we invited all students to submit Spotlights. This document contains all spotlights which were submitted to us.

Congratulations to all UCCS Honors Program students who are graduating. Their names and sample of certificated which will be issued to them for completing their HP curriculum requirements are attached.

We wish all of you the best!

*UCCS Honors Program Faculty, Staff, Portfolio Mentors.*

ML = Mountain Lion U= University

4-23-2020

**Honors Program Graduates Spring, 2020**

*That turned in their intent to graduate form*

**They are:**

**Jessica Asuquo**

Biomedical Sciences, Pre-Medicine

LAS

U

**Jessica Battin**

Biomedical Sciences

LAS

U

**Caitlyn DelMonico**

Finance

College of Business

U

**Eric Scott Eisaman**

History, Secondary Teaching

LAS

U

**Selana Gallegros**

Nursing

Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences

U

**Naomi Hayner**

Inclusive Elementary Education

College of Education

U

**Samantha Hee**

Marketing

College of Business

ML

**Spencer Baron Hoover**

Bachelor of Science in Chemistry

LAS

U

**Autumn Keefe**

Nursing

Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences

U

**Justin Leo**

Computer Engineering

Engineering and Applied Science

U

**Alison Lloyd**

Sport Management

Minor- Marketing and Management

College of Business

ML

**Joslyn Skye Meek**

Biology (Biomedical Sciences)

LAS

ML

**Rachelle Ono**

Nursing

Minor- Leadership Studies

Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences

ML

**Kelly Parrish**

Bachelor of Innovation: Inclusive Early Childhood Education

College of Education

U

**Emma Pauls**

Physics

LAS

ML

**Daniel Rivera**

Computer Science

Minor- Math

Engineering and Applied Science

ML

**Shealy Salas**

Exercise Science - Pre-Physical Therapy Track

Minor- Psychology

Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences

ML

**Jenna Schaffert**

Biology

LAS

ML

**Katie Schumacher**

Dual Emphasis in Sport Management and Marketing

Minor- Sports Communication

College of Business

ML

**Elizabeth Schmidt**

Psychology and Visual & Performing Arts

LAS

ML

**Joseph Schwartze**

English Secondary Education

LAS

U

**Zoey Marie Stealey**

Biomedical Sciences

LAS

ML

**Courtney Paige Stears**

Biomedical Science

Minor- Biochemistry

LAS

ML

**Stephanie Thompson**

Biology

LAS

ML

**Amanda Turmes**

Mechanical Engineering

Engineering and Applied Science

ML

**Brianna Vetter**

Electrical Engineering

Engineering and Applied Science

ML

**Kelsey Weatherford**

Business Management and Finance

Business

ML

**Madison Marie Zainhofsky**

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

Engineering and Applied Science

ML

**Gia Zhuang**

Computer Science

Engineering and Applied Science

U

# *Certificate of Completion*

For the successful completion of all program requirements, including the study of Gray Matters and Complex Systems

