

Honors Program Graduation Congratulations

May 2021

Dear Honors Program Graduates, Family, and Friends

On behalf of the university, I'd like to extend warm greetings to all of you as we celebrate our Spring 2021 Honors Program graduates. I would also like to offer appreciation and thanks to Dr. Sudhanshu Semwal, Honors Program Director, Dr. Joseph Kuzma, Associate Director, and Ms. Carol Pina, program administrator, and the Honors Program faculty for all you do to support the Honors Program and our students.

I am very glad to have this chance to congratulate our Spring 2021 graduates. Your accomplishments in pursuing and completing your degree, along with meeting the Honors Program's rigorous standards, are indeed something to celebrate. As you prepare to begin a new phase of your life, I hope that in whatever major and discipline you've studied here, your time with us has helped cultivate in you the ability to engage with multifaceted ideas and perspectives and find meaning in complexity, discovering insights wherever your future takes you.

With best wishes and congratulations to you,

Susan Taylor

Susan Taylor, Ph.D.

Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning/Professor of English

Honors Program Graduation Ceremony Spring 2021

Congratulations to all students, family, parents, and friends.

Dear UCCS Honors Program's Faculty, Mentors, and community

We are honoring all the UCCS Honors Program Graduating students for the Spring 2021 in this online version of our regularly scheduled UCCS Honors Program Graduation Ceremony. This is our third online celebration, and we hope to have both online and in person celebrations in future as permitted.

HNRS 4950 portfolios continue to focus on the study of Gray Matters and understanding them as complex systems. HP's Summer School of Complexity (<https://honors.uccs.edu/summer-of-school-of-complexity>) is starting this year with offering of HNRS 3011 (Conversations about Complexity), HNRS 4950 (Honors Program Portfolio along with CS7060 (MSCS-GMI Portfolio focused on Complex Systems). The Honors Program *Lounge* is now called the Honors Program *HUB* (<https://honors.uccs.edu/hplounge-doc>) and supports highly interdisciplinary activities.

In continuing the celebration of all students who are candidates for UCCS Honors Program graduation, we have attached spotlights on our students who have completed the UCCS Honors Program curriculum.

Students are:

**Angela Calhoun
Annalise Hopkins
Kinsey Greve
Madison Harris
Max Hexom
Trenton Reinicke
Charlene Madden
Jacob Olsen
Thanh Thanh Tran
Ian Wisniewski**

We are proud of our students.

UCCS Honors Program Director on behalf of UCCS Honors Program Faculty, Staff, Portfolio Mentors.

Angela Calhoun -- Honors Program Spotlight Spring 2021 (put in the actual date you submit)

Aside from my business degree, I am passionate about community work and advocating for social change. I am volunteering with some local organizations that work with immigrant rights, as well as other various social justice topics. I also love to do illustration and digital art to help bring abstract concepts into a visual form.

What fascinates Angela Calhoun about the Honors Program

The Honors Program was great to be a part of, because the community that we had was a fantastic support system throughout my years at UCCS. Everyone was extremely kind and intelligent, and it was always so inspiring to hear about what the other program members were doing. I appreciate all the excellent conversations we had, and the facilitation from the professors helped to further our insight of grey matters.

Angela Calhoun's Future Plans

I plan to do work that impacts people and advocates for change in whatever form that may take. I like design, art, social advocacy, and business related fields, so I will continue to explore ways to combine my passions. I have been fascinated by how social media can be used to spread awareness, so I can see myself being involved in digital work as well.

Acknowledgements by Angela Calhoun

I am grateful for all the professors at UCCS and within the honors program who directed me towards new ideas and made me think about concepts that I had not been introduced to before. I am also grateful to my classmates for being a great group of people to have conversations with. I met many people who were dedicated to their work and motivated me to create positive changes in my community and in my own life as well. A big thank you to my family who supported me through it all.

