

# UNIVERSITY *of* DUBUQUE

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies  
Commencement Ceremony



DECEMBER THE FIFTH  
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE  
10:00 A.M.

*John and Alice Butler Hall, Heritage Center, Dubuque, Iowa*

# The ORDER of EXERCISES

## **Prelude**

### **Processional**

Charles Barland, DMA  
*University Organist and Professor of Music*

Derek Grant  
*Bagpiper*

Marin Ryan (MSPAS'26)  
*Crucifer*

Haley Huenink (MSPAS'27)  
*Student Marshal*

### **Welcome**

Natalie Weber, DMSc, PA-C  
*Program Director, Physician Assistant Program*

### **Invocation**

Rev. Susan Forshey, PhD  
*Associate Professor of Christian Discipleship, Seminary*

### **Introduction of the Commencement Speaker**

Emily Vyverberg, PharmD  
*Associate Professor, Physician Assistant Program*

### **Commencement Address**

*"From Courage to Confidence"*  
Jenna Doyle (MSPAS'24), MSPAS, PA-C  
*Physician Assistant, Emergency Medicine, Mayo Clinic Health System, Mankato, Minnesota*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of AWARD RECIPIENTS

*(Please refer to page 6 in this program for a description of the awards)*

### **Capstone Research Awards**

Addy First, MS  
*Academic and Laboratory Specialist and Adjunct Instructor, Physician Assistant Program*

### **Academic Achievement Award**

Amy Engelman, DO  
*Medical Director, Physician Assistant Program*

### **Spirit of the PA Profession Award**

Emily Appleton, MPAS, PA-C  
*Associate Professor and Academic Director, Physician Assistant Program*

# AWARDING of DEGREES

## **Board of Trustees Recognition**

Douglas J. Horstmann (C'75), MBA  
*Chair, Board of Trustees*

## **Presentation of Candidates for Degrees**

Natalie Weber

## **Awarding of Degrees**

Travis L. Frampton, PhD  
*President of the University*

## **Introduction of Graduates**

Regan Wolbers, MD  
*Clinical Education Director and Assistant Professor, Physician Assistant Program*

## **Conferring of Hoods**

Adam Hoffman, PhD  
*Vice President for Academic Affairs*

## **Physician Assistant Professional Oath**

*(Please refer to page 4 in this program)*  
Tonya Kerker, MSPAS, PA-C  
*Assistant Professor, Physician Assistant Program*

## **Farewell Address**

Abigail McGrain (MSPAS'25)  
*MSPAS Class of 2025 President*

## **Benediction**

President Travis L. Frampton

## **Recessional**

*The audience is asked to remain seated during the recessional.*

## **Platform Party**

Travis L. Frampton, PhD, *President of the University*  
Douglas J. Horstmann (C'75), MBA, *Chair, Board of Trustees*  
Natalie Weber, DMSc, PA-C, *Program Director, Physician Assistant Program*  
Adam Hoffman, PhD, *Vice President for Academic Affairs*  
Jenna Doyle (MSPAS'24), MSPAS, PA-C, *Physician Assistant, Emergency Medicine, Mayo Clinic Health System, Mankato, Minnesota*  
Regan Wolbers, MD, *Clinical Education Director and Assistant Professor, Physician Assistant Program*  
Emily Appleton, MPAS, PA-C, *Associate Professor and Academic Director, Physician Assistant Program*  
Amy Engelman, DO, *Medical Director, Physician Assistant Program*  
Rev. Susan Forshey, PhD, *Associate Professor of Christian Discipleship, Seminary*  
Tonya Kerker, MSPAS, PA-C, *Assistant Professor, Physician Assistant Program*  
Addy First, MS, *Academic and Laboratory Specialist and Adjunct Instructor, Physician Assistant Program*