*Student Name Here*

## UCCS UNIVERSITY HONORS GRADUATE

**Academic Excellence, Campus Engagement, Building a Sustainable Community**

---

Dr. Semwal Sudhanshu, Program Director

---

Dr. Robert Sackett, Honors Program  
Distinguished Professor and Advisor



---

Dr. Joseph Kuzma, Associate Director

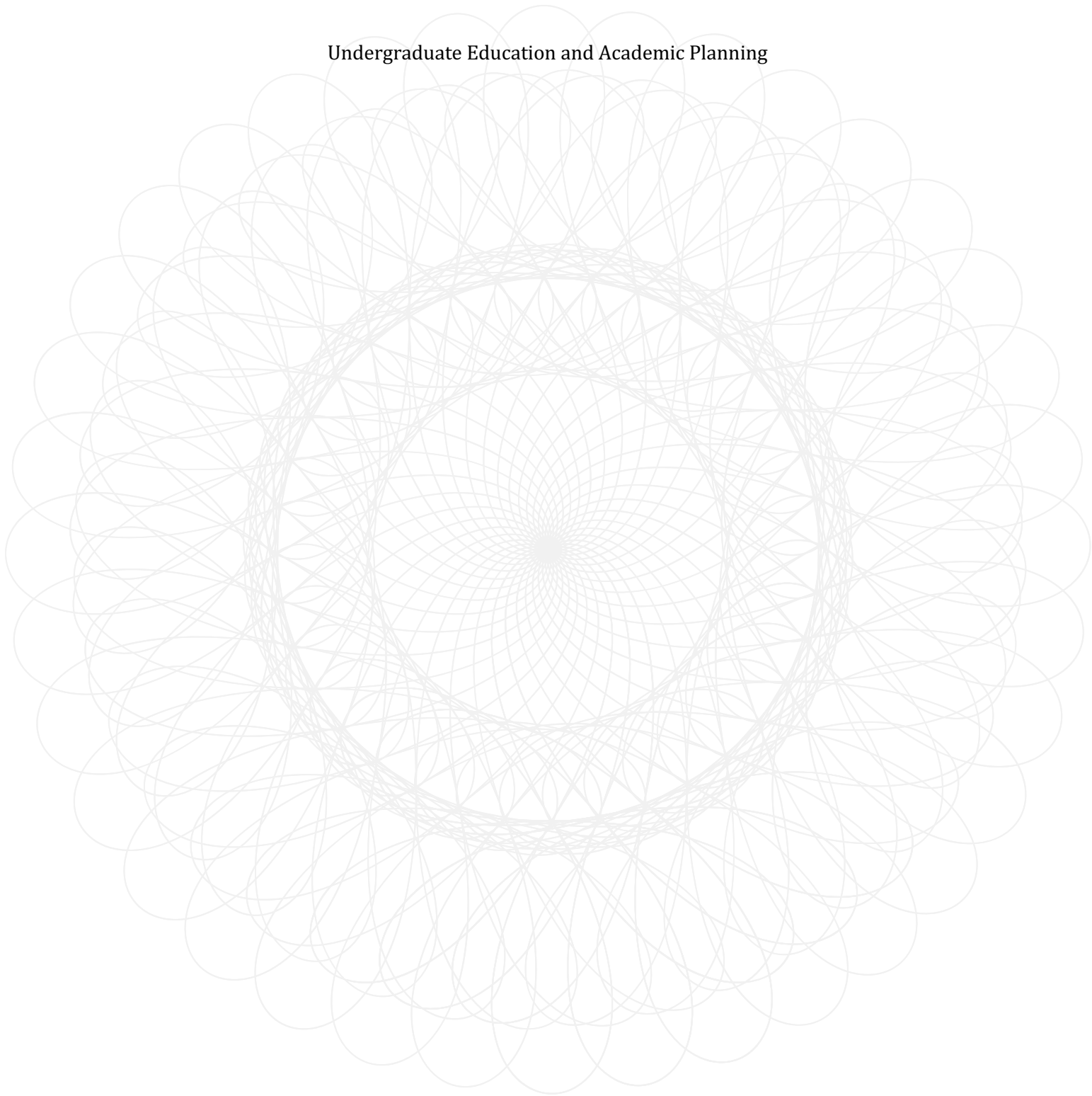
---

Ms. Carol Pina, Program Assistant

---

Dr. Susan B. Taylor, Associate Vice Chancellor for

## Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning



### Autumn Keefe -- Honors Program Spotlight Oct 9, 2018

My name is Autumn Keefe and I am currently in my junior year here at UCCS. I am in the nursing program working towards obtaining my bachelor's degree in nursing. I was born and raised in Colorado until I was 9 years old, at which point I moved to Minnesota and stayed there until returning here for college. I am the oldest of three siblings, with a fraternal twin sister and a younger brother. I enjoy going outside and exploring new places with my friends. I also love scary movies and haunted houses... basically all the things scary.

### What fascinates Autumn about the Honors Program

The thing that intrigued me about the Honors Program was the sense of community that I hoped I would gain. Because I didn't know anyone when I moved out here for college, I thought it was a good idea to have a group of people with a few shared interests or values to connect with. Also, I have always loved learning and enjoyed school, so I've always applied myself to my studies and worked very hard. It was nice to be recognized for that effort by being offered a place in the program, an incentive to continue putting forth effort, but also to have the support of peers and professors to do so.