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



Annalise Hopkins -- Honors Program Spotlight Spring, 2021



After her time at UCCS, Annalise will earn a Bachelor of Science in Biology with an emphasis in Pre-Veterinary Science and Medicine and a Minor in Leadership. Outside of academics, she was also employed on campus as the Student Assistant for the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Collegiate Program at UCCS College of Business. Annalise was also involved in Hoary Bat Echolocation research under the mentorship of Dr. Corcoran. She is also an intern at the Animal Clinic of Woodland Park, where she has learned the foundations for her future profession. Annalise has also enjoyed her competitive Irish Dance career and representing the United States at Regional, National, and World Championship levels. She has enjoyed teaching children and adults at Celtic Steps School of Irish Dance. Annalise has lived in the small mountain town of Woodland Park, has two rescue dogs that she enjoys taking for walks, and a rescue cat that spends most of her time napping.

What fascinates Annalise about the Honors Program

Annalise is incredibly grateful for the opportunities and learning experiences that came with her involvement in the Honors Program. Her favorite part was being able to build mentorships with professors that she admired through her Honors Designated Courses. Being able to build a professional relationship with someone in a field she was interested in truly broadened her perspective. She has also enjoyed listening to the viewpoints of her fellow students during Honors events!

Annalise's Future Plans

After graduation in May 2021, Annalise will be continuing her education at Colorado State University, pursuing a Doctorate in Veterinary Science and Medicine (DVM). After seeing the need in her community, Annalise would like to practice mixed animal medicine with a special interest in practicing in rural and underserved areas.

Acknowledgements by Annalise

I must contribute my thanks to those who stood behind me so I could accomplish my dreams. First and foremost, I must thank my parents for their unending support and for teaching me the importance of dedication, resilience, and beneficence. Second, I thank my brothers, family, and friends for being my moral support when things became difficult. I must also thank the mentors that have guided me throughout my life. At UCCS, my professors and research mentor Dr. Corcoran have truly influenced me during my academic career. I would like to specially thank Dr. Cheryl Doughty and faculty advisor Dr. Joseph Kuzma (and all the Honors faculty) for their support throughout the Honors Program. Lastly, outside of UCCS I must thank Dr. David Volz, Dr. Carol Steiner, and the entire clinic staff at ACWP for helping me begin to cultivate my dream.

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

Kinsey Greve -- Honors Program Spotlight Spring 2021

My name is Kinsey Greve and I am a senior at UCCS who will graduate in May 2021 with a bachelor's in biology. I was born and raised in Colorado and have always loved the landscapes and wildlife of this state. I enjoy hiking, drawing, writing, baking, and photography.

What fascinates Kinsey Greve about the Honors Program

I was excited about the opportunities for learning as well as meeting new people that the Honors Program presented. The variety of courses and events provided a forum for creating social connections with other students as well as for discussions on a wide range of topics. Events like movie nights, where honors students and professors come together as a group to watch and discuss films from around the world, will always stand out in my memory of my college experience.

Kinsey Greve's Future Plans

I intend to pursue a career in the fields of ecology, conservation biology, or wildlife biology, starting with internships to gain experience in different roles. I have always dreamed of working with animals in a way that helps preserve biodiversity.

Acknowledgements by Kinsey Greve

I am eternally thankful for my family-- my brothers, my mom, and my dad-- and my friends Crane, Megan, Lindsey, Dante, and Madison, who all provided valuable friendship and support during my years at college. I am also incredibly grateful to Dr. Emily Mooney, an amazing professor who has supported me in my ecology research, as well as Dr. Robert Sackett, my Honors advisor and always a source of fascinating discussions. Looking back, I would also like to thank my high school AP biology teacher, David Meyers, for challenging me academically and igniting my interest in science.

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



Madison Harris - Honors Program Spotlight Spring, 2021

Hello! I've spent a great four years at UCCS, all thanks to various programs I've had the honor to be a part of. My college experience would not be the same without the Chancellor's Leadership Class, the Student Government Association, the Pre-Health Society, Ethics and Bioethics Bowl team, Phi Alpha Theta Historical Honor Society, the Southern Colorado Special Olympics, and several other programs. Even more, I've been fortunate to work both my jobs on campus, chair the 2018 Student Leadership Conference, present my research at national conferences, and found a few clubs. When not running around, I enjoy reading, ping-pong, yoga, and hiking.