# UNIVERSITY of DUBUQUE

## Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

### DECEMBER 2025 COMMENCEMENT

| GRADUATE                     | HOMETOWN             |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Kevin Michael Armbruster     | Council Bluffs, IA   |
| Sidney Jo Ayers              | Ames, IA             |
| Madison Nicole Bohlken       | Anamosa, IA          |
| Madison Faye Bowers          | Mineral Point, WI    |
| Alysha Ann Brickl            | Chilton, WI          |
| Emily Xuan Truc Ly Bui       | Sioux City, IA       |
| Emily Rose Corazzi           | West Bend, WI        |
| Taylor Renee Evans           | Urbandale, IA        |
| Madison Paige Farrington     | Marshalltown, IA     |
| Ally Lynne Flint             | Hampton, IA          |
| Carolyn Frett                | Des Moines, IA       |
| Anjali Kottukapally George   | Morton Grove, IL     |
| Alexus M. Jensen             | Jesup, IA            |
| Olivia Ann Kelzer            | Minnetrissa, MN      |
| Jared Thomas Kort            | Stevens Point, WI    |
| Isabella Marie Koutsopanagos | Rockford, IL         |
| Ashley Kay Luecke            | Olathe, KS           |
| Alexis Brianne Markley       | Beloit, WI           |
| Thea Kathleen Mauck          | Spring Valley, IL    |
| Abigail Christine McGrain    | Pleasant Prairie, WI |
| Nishita A. Patel             | Carol Stream, IL     |
| Kristen Marie Petti          | Corona, CA           |
| Breanna Kay Runksmeier       | Armstrong, IA        |
| Tegan Evelyn Rae Schneider   | Plymouth, WI         |
| Pardis Shahamat              | Thousand Oaks, CA    |
| Amanda P. Sifuentes-Smith    | Chicago, IL          |
| Kennedy Brannen Smith        | Iowa City, IA        |
| Nolan Timothy Strang         | Shullsburg, WI       |
| Erin Elizabeth Tupy          | Lakeville, MN        |

## PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSIONAL OATH

I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty and dedication:

- I will hold as my primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all human beings.
- I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice.
- I will recognize and promote the value of diversity.
- I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.
- I will hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
- I will assess my personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve my medical practice.
- I will actively seek to expand my knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.
- I will work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
- I will use my knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.
- I will respect my professional relationship with the physician.
- I will share and expand knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and upon my honor.

# Jenna Doyle (MSPAS '24), MSPAS, PA-C

*Physician Assistant, Emergency Medicine,  
Mayo Clinic Health System, Mankato, Minnesota*

*"From Courage to Confidence"*



Jenna Doyle is a 2024 graduate of the University of Dubuque Physician Assistant Program. Originally from Princeton, Minnesota, Jenna earned her bachelor of science in biology from the University of Jamestown in North Dakota, where she was also a student-athlete on the women's basketball team.

Prior to entering the PA profession, Jenna gained a diverse range of experiences that strengthened her commitment to service, teamwork, and leadership. Her background includes working as a certified nursing assistant, emergency medical technician, and emergency room technician, as well as serving as a basketball coach and substitute teacher.

During her time at the University of Dubuque, Jenna served as co-chair of the UIDPA Student Wellness Committee, where she promoted health and well-being by fostering a supportive environment and helped students develop healthy habits to maintain balance during PA school. Following graduation, she began her career in emergency medicine with the Mayo Clinic Health System in Mankato, Minnesota. In addition to her current role, Jenna is training to provide care at several rural emergency departments across southern Minnesota, with the long-term goal of serving as a solo provider in the emergency department in these communities. She is deeply passionate about improving access to healthcare and delivering high-quality emergent care to underserved populations.

Outside of her professional endeavors, Jenna enjoys spending time with her family and friends, especially her adorable nieces and nephews, running, traveling, exploring the outdoors, and staying active in her local church community.

Jenna is honored to return today to celebrate the achievements of the University of Dubuque Physician Assistant Class of 2025.

# MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM AWARDS

## **Capstone Research Awards**

### **Most Distinguished UD MSPAS Research**

The Most Distinguished UD MSPAS Research Award is presented to the student with exemplary ability to critique and integrate scientific evidence to inform clinical decision making. The research investigation advances medical practice through dissemination of research findings in a scholarly manuscript and formal presentation which demonstrate expert-level critical thinking.

### **Most Accomplished UD MSPAS Systematic Literature Review**

The Most Accomplished UD MSPAS Systematic Literature Review Award is presented to the student who conducted research with expert level methodology, critical appraisal, and translation of the available evidence. This award recognizes the author of an outstanding manuscript.

### **Most Impactful UD MSPAS Research**

The Most Impactful UD MSPAS Research Award is presented to the student with an innovative research pursuit which promotes progression of medical knowledge through implementation of relevant evidence.

## **Spirit of the PA Profession Award**

Spirit of the PA Profession Award is awarded to a third-year PA student who has made significant contributions to the PA profession in and out of the classroom. This student has overcome and risen in the face of adversity. They are viewed to be a leader by others and embody the Mission, Vision, and Values of the University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program. This student undeniably strives to be a vital member of the health care team serving as a competent and skilled PA.

## **Academic Excellence Award**

The Academic Excellence Award is awarded to the student with outstanding academic achievement and success in pursuit of their Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree.