### Autumn's Future Plans

In the future, I plan to get as much experience in the nursing field as I can. That requires me, of course, to pass the NCLEX and boards exam first, but thinking about that too much ahead of time is anxiety inducing, so we'll assume I will pass. My goal is to work in the pediatric area of nursing, but I do not have a specific specialty decided. If that does not work out, or I change my mind, I would love to be an ER nurse and get to see all kinds of injuries and cases that could broaden my experience farther.

### Acknowledgements by Autumn

There are a few people in my life that have made a great impact or difference in my journey. My mother, stepfather, and father have always been incredibly supportive of me and encouraged me to strive to reach my goals, whatever they may be. My twin sister, though we hated always being compared to one another, has pushed me to go outside my comfort zone, to expand my limits and always try to go further, even if she wasn't trying to inspire me. My Nana has always told me to put my studies first, but not to the extent of too much stress or discomfort, and that has given me a great academic discipline.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's first spot light feature!**





### **Zoey Stealey -- Honors Program Spotlight May 2020**

My name is Zoey Stealey and I am finally graduating with my Bachelor's in Biomedical Sciences. Throughout college I have participated in numerous leadership programs at UCCS allowing me to meet incredible leaders and develop life-long skills. Outside of UCCS, I am a fulltime CNA at a nursing home, and I enjoy spending time with my family of six and my three fur babies.

### **What fascinates Zoey Stealey about the Honors Program**

Transitioning from my graduating class of three hundred in high school, to the thousands of students at UCCS, I was nervous as a freshman that I would just blend into the crowd and would never be noticed. Becoming a member of the honors program made me feel recognized as a student and brought me together with other like-minded and dedicated students, even outside of my degree program that I may have never connected with otherwise. These students have become great friends of mine and for those connections alone, I am grateful I was accepted into the program.

### **Zoey Stealey's Future Plans**

My next step will be moving on to graduate studies. I plan on going into a Perfusionist program out of state, so I will be moving wherever school takes me next! I am excited for the new adventures as I leave the mountain state to see and learn more than ever. I will continue to work in the medical field as it is a passion of mine to help others in need.

### **Acknowledgements by Zoey Stealey**

I will always first and foremost be grateful for my parents and my brothers. They have always been supportive and encouraging of my career and life goals, without my family I would be lost. I am also grateful for the incredible programs, the Honors Program, the Reisher Scholarship Program, and LIVE Leadership; without them, I may have not been able to handle the financial burden of schooling and thanks to them I can further my education more than I ever thought I could.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**





### **Katie Schumacher -- Honors Program Spotlight**

My time at UCCS has been nothing short of amazing! I chose UCCS specifically for its Sport Management program in the College of Business. This program has allowed me to intern with top sports organizations like Air Force Athletics, The Sports Corp, and U.S. Figure Skating—all of which increased my passion and desire for working in the business of sport. My freshman year, I joined a sorority, Pi Beta Phi, and ever since I haven't looked back. Through Pi Phi, I have been able to serve over 70+ women as Chapter President, Vice President of Membership, and on the Leadership and Nominating Committee. I was also able to serve as the SMAC (Sport Management Activities Council) co-president and social media specialist. I have been grateful to work on campus as a Student Ambassador (tour guide) for my first two years and then as the social media assistant at Campus Recreation my final two years. In college, filled every ounce of my time trying new activities and even found my husband along the way!

### **What fascinates Katie Schumacher about the Honors Program**

The honors program has given me a time and place to serve and volunteer throughout college, which I've found to be the most rewarding. This program instantly gave me a sense of community through my freshman honors GPS class where I met motivated individuals who I've stayed close friends with throughout college. The honors program has continued to hold me to a high standard academically and pushed me to strive for success in and out of the classroom.