What fascinates Madison about the Honors Program

The Honor's Program impressed on me the value of interdisciplinary work not only in academia but in life. Grey Matters is still one of my favorite classes I've taken and inspired me to pursue a varied college experience majoring in both History and Biomedical Sciences and minoring in Leadership Communication Studies and Civic Engagement through U.S. History. I would be lost without the guidance of my fantastic mentor, Dr. Sackett. Without you, I may have never discovered the splendor of international cinema. I treasure them dearly now. Thank you.

Madison's Future Plans

When I graduate in the Spring I will be working as a Medical Assistant until I start medical school in the fall, where I will also be pursuing my Masters in Healthcare Administration. In the meantime, I plan on reading as many books as possible, doing a triathlon, working as a research aide, and volunteering.

Acknowledgements by Madison

It's hard to express my gratitude to the numerous individuals who have gotten me to where I am today. Mom, Dad, Taylor, and Jackson, you are my world, and I am grateful to exist in yours. To my scholarship, the Kane Family Foundation, thank you for making this all possible. For everyone that has taught me in my twenty-two years of life, THANK YOU. You have all instilled in me an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. I am a lifelong learner and in debt to you all.

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



Max Hexom -- Honors Program Spotlight February 25, 2021

Intro: Hello, I am Max Hexom, an honors program student graduating with a B.S. in Biochemistry in the spring of 2021. As an extension of my interest in science, organic chemistry research under Dr. Allen Schoffstall has occupied my past two summers. Music is another integral part of who I am; I play the trumpet. These two aspects of what occupies my time capture my essence: creative and analytical. Also, the occasional video game or tabletop game are some favorite leisure activities of mine. In my time at UCCS, I have accomplished the following:

- A Pay it Forward Scholar
- Undergraduate Research Academy Awardee
- President's List Academic Recognition (Spring 2018, 2019, Fall 2018)
- Dean's List Academic Recognition (Fall 2020)
- UCCS LEAD Transformative Leader

What fascinates about the honors program: There is much that drew me to the honors program and continues to excite me about where it is going. The primary aspect is the diversity of the members that make up the program. The students and faculty represent a multitude of backgrounds and disciplines that incite thoughts and perspectives unique to this group. From guest speaker symposia to film viewings and discussions, there is always more to the story than what one mind can muster. Key to this are the faculty mentors: Drs. Kuzma, Sackett and Semwal who bring expertise from their fields to foster an interdisciplinary environment.

Future Plans: In the near future, I will continue my interest in organic chemistry with an internship at a local company: Chromatic Technologies Inc (CTI). CTI is known not by name, but by their creations, chiefly the color changing Coors cans that show when the beer is cold. Funds from the association with Coors are used for the noble cause of cancer research. Following work at CTI, graduate school in organic chemistry or a similar field is on the horizon.

Acknowledgements: For moral and emotional support, I thank my Mom and my best friend Jared Keul (and the whole Keul family). Inspiration and good role models were another key to where I am today. To me these characteristics are seen in how people act, how they spend their time, and to start, I see them in the benevolent Mary and Harold Williamson. Founders of the Pay it Forward Scholarship who exemplify using your capabilities to better the world around you and make a positive impact on others. Mentors like Drs. Joseph Kuzma, Wendy Haggren, and Allen Schoffstall showed me what it means to put these ideals in action. And to all others with whom I have shared the journey of life with thus far, Thank You.