## HISTORY *The UNIVERSITY of DUBUQUE*

The University of Dubuque's long and distinguished history of leadership, innovation, and change in service to church and world began in 1852 when the Rev. Adrian Van Vliet started to tutor two brothers for the ministry. The Van Vliet School provided spiritual leadership for the burgeoning population of immigrants from Germany on the American frontier.

In 1864, the school was formally named the German Theological School of the Northwest. Six years later, in 1870, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church assumed control of the institution and renamed it the German Theological School of the Presbyterian Church of the Northwest. Over the next 50 years, the institution underwent multiple name changes until June 17, 1920, when a new charter was issued along with the new name of the University of Dubuque.

In 1905, President William O. Ruston and Financial Secretary Cornelius M. Steffens reorganized the institution to expand its curriculum and grant academic degrees. In April 1905, the first four bachelor's degrees from the school were awarded. During this time, Steffens led the charge to relocate campus to its present location on six acres of land along what is now University Avenue. The new campus' first building, later named Steffens Hall, was dedicated in April 1907.

During Steffens's tenure as president from 1908 to 1924, the campus expanded and became co-educational. Generous people who recognized the institution's potential provided funding for the buildings that constituted the core of the campus by 1917: Severance

Hall, Steffens Hall, Peters Commons, and McCormick Gymnasium. By 1923, the University of Dubuque became a truly international institution with 96 of the 296 students from Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

Barely surviving the Great Depression, the University of Dubuque faced another challenge during World War II. Nearly 500 students and former students joined the military. President Dale D. Welch secured the Navy's V5/V12 program on campus in July 1943 that allowed sailors to take college courses. The program provided resources until the advent of the post-war GI Bill, which revolutionized higher education and society, filling campus with motivated veterans.

President Gaylord M. Couchman led the University of Dubuque in building a modern campus during the 1950s and 1960s. No buildings, except for Van Vliet Hall in 1925 to 1926, had been constructed on campus since 1917. Under Couchman's leadership, Aitchison, Donnell, and Cassat residence halls, Ficke-Laird Library, Goldthorp Science Hall, Smith Hall, and Potterveld Apartments were built while McCormick Gymnasium underwent an addition. The growth in buildings made it possible to increase academic offerings, the endowment, and enrollment.

The 1970s produced a remarkable ecumenical thrust in higher education under the leadership of President Walter F. Peterson. The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Aquinas Institute of Theology, and Wartburg Theological Seminary created an unprecedented threefold seminary consortium. Aquinas became the home for UDTS until 1981 when Aquinas moved to St. Louis, Missouri, thus dissolving the consortium, and UDTS returned to campus.

Although UDTS has seen considerable change over the years, faculty and staff have remained committed to maintaining a tradition of providing strong preparation for pastoral ministry. In 1998, a \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment funded a distance education program for lay pastors of the Presbyterian Church. In 2007, UDTS pioneered the first distance learning master of divinity degree in Presbyterian seminaries nationwide. The seminary now offers the master of arts in Christian leadership, master of arts in mission and discipleship, master of divinity, and doctor of ministry, as well as a certificate in Christian leadership for commissioned ruling elders.

During the 1980s, the University of Dubuque once again underwent multiple changes. Steffens Hall, the original building on campus, was razed, and Blades Hall was constructed. Arches and pillars from Steffens Hall were saved to create Steffens Colonnade – a piece of history that welcomes visitors to campus along University Avenue. During this same time period, the addition of Stoltz Sports Center on McCormick Gymnasium doubled the size of the indoor athletic facility.

In June 1998, Jeffrey F. Bullock became the eleventh president of the University of Dubuque. Under his leadership and with guidance from the *Mission, Vision, Action Plan*, adopted by the Board of Trustees, the University of Dubuque continues to provide leadership, innovation, and change in the church and society. Multiple initiatives and programs support that service including Apex: Celebration of Student Scholarship and Creativity, the John and Alice Butler Summer Research Fellowship, the Joseph and Linda Chlapaty Summer Research Fellowship, and the Wendt Center for Character and Leadership.

During the Bullock presidency, the University extensively grew its campus footprint. In 1998, the Jackaline Baldwin Dunlap Technology Center was dedicated. Three years later, in 2001, the Charles C. Myers Library was dedicated with construction of the second floor being completed the following year. Also in 2001, Seminary Village was constructed on South Campus to provide housing for seminary students and their families.

In 2004, South Campus – the most significant land use development on campus since Steffens Hall was constructed in the early 1900s – was dedicated. South Campus anchors the University of Dubuque along Highway 20 and, at the time of its dedication, included Seminary Village, Alumni Walkway, Conlon Colonnade, University Park Village, University Park Drive, and Oyen Field.