### **Katie Schumacher's Future Plans**

I will be staying in the lovely Colorado Springs, getting married, and seeking a marketing or communications job within the Olympic Movement. I hope to work for a National Governing Body (NGB) or the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC).

### **Acknowledgements by Katie Schumacher**

I am so very thankful for the endless support of my parents, Randy and Kayce, and my sister Alex- you all continue to encourage me every day and cheer me on even when you know I am overcommitting myself. Thank you to the UCCS Sport Management program (Dr. Olsen, Ian, Rachel, Spencer, and Tommy) for your guidance and wisdom- I am better because of you. To the Kane Family Foundation, I am forever grateful for being gifted a generous scholarship. To all of my Pi Phi sisters, I would not be who I am without the love and sincere friendship you've shown me. To my sweet fiancé Andrew, you have been my rock the past four years and I love you dearly.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**

### **Jessica Battin -- Honors Program Spotlight April 1, 2020**

My name is Jessica Battin and I am currently a Senior about to graduate this May 2020. I am majoring in biomedical sciences with minors in biochemistry and philosophy and I will be graduating magna cum laude. I am a Colorado native, born and raised in Colorado Springs. I love outdoor activities including hiking, camping, biking, and just being outside. I have my EMT certification and love all things medicine. I also play tenor saxophone and officiate high school women's lacrosse.

### **What fascinates Jessica about the Honors Program**

I was always a high achieving kid in school, and I wanted to continue pushing myself when I went to college. The honors program seemed like the perfect place to challenge myself. I decided to join the honors program and I am really glad I did. I ended up living on the honors floor in the dorms my freshman year and I met my best friend, who was my roommate. She continues to inspire me and make me a better person by challenging my world views and giving me new perspectives in life.

### **Jessica's Future Plans**

After I graduate in May, there are a lot of fun and exciting plans. Later in May I will be getting married. Over the summer I plan to start working full time as an EMT while my spouse is in training. In October we plan to move to Alabama where I will continue working as an EMT for the next year. I am also applying to medical school in hopes to matriculate in Fall 2021. I want to work with children in some form, but I am not sure which field of medicine I want to go into just yet.

### **Acknowledgements by Jessica**

I am grateful for my parents, my fiancé, my best friends, and my professors. It is not easy getting a college degree and becoming an adult and there have been a lot of people who have helped me along the way. My parents have always been supportive in more ways than one and I cannot thank them enough for that. My fiancé always encourages me when I am struggling, and he never ceases to amaze me with his kindness. My best friends from high school and the ones I met in college provided me the support system that I needed to stay on track and be successful in college. I have also had a lot of great professors that have inspired me to never stop learning.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**



### Selana Gallegos -- Honors Program Spotlight

My name is Selana and I will be graduating with my Bachelor's in Nursing this upcoming May. I was born and raised in Colorado Springs. I couldn't bring myself to leave this beautiful city, especially when the college up the street had the nursing program I wanted to be apart of! I love the patient interaction nursing offers. I have kept the phrase, "Health is wealth," on the forefront of everything I do for the patients I encounter. Outside of the school or hospital, I enjoy exploring sights in and out of Colorado.

### What fascinates Selana about the Honors Program

The Honors Program allowed me to push myself in all areas of school. To me, having honors is not just a title, but a role that I wanted to fulfill. My GPS course freshman year has resonated with me throughout my school career. Learning about "Gray Matters," was something that I would not have pursued myself. This course pushed me to find intriguing subjects and people to learn about from then on.

### Selana's Future Plans

After graduation, I plan to take my NCLEX and the move to Dallas, TX. I am looking into critical care and trauma graduate nurse residencies that I can build my foundation in. The critical care setting is especially appealing to me because of the high-pressure environment where I will be the advocate for the patient when they can't advocate for themselves. After acquiring a few years' experience in the critical care environment, I would like to obtain my CCRN and later become an acute care nurse practitioner. I hope to function in a hospital that has its main focus in reaching out to the community, especially those in need financially.

### Acknowledgements by Selana

I am grateful for my mom and dad, who have pushed me to be the best I can be since kindergarten. They have always reminded me how proud they are of me, even when I am not proud of myself. I owe so much of who I am today because of their support.