Trenton Reinicke – University Honors Program Spotlight Jan. 30, 2021

Hello! My name is Trenton Reinicke and I am a graduating biology major at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS). I started out as an accounting major at UCCS in 2014. While on this accounting detour and attempting to accomplish my dream of playing college basketball, I managed to cultivate a 2.8 cumulative GPA after three years of classes, get rejected or ignored by every college basketball program I reached out to, struggle to fund tuition as a busser and maintenance worker, and pondered the belief that college may not be for me. To keep a long story short, a family member got diagnosed with cancer and that led me to my passion in medicine. I dropped out of accounting and practically restarted college as a biology major. Since that change, I have been able to maintain a 4.0 GPA for the last four years, surpass 1,000 volunteer hours in the community and working as an EMT, earn multiple academic scholarships, and earn multiple publications for cancer and diabetes research that I was able to help with. Not to sound cliché, but if you have a goal, whatever it is, you can do it...I know we all face our own obstacles towards reaching our goals, but what you go through to get to where you want to be is yours, and it will make you stronger for going through it and learning from failures.

What fascinates Trenton about the Honors Program

What motivated me to join the Honors Program at UCCS was the opportunity to be part of a team, which is something I valued when I attempted to play college basketball. I valued the emphasis that the Honors Program placed on both academic and community service, as well as self-discovery through discussions on complex systems. It has meant a lot to me through all these years of uncertainty and tribulations to have individuals like Dr. Semwal, Dr. Sackett, Dr. Kuzma, and Carol, who want to see you succeed and help you in anyway they can. You all do an amazing job!

Trenton's Future Plans

One day, I intend to be a physician who treats cancer patients and conducts research. I intend to apply to medical school in the coming years, but until then, I have accepted a cancer research position at Massachusetts General Hospital. In addition, I would also like to travel the world and create a foundation to serve underprivileged communities across the U.S., as well as impoverished regions across the globe to provide support for education, medical treatment, and providing necessities of life.

Acknowledgements by Trenton

I have so many people to thank on this journey so far. First, I do not think any of this would have been possible without God. I am so thankful for my amazing families... Mom, Dad, Daryl, Mimi, Lolo, Grant, Jake, Daniel, Josh, Kyle, Fiona, and Nick... BIG FAMILY! You all have supported me through the thick and thin, I love you all so much! I want to acknowledge the Honors Program for making this all possible. Thank you, Dr. Semwal, for responding to this random transfer student that reached out with aspirations years ago. Thank you, Dr. Sackett, for your mentorship and advice on life. Also, I cannot end this section without thanking my best friends, Danyon and Andy, you guys already know...but thanks for everything.

Ian Wisniewski -- Honors Program Spotlight Spring, 2021

I am currently about to graduate with a B.S. in Biochemistry from UCCS. I really like working in the research lab, and especially my current project which concerns engineering living cells to synthesize an anti-tumorigenic agent. Some of my hobbies include deep diving into Wikipedia rabbit holes, reading, and sword fighting. I love watching rocket launches and learning about space, and hope to become an astronaut in the future.

What fascinates Ian Wisniewski about the Honors Program

I wanted an extra challenge besides solely getting my degree. I knew that I would be able to meet like-minded peers in the program, as I seriously care about my education and knew that this program would attract others who typically go above and beyond. I also felt that the capstone project would be interesting to do, as I have never been able to design and research a project as freely as this one in any other college or high school class.

