

CLARKSON COLLEGE CORIER



Alumni Edition

**Honoring Clarkson
College graduates**
Past, present and future

**Life-changing encounter
yielded lifelong mentor**

Excellence
in Motion
30 years of
PTA program success

Clarkson College alumni are well-represented in the PTA program by faculty members Kat Pursell ('19, '24) and Karen Abboud ('05, '12), and director, Jessica Niemann ('99, '16)

► Welcome to the Courier

FROM THE DESK OF CLARKSON COLLEGE PRESIDENT/CEO,
ANDREIA NEBEL, EdD, PT, DPT, FNAP

As each year passes, my appreciation and pride for the Clarkson College community continues to grow. As president and CEO, I am always looking ahead to ensure we remain at the forefront of preparing the talented, compassionate healthcare professionals our communities and country so greatly need. This issue of the Courier offers an opportunity to reflect and recognize the remarkable achievements of our alumni and the difference they make every day.

The stories featured in this issue showcase innovation, healing, and leadership. They represent just a handful of the countless ways Clarkson College alumni are improving healthcare, strengthening communities, and changing lives. But their impact extends beyond their careers. Their generosity and dedication help create meaningful opportunities for current students. Thanks to the support of our alumni community, now more than 9,000 strong, we have expanded our ability to provide:

- Student scholarships.
- Emergency assistance for students facing unexpected financial hardships.
- Support for basic needs and essential resources.

I am deeply grateful for the lasting connection our alumni maintain with Clarkson College. They represent what is possible for our students as they begin their own journeys.

Andreia Nebel



OUR COMMUNITY

ACADEMICS AND PROGRAMMING

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OUR CONTRIBUTION

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OUR CONTINUITY

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On the cover

The Physical Therapist Assistant program has many reasons to celebrate, including 30 years of graduating healthcare professionals and a new program space.

Contact us

Direct all inquiries, story ideas, and address changes to:
Communications@ClarksonCollege.edu.
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Kiewit gift ensured legacy of learning and caring

Over the last six decades, visitors to midtown Omaha may have noticed a significant work of art on the Nebraska Medical Center campus. A 40-ft tall cast aluminum sculpture on the unassuming red brick of Kiewit Tower creatively depicts Florence Nightengale inspiring modern-day nursing. Built in 1960, Kiewit Tower (originally known as Kiewit Hall) served as both classroom space and as a dormitory for Clarkson College before operations were moved to the current location a few blocks north in the early 1990s.

As the campuses of Clarkson College and Nebraska Medical Center continue to evolve, there is renewed interest in securing the future of the sculpture. Discussions are ongoing to find a way to bring it "home" to

Clarkson College where a permanent location would honor the legacy of the Kiewits and the contributions of generations of graduates.

An article published in the Omaha World-Herald on the day of the Kiewit Tower's dedication, Nov. 20, 1960, stated that "the dominant figure is Florence Nightengale. From her lamp flows a tableau of figures symbolizing patient care, the faceless unborn who emerge as nursing students, receive their training and finally their diplomas. The sculpture was produced in Italy and designed by Harold Rambusch of New York City in co-operation with the Leo A. Daly Company of Omaha."

From the archives: Benefactors Evelyn and Peter Kiewit are shown with an architectural model of Kiewit Tower.



The new PTA space welcomed students for the first time in August. (Top photo) Kat Pursell and Karen Abboud demonstrate proper stabilization exercises in the lab with students Jacob Garnas, Maggie Buhr, and Justin Pratt. (Below) Jessica Niemann guides Maggie and Jacob through stair training. (Bottom) Kat Pursell demonstrates the goniometric measurements with students, Jacob and Maggie.

Excellence *in motion*



Her seventh year as director of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program has been a lucky one for **Jessica Niemann ('99, '16)**.

The program has a dedicated faculty team, strong enrollment and a well-earned national reputation. And now, as PTA celebrates the 30th year of graduating students, they do so in a larger, fully renovated home on the Clarkson College campus. As part of the reimagining of the south building, the PTA program space on level two was gutted and rebuilt. As construction continued, classes were moved to the Interprofessional Learning Center on level three of the main building. The temporary inconvenience has been replaced with new finishes, expanded lab and office spaces, and high-tech upgrades.

"A boom camera in the front of the lab enhances the learning experience," Niemann explained. "Students will have a close-up view of hands-on skills while the instructor is demonstrating skills." A live camera feed displays on monitors throughout the lab, ensuring all students have a clear view of the technique being performed, enhancing clinical skills development.

Niemann has also seen changes in the physical therapy profession, shifting toward greater utilization of the PTA. Physical therapy organizations increasingly rely on PTAs to meet the growing rehabilitation needs in all settings. Medicare recently changed a requirement from direct supervision to general supervision of PTAs in private practice clinics which allows community members greater access to physical therapy services. As PTs more readily focus on specializations and rely on PTAs to treat patients, there are more PTAs in leadership roles.



Level up your PTA career

Working PTA professionals who want to advance their careers without putting their life on hold can pursue a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant with Clarkson College. While working as a licensed PTA, students in this program can work toward their career preference with specialized concentrations, Pre-Physical Therapy and Leadership.