To Bethany and Rachelle, you have become some of the greatest friends I have ever met. You both have never failed to put a smile on my face when I am upset. Thank you for being there for me through this journey throughout nursing school.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**





### Justin Leo -- Honors Program Spotlight Mar 26, 2020

Hey! My name is Justin Leo and I am finishing up my senior year here at UCCS. I am a Computer Engineering major and a Computer Science minor. I am also a research student here at UCCS and I really enjoy exploring the new depths of Computer Science and its applications. I have lived most of my life here in Colorado and I quiet like it here. I really enjoy swimming, hiking, and camping and being here in Colorado allows me to do just that. I also really enjoy reading and my favorite genre is Fantasy. I have had a wonderful experience here at UCCS and have made numerous lifelong memories.

### What fascinates Justin about the Honors Program

The most intriguing part of the Honors Program initially was the people I would meet; I had hoped that I could meet people with similar interests. Later on, I also became interested with the classes and meetings from the Honors program as I really enjoyed the material. The topics explored in the Honors program are quite different from the normal ones covered in my major so I really enjoyed the complexity and greyness of the material. I also really enjoyed working with the Honors program professors and organizers as they provided an abundance of support throughout the program.

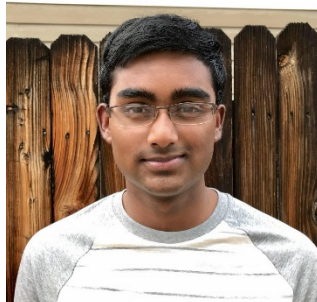
### Justin's Future Plans

I currently have plans to continue on to graduate school here at UCCS. I am already a research student at UCCS and I will be working with my same advisor moving forward. My main research field will be in Machine Learning in the field of Computer Science. I will also be working a software engineer job parallely with graduate school. Apart from that I do not know what the future holds for me but I am excited moving forward.

### Acknowledgements by Justin

There have been numerous people that have had impacts on my life and journey through college. I first would have to acknowledge my family who have set a wonderful example for me throughout me life; from the beginning they made it a point to show me giving up on anything was never the solution. I also have to acknowledge my friends through college. Working with them and going through different college experience with them made my experiences much more enjoyable and memorable. Seeing my friends becoming wonderful people and reaching various milestones has also helped and motivated me throughout college. I am thankful for all these people and the Honors program for shaping me to be successful and preparing me for the future.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**



### Kelly Parrish -- Honors Program Spotlight Spring 2020



Hi! My name is Kelly Parrish. I am graduating from UCCS with a Bachelor of Innovation in Inclusive Early Childhood Education this coming May. I love to sing, play soccer, be outside, spend time with loved ones, lead, teach, and learn. I have been a Student Ambassador for UCCS for four years now- something of which I am very proud. It has been so amazing to be able to help prospective students find their home at UCCS, just like I did years ago. I have made so many friends and built irreplaceable relationships with staff, and I am so grateful for the opportunities has given me to grow as a scholar, a person, and a leader.

#### What fascinates **Kelly** about the Honors Program

I wanted to be part of the UCCS Honors Program so that I could have more opportunities for challenge during my degree program. Throughout the program, I have been able to volunteer, make new friends, challenge myself academically, and learn about leadership. Dr. Carrie Arnold was my Honors GPS professor when I was a freshman, and she really inspired me to be an independent learner and leader throughout my college career- Thank you, Carrie!

#### **Kelly's** Future Plans

I have accepted a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teaching position at Vera G. Scott Elementary School here in Colorado Springs! I am really looking forward to serving their amazing students and continuing to work with their fantastic staff (I did my student teaching at Scott Elementary Kindergarten). I am interested in pursuing a graduate degree sometime down the road, in some area relating to education, but for now I am just very excited to jump right into teaching in my own classroom! 😊

#### Acknowledgements by **Kelly**

Thank you so much to my Mom, Dad, sister, my roommates, and all the close friends who have supported me, listened to me, and given me advice throughout my college journey. I am so grateful to my professors, especially Dr. Follari, Dr. Oh, and Ashley Lawless for inspiring me, believing in me, and guiding me to be the best educator I can be for my future students. Thank you also to my Student Ambassador team, Ariadna, Hanna, Jessica, and all of the amazing ambassadors who have supported me and made UCCS a place I will always cherish.