Over the next few years, Cassat, Donnell, and Aitchison residence halls were renovated and multiple buildings were dedicated: Charles and Romona Myers Center, University Science Center, Goldthorp Hall, Mary Chlapaty Hall, and Chlapaty Recreation and Wellness Center.

Campus growth continued through the new decade. Mercer-Birmingham Hall was dedicated in 2011, and Heritage Center held an Opening Night Celebration featuring the Columbus (Ohio) Symphony Orchestra and the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra in 2013. One year later, Chlapaty Hall and the Veterans Memorial Training Center were opened. In 2015, the dining hall in Peters Commons was renovated and renamed the Barbara and Jack Smeltzer Dining Hall. Also in 2015, the Sergeant Jeffrey B. Dodge Veterans Center was dedicated to invest in student veterans. The addition of Linda Chlapaty Hall on the University Science Center and Debra Runkle Center were dedicated in 2016. The following year, the Dan W. Runkle Baseball Field was dedicated. In 2018, a weight training facility at the Veterans Memorial Training Center opened and the renovation of the Quad was completed. Wallace Common and the Babka Aviation Learning Center were dedicated in 2019.

Two major campus projects were dedicated fall 2020. The Smeltzer-Kelly Student Health Center provides students with a first point of access for outpatient and preventative medical care services for physical and brain health as well as referral services to medical facilities for more serious ailments. The Peter and Susan Smith Welcome Center includes an interpretive welcome area, a multicultural student center, classrooms, and office space for the Office of Advancement and Alumni Engagement.

In May 2021, the University officially dedicated the John and Alice Butler Pipe Organ in Heritage Center. The pipe organ has expanded students' musical horizons and enhanced campus events.

Thanks to investors, 121 acres of unglaciated land about 20 miles from campus was purchased after the previous property owners, Mari and Gary Wolter, proposed UID become stewards the land. The Wolters had partnered with the Department of Natural and Applied Sciences for a decade on a variety of research projects and educational activities. The property's official name became the Wolter Woods and Prairies Environmental Stewardship and Retreat Center.

In summer 2022, the first complete renovation of Van Vliet Hall in nearly 100 years was completed. Severance Hall underwent a similar renovation that was completed fall 2023, and Aitchison Residence Hall received a new roof and brick and stone exterior. Grace Plaza, completed fall 2022, created an open and flexible pedestrian-friendly space connecting the upper and lower portions of campus.

Growth also occurred in academic offerings. In 2009, the Learning Institute for Fulfillment and Engagement (LIFE) enrolled its first students. The program offers accelerated bachelor's and master's degrees for adult learners. LIFE expanded to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 2013. In 2016, the University of Dubuque welcomed its inaugural class of students in the master of science in physician assistant studies program. Additionally, the University of Dubuque launched a new master in management program in 2018 designed to help graduate students develop an understanding of management practices and leadership skills in an organization.

In 2024, Travis L. Frampton became the University's twelfth president, following Bullock's 25 plus years of transformative leadership. Continuing the work of his predecessors, Frampton initiated significant advancements in his first year, including the process of establishing the John and Alice Butler College of Osteopathic Medicine (proposed, applicant seeking accreditation), a major expansion of the aviation program and the Edward Babka Aviation Learning Center, and the construction of the 75,000-square-foot Chlapaty Center for Innovation.

As the University continues to grow, we remember and honor those who have committed themselves in service to the University's *Mission* of shaping lives of exceptional ability, worth, and purpose. Today we highlight our newest graduates who have pursued their educational dreams, and we welcome them to the University's alumni family – committed to serving the Church and the World with (Various Gifts and One Spirit).

## ACADEMIC PROCESSION

The tradition of the academic procession and academic apparel goes back to the 14th century and the early days of the old European universities, when gowns and hoods were first required. Although European institutions continue to show great diversity in their specifications on academic apparel, current practices in the United States follow the code established by the American Council on Education.

Academic apparel indicates the most advanced degree held by the wearer. Gowns for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees are distinguished by the variation in sleeve length; the hoods for these degrees, by their length and width of the edging. The color of the edging of the hood indicates the subject of the degree (green for medicine) and the colors of the lining of the hood indicate the institution from which the degree was received. The University of Dubuque's colors are blue and white. Apparel for the doctoral degree is distinguished by the panels on the sides of the hood, the gold tassel on the cap, and the velvet trimming on the gown.

### **Bagpipes**

Bagpipes are a symbol of Scotland and the Presbyterian Roots of the University; they represent the spiritual freedom we have received through Jesus Christ.