PTAs can take advantage of flexible coursework and available scholarships. Details about these career pathways are available at ClarksonCollege.edu.

PTA senior earns top APTA scholarship

Jared Mattley ('26), was named a recipient of the Mary McMillan Scholarship Award, the top academic honor a PTA student can receive at the national level. He joins seven previous Clarkson College students so honored.

After graduation, Jared will begin his PTA career at OrthoNebraska where he worked as a rehab aide while completing his Clarkson College degree.

Assistant Professor **Kat Pursell ('19, '24)** accompanied him to the annual APTA conference in Portland, Oregon.



A degree that opened an unexpected door

It was an experience that changed the trajectory of **Jimmy Nguyen's** life.

Nguyen was working as a certified nursing assistant at a rehabilitation facility in Omaha, Nebraska, caring for a patient who suffered a brain injury. At the time, Nguyen wasn't sure about his next steps, or what career he wanted to pursue. But it all became clear after watching this patient make a remarkable recovery.

"I remember when I first met them and wondering if they would ever recover," Nguyen recalls.

As the patient worked with physical therapy, he witnessed how they progressed from achieving the milestone of sitting up in bed to walking with a cane weeks later.

"The patient's spouse was so emotional about their progress," says Nguyen. "I knew right then and there I wanted to be part of that experience."

But there were barriers.

"I was young with no financial support," he says. "At the time, it was not possible for me to commit to pursuing physical therapy school."

"My experience with the Clarkson College PTA program was life changing and wonderful."

As an Avenue Scholar, Nguyen was introduced to the Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant with Clarkson College, a career training partner of the organization.

"This program showed me what I was really capable of and gave me the confidence to further my education," Nguyen says.

He decided to continue his education, earning a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant with Clarkson College, with the goal of applying to physical therapy school. But the coursework inspired him to take a different path.

"In classes like pathophysiology, I discovered a new interest in medicine and pharmacology," he says. "I kept finding myself wanting to diagnose diseases and pathologies and to connect the lines from treatment methods and medications."

Those experiences in the classroom stayed with Nguyen as he worked in both home health and acute care settings. The more he reflected on his growing interest in diagnosing and treating disease, the more he realized that becoming a physician assistant was a better fit than physical therapy school.

After graduating from Clarkson College in December 2024, he was accepted to the University of Nebraska Medical Center Physician Assistant program and began this fall.

"I'm very excited to learn new information and how to effectively treat patients medically, while applying what I learned in the Physical Therapist Assistant program," he says. "The PTA program was very rigorous and rich in content. The experience of preparing for the state board exam during my clinical training required daily sacrifice and a lot of work, but I believe prepared me for PA school."

Nguyen continues, "I met people I will never forget; I was challenged in ways I never imagined possible and made connections with students and staff that shaped me into the person I am today."



Jimmy Nguyen ('24)

Preparing the best

Academic program updates

General Studies

This fall, we are offering a new preferred pathway for students pursuing an Associate of Science in General Studies or a Bachelor of Science in Community Health to continue their education in the UNMC College of Pharmacy.

A new agreement offers Clarkson College undergraduates new pathways to pursue graduate programs with College of Saint Mary. Those include a Master of Science in Kinesiology and Exercise Science, Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies, Doctor of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Doctorate programs at College of Saint Mary. Students at College of Saint Mary can apply for preferred admission into our graduate Health Administration and Nursing programs.

Healthcare Business

We received approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer **two reduced credit bachelor's degrees** this fall. The Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management and in Health Information Administration (HIA) now require 90 credit hours for completion. We are the first college in the United States to offer a reduced credit bachelor degree in HIA.

We earned the **Program of Distinction** status from the accrediting body (CAHIIM) for Bachelor of Science in Health Information Administration.

The Associate of Science in Health Information Technology (HIT) program was accepted into the final cohort of the Future Education Model Demonstration Project sponsored by CAHIIM.

Physical Therapist Assistant

Brycen Bell, current PTA student, was recognized for his service with the YMCA's Brain and Body program by helping individuals with Parkinson's Disease stay active and engaged in exercise to promote improved movement and function. More on pages 4-5.

Celebrating a 98% job placement rate for our graduates!

Remaining 2% continue to graduate programs.

Nursing

The **Nurse Anesthesia** program completed a successful visit from the Council on Accreditation. With no deficiencies to the 152 standards, a 10-year accreditation cycle was secured.

Graduate nursing experienced exceptional certification pass rates in all Nurse Practitioner options, three years running. Participation in the Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP), which provides low-interest loans for graduate-level nursing students preparing to become nurse educators, has increased.

Undergraduate nursing began a new curriculum allowing degree completion in six semesters. We secured additional clinical sites, and are conducting all-student clinical orientation each semester. We have added online options to save students the burden of purchasing nursing course textbooks.

Radiography/Medical Imaging

A successful Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) visit resulted in the maximum 8-year accreditation term.

Medical Imaging has strengthened recruitment efforts and provided a more direct route to graduation by reducing the number of credits required to earn a Bachelor of Science degree.