### Alison Lloyd -- Honors Program Spotlight

My name is Alison Lloyd and I will graduate in May (2020) from the Sport Management program within the College of Business. I was born and raised in Lakewood, CO and decided to attend UCCS for the Sport Management program. I have an older brother who graduated from CU Boulder and is now a F-15C pilot in the Air Force. I love to travel and the highlight of college was my time in Loughborough, England for a semester abroad. In my free time enjoy reading, attending sporting events, and hanging out with my friends and family.

### What fascinates **Student-Name** about the Honors Program

What drew me to the honors program was the opportunity to be surrounded by driven, hard-working individuals who could support me through my college career. Further, I wanted to be challenged academically and found the honors program a great way to grow as a person and student. As a 2016 cohort, I liked that we were required to attend UCCS Leadership in order to develop ourselves outside the classroom and as leaders. I am proud to be graduating from the honors program and am grateful for my time in the program and at UCCS.

### **Student-Name's** Future Plans

After graduation I hope to work for the United State Olympic and Paralympic Committee or a National Governing Body, specifically in events or operations. I want to work in the Olympic Movement to support athletes and make a positive impact on people's lives through sport.

### Acknowledgements by **Student-Name**

I am grateful for the Sport Management staff and professors, especially Ian Ratz and Spencer Harris, who have helped me during my time here at UCCS and have prepared me for my future career. I am thankful for my friends and for my brothers in Delta Sigma Pi who have all supported me and made my time at UCCS very special. Finally, thank you to my family for encouraging me, supporting me, and challenging me in all that I do.



### **Amanda Turmes – Honors Program Spotlight**

My name is Amanda Turmes and I am a senior finishing my last semester as an undergraduate at UCCS. I will graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering, with minors in Aerospace Engineering and Math. I have loved living in Colorado all my life. I am also a book reading, piano playing, opera singing, musical theater loving, gamer. I have enjoyed singing many solos with the University Choir and spent countless hours in the library with the friends I have been blessed with here at UCCS.

### **What fascinates Amanda about the Honors Program**

The UCCS Honors Program has provided great motivation for me to excel and be successful in all my classes. The additional requirements led me to a special appreciation for the honors designation. I also appreciate that the program allowed me to learn about effective leadership. I could explore and recognize my own style of leadership, along with instilling the desire to expand on the best aspects of that style.

### **Amanda's Future Plans**

Following graduation, I am looking forward to working as a Systems Engineer for a large defense contractor. I am also excited about my future educational plans which include pursuing Master's and Doctorate degrees in a field I have identified a passion for - Engineering Thermofluids. I also plan on signing up for lessons or joining a choral group to continue with my love for singing.

### **Acknowledgements by Amanda**

I would like to recognize a few of the best teachers I have ever had. Dr. Amundson is an Engineering Professor at UCCS and Ms. Olsen is an instructor in the Performing Arts Department. Mrs. Stedman and Mr. Knuth are two incredible teachers from high school. I thank these fine people and educators for making such a positive difference in my life and education. Finally, I want to acknowledge my wonderful parents and the best sister in the world. They have always helped, encouraged and supported me, and I will always be grateful.





### **Rachelle Ono -- Honors Program Spotlight**

My name is Rachelle Ono, and I am graduating with my Bachelor's in Nursing and minor in Leadership Studies. I would not be the woman I am today if it were not for the wonderful experiences as a Resident Assistant, an Intern for a children's science company, and as a Scholar with my family from Chancellor's Leadership Class. From those wonderful jobs, I fell in love with getting involved in my community in any way I can and being a positive influence in children's lives.

### **What fascinates Rachelle about the Honors Program**

The Honors Program helped encourage me to take different leadership and communication classes I would have never considered joining if it were not for this program. My first leadership course was with Dr. Carrie Arnold, and she helped push me to instill confidence in my abilities and was the catalyst to my involvement with the college community.