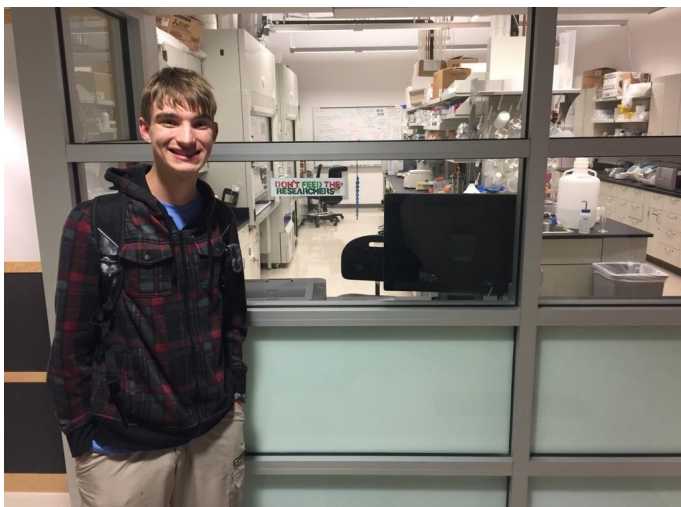
Ian Wisniewski's Future Plans

I am currently proceeding straight into an accelerated Master's program for a MSc in Biochemistry here at UCCS. After that I plan to get a job in biochemistry research, with the ultimate goal of becoming an astronaut in the future. I would love to work in some extremely high-profile laboratory conducting cutting-edge research into extremely lethal and infectious diseases.

Acknowledgements by Ian Wisniewski

I would like to thank Dr. Kuzma for being my Honors program mentor, as well as Dr. Sackett and Dr. Semwal who provided me excellent ideas and advice about my capstone project. I would also like to thank Dr. Haggren who has been my research adviser since the summer before my sophomore year, as well as Dr. Klocko, who agreed to help me fulfill one of my Honors Designated courses. I would also like to thank the rest of the professors I had in the UCCS Chemistry & Biochemistry Department, as well as all of my high school teachers at The Vanguard School, as it was thanks to all their efforts that I have learned as much as I have throughout these years. I would also like to thank my family for supporting me all these years with my dreams.

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





Charlene Madden -- Honors Program Spotlight Spring 2021

Hi! I completed all four years of my undergrad here at UCCS and am excited to see what the future has in store for me. I'm passionate about issues such as special needs and foster care and have had the opportunity to work with both populations through my job and volunteer work. In my free time I enjoy reading, watching movies, and spending time with friends and family.

What fascinates Charlene Madden about the Honors Program

I was excited to be in an environment that challenged me academically and found myself surrounded by peers and mentors who encouraged and facilitated personal and academic success for their peers and colleagues.

Charlene Madden's Future Plans

Moving forward, I plan to attend graduate school this fall to obtain my master's degree in Psychology. From there, the goal is to sit for my BCBA (Board Certified Behavioral Analysis) exam so that I can work with children with autism spectrum disorder and other disorders providing ABA therapy.

Acknowledgements by Charlene Madden

First and foremost, I want to thank my parents for always motivating me to succeed and giving me the tools to do so. I absolutely would not be here without you guys. I want to thank my professors at UCCS for challenging me to the best of my academic ability and for giving me the opportunity to acquire an education here.

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



Jacob Olsen -- Honors Program Spotlight Fall, 2021

I am Jacob Olsen, and this spring I am graduating with a major in Mechanical Engineering with a minor in Aerospace Engineering. I am currently employed at a large homebuilding company where I do architectural drafting and photoshop for various product development purposes. Despite my formal education being in engineering, I am most deeply passionate about various creative pursuits.

What fascinates Jacob about the Honors Program

I am grateful to the honors program for allowing me to continue spending time with people whom I knew from high school and am grateful for the new friends it has allowed me to meet along the way. I enjoyed the various honors program meetings like the movie nights, since the discussions were a great break from the often-monotonous day to day schedule of engineering. I also enjoyed that the portfolio project permitted me to demonstrate my interest in a subject not entirely focused on my major.

Jacob's Future Plans

After graduation I plan on getting the FE certification in mechanical engineering. Eventually I plan on starting my own machining business. With my newfound free time after graduating, I will continue to pursue my passion for music production.

Acknowledgements by Jacob

I would like to thank Dr. Semwal, Dr. Sackett, Dr. Kuzma, and Dr. Pina for their contributions to my time in the honors program. I would like to thank the honors program for permitting me flexibility when needed due to my often very busy school and work schedule. I would like to thank all the people I have met in the honors program, especially from my cohort, for their companionship throughout the years. It is my sincere hope that everyone goes on to achieve the best life possible for themselves, and the others in their lives.

Thank you all.