### **Rachelle's Future Plans**

My future plan includes using my nursing degree to help impact my community in a positive manner to provide not only direct patient care but help educate community members how to improve their health and wellbeing. I am striving to obtain my Master's Degree in a few years in order to continue being a lifelong learner.

### **Acknowledgements by Rachelle**

Words cannot express the full gratitude I have for the faculty who encouraged me these entire four years. I am so grateful to have had the guidance of Erin Mitchler, who constantly found resources and contacts to help find my path. My heart is so full of thanks to my kind friends: Selana, Christina, Matt, Keyla, and my boss, James. You all have supported me through the toughest of times, and I am so humbled for your friendships. Thank you for being a part of my strength during my college journey.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**



### Joslyn Meek – Honors Program Spotlight Spring 2020

My name is Joslyn Meek and I will be graduating from the UCCS in May 2020. I chose to major in Biomedical sciences on the Pre-Med track and will be graduating cum laude. I am a proud Colorado Native who loves to hike and be outside. I have an Emergency Medical Technician certification as well as a Wildland Firefighter Type II and Colorado Firefighter I certifications. In 2019, I became a volunteer firefighter.

#### What Fascinates Joslyn Meek- about the Honors Program

I was drawn to the honors program, as it presented a challenge for me. It also allowed me to set goals for myself and work to achieve those goals. I have always wanted to find a platform that will maximize my learning and the honors program helped me do that.

#### Joslyn's Future Plans

After I graduate, I will be continuing to work as a volunteer firefighter and continue to work at my payed job to save up money. In July I will move to Tennessee to be closer to my family. I hope to find work as an EMT there. My goal is to go to medical school to become a trauma surgeon after taking a couple gap years. I will spend those gap years trying to become a better provider.

#### Acknowledgements by Joslyn

I would like to thank my Mom and Dad for always being there for me, and for sacrificing a lot to make sure my siblings and I had access to opportunities they might not have had growing up. I am proud to call myself a Meek.

Thank you to the station for showing me what it means to be apart of something greater than myself and for teaching me about tradition, integrity, honor, and pride.

Thank you to Taylor for training with me, giving great advice and teaching me what it means to have and to be a best friend. I would like to thank my friends, specifically Caley and Abby for listening to my stories and getting me motivated on those long nights. I will never forget the good 'ol' days.



### **Naomi Hayner -- Honors Program Spotlight Oct 9, 2018**



Hello! My name is Naomi Hayner and I am a first generation student graduating this May. I am so grateful for the opportunity to pursue higher education and can hardly believe my time at UCCS is coming to an end. Along my journey through college, I have met so many incredible people and have gotten to experience many new activities. While being dedicated to my studies, I also found a love for traveling, skiing, hiking, white water rafting, and above all, spending time with family and friends. I am proudly

graduating with Summa Cum Laude honors and an alumni to four scholarship foundations along with so many wonderful memories and life-long friendships.

#### **What fascinates Naomi Hayner about the Honors Program**

I was a part of my high school honors program, so when applying to college it only seemed appropriate to continue seeking the challenge and accountability that programs such as these demand. I wanted to quickly become a part of the UCCS family and with getting accepted into the Honors Program, I was able to become acquainted with other passionate and driven students and even lived on the Honors Floor in the dorms freshman year where I met my best friend.

#### **Naomi Hayner's Future Plans**

After graduation, I will be moving to Thailand to teach English to elementary students. Two of my greatest passions are teaching and traveling, so to have the opportunity to do both is such a joy. I look forward to acclimating to a new country and expanding my cultural awareness and skills for teaching diverse learners. This will be my first big adventure of many and as a UCCS alumni, I look forward to bringing a piece of Colorado with me to students around the globe.

#### **Acknowledgements by Naomi Hayner**

The list of people I am grateful for could take up pages upon pages; I wouldn't be where I am without all the people who helped and guided me along the way. A few of the main players in my story are my parents and family, who have given me endless love and support; the Chancellor's Leadership Class (CLC) where I found my home away from home and met some of the most driven individuals; Lissanna Follari, a professor I met my freshman year who fueled my desire to become the best educator I can be and never to settle for mediocrity and who continues to inspire me; Aljean Tucker, my supervisor through my student teaching year who has shown me such love and wisdom; and lastly, my wonderful friends without whom, I probably wouldn't have survived the last four years. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to my journey!

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**

### **Elizabeth Schmidt -- Honors Program Spotlight**

Hi! My name is Elizabeth Schmidt. As a proud member of the graduating class of 2020 I am excited to receive two bachelor's degrees, one in Psychology and the other in Visual Arts. I was born and raised in Colorado and have always loved trips to the mountains to ski and snowboard. During my time at UCCS I was involved in numerous clubs and organizations including: National Residence Hall Honorary, Athletic band, UCCSLead, and National Society of Leadership and Success, among others. I was a Resident Assistant for three years and really enjoyed living on campus.

### **What fascinates Elizabeth about the Honors Program**

One thing that I was enthusiastic about the Honors Program was living on the honors floor my first year. I was excited to be building a community of devoted and committed scholars. Moving away from my parents was a difficult transition however the friends I made in the residence halls made it easier by giving me support, encouragement, and love.

### **Elizabeth's Future Plans**

In the future, I plan on attending graduate school to continue my studies. I am working towards my dream career in Art Therapy. After my master's degree, I want to work with children and teens in a safe and reassuring environment where I can share the healing and pleasure of art making.

### **Acknowledgements by Elizabeth**

There are so many incredible people in my life that have supported me throughout my education. My parents have always been there for homework help and advice. I also want to thank my friends: Tatum, Michaela, Lauren, Morgan and Justine for always giving me kind words and much needed encouragement. Next, I am going to thank my RA family. They helped make my home away from home so special. Who doesn't love tea time Tuesdays! Lastly, I want to thank my Art and Psychology professors. They have gone above and beyond for helping me personally grow and succeed. I am blessed to have such a strong group of supportive individuals.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**



### **Jessica Asuquo – Honors Program Spotlight May 2020**

My name is Jessica Asuquo and I am graduating this May at UCCS. I am getting a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences with an emphasis in Pre-Medicine. I born and raised in Colorado, but my family is from Nigeria. I am the third of four daughters, three of which who graduated or will graduate from UCCS. My favorite hobbies are to write poems, read, paint, and draw. I also like to cook, although, what I cook usually ends up being too spicy!

### **What fascinates Jessica about the Honors Program**

I was fascinated about the learning opportunities the Honors Program allowed students to have! I was excited to take the Honors GPS and the Honors Communication course. Not only were these classes intriguing and enjoyable, but I also made really great friends that I still talk to, till today! I became friends with my JTA, Kayla. A couple weeks ago, I actually looked back at my final project in GPS and I was happily surprised at the amount of self-actualization that occurred during my first semester.

### **Jessica's Future Plans**

In the future, I plan to apply to medical school. This means I will continue to gain shadowing and interning experience and take the MCAT. In the future, I plan to become a surgeon. I am not too sure of the specialty, but I have always had my eye on neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery, or general trauma surgery. I am excited to go to medical school and find out which specialty fits me best!

### **Acknowledgements by Jessica**

There are so many people who have made UCCS a home to me. I cannot thank my professors, instructors, supervisors, classmates, friends, the UCCS custodians and food services workers, enough. I will miss giving hugs to Mr. Cordova, catching up with Brad and Stephen, and talking with my bosses, Ellen Burkart and Missy Sernatinger. I will miss dancing with my friends and attending ASA, APISU, and Mi Gente. However, I would not be who I am today without all of the amazing Mountain Lions who were meant to impact my life. My mother always quotes, "Shoot for the moon, if you miss, you'll land on a star." My time at UCCS has proven this is true in every aspect of my life. Thank you, my Mountain Lion Family, for everything.

**Congratulations on being UCCS Honors Program's spot-light feature!**