First-year Radiography students Nushinalsadat Musavimadani and James Brockhouse were selected for the ASRT Student Leadership Development Program. Chosen by the Nebraska NSRT Board of Directors, both students represented Nebraska and attended the ASRT Annual Conference and House of Delegates meeting in June 2026.

Special recognition



Selected as a **2026 Great Colleges to Work For** (Honor Roll distinction).

Classified by the **Carnegie Foundation** as an **Opportunity College**, one of just four in Nebraska selected.

Named as a **College of Distinction**, one of five in Nebraska.

U.S. News & World Report recognized our Graduate Nursing program in their "Top 100" for the 15th year in a row, and ranked in the top 25 Best Online Master's Programs for Veterans.

Newsweek ranked Clarkson College as the 66th Best College for Women Nationwide.

Research.com ranked in three "top five in Nebraska" categories: Best Value College, Most Popular College, and Most Affordable College.

Governor's Wellness Award (Sower), the only college or university selected for efforts of creating a workplace culture of health and wellness. Sponsored by Nebraska Health and Human Services.

Excellence shines in employee honors



Apple Award

Presented to faculty members by the Faculty Senate. Fall 2025 winners were **Sherri Porter ('93, '09, '21)** and **Margaret Lorimor**. Spring 2026 winners were **Cassidy Stroda** and **Leanne Galvan**.



Pillar Award

Presented to staff members by the Staff Senate. Fall 2025 winner was **Chris Mason**. Spring 2026 winner was **Kathryn Onorato, EdD**.



From left: Rachel Holm, ('24), Michael Ehrecke, and Katie Steckman.



Beyond the blarney

ATA travelers explore Ireland

The most recent Academic Travel Abroad (ATA) group enjoyed an unforgettable spring adventure in Ireland. From exploring the country's rich history and culture, to learning through firsthand experiences, this trip was another reminder of the incredible impact global travel has.

Five alumni were counted among the 40 travelers enjoying Ireland. The immersive ATA trips offer opportunities to gain insight into diverse worldviews and perspectives.

Alumni, faculty, and students interested in joining a future ATA experience may reach out for more details of upcoming opportunities.

Contact Katie Steckman
SteckmanKatie@ClarksonCollege.edu



Fuel the journey

Gifts to the ATA scholarship fund help students turn travel dreams into life-changing opportunities.

Expanding our impact through Office of Community and Cultural Engagement

Clarkson College has established a new department to bring areas of engagement under one umbrella, creating greater opportunities for collaboration, partnership, service, cultural learning, interprofessional education, and community impact.

As director, **Rachel Holm ('24)**, EdD, works to connect the College with communities and organizations in ways that benefit both our students and our partners. The office supports community-based programs and events, develops partnerships with organizations, promotes cultural awareness and inclusion, and creates opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and alumni to engage meaningfully beyond campus.

Joining the office is Katie Steckman, as Academic Travel and Mission

Administrator. She will oversee Academic Travel and Mission programs and Interprofessional Education efforts.

People and Culture Administrator, Michael Ehrecke, continues in his role. He develops programming to cultivate human skills for engaged, global citizenship.

A Community Engagement, Outreach, and Service Administrator is planned for hire later in 2026.

Bringing these efforts together creates a stronger, more coordinated approach to engagement and reinforces our commitment to preparing graduates who not only excel in their professions, but who also understand their responsibility to lead, serve, and make a difference in the world around them.



A pet's best friend

Cupboard and Closet adds pet essentials

The on-campus pantry has proven popular with steady use by students and employees. The inventory was expanded this spring with the addition of pet supplies. A gift from the family of nursing student Caressa Jones ensures that pet food is available to those in need, celebrating Caressa's legacy of care and kindness.

Donations to support our students and the pets they love are welcome. Email: HolmRachel@ClarksonCollege.edu

The mentor who changed my life

"I knew I wanted more."

At 16, the odds seemed stacked against Lateshsha Collick.

She was raising her one-year-old son and was simply focused on finishing high school. But in 2001, while sitting in the library of Bellevue East High School, everything changed when Aubray Orduña, EdD, walked into the room.

"I had never seen a woman like her in person," Collick recalls. "She was Black, professional, articulate – I knew in that moment I wanted to be just like her."

Dr. Orduña, former Dean of Nursing and current member of the Clarkson College Board of Directors, was there to speak to teenage girls who were young or expectant mothers and encourage them to pursue a career in healthcare with Clarkson College.

"I said to myself 'this is my way out'," Collick remembers.

"I'm going to do this."

She applied to Clarkson College and received the prestigious Gateway to Success Scholarship, awarded to four incoming undergraduate students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement. Collick graduated high school ahead of schedule and started her Bachelor of Science in Nursing with Clarkson College at 17 years old.



"It was very hard," Collick recalls of nursing school. Thanks to the support of her fellow students, Dr. Orduña, and faculty, she earned her BSN in 2005, and pregnant with her second child, she passed the NCLEX on her first attempt.

"It felt amazing," she says. "At the time, I was the first person in my family to graduate from college."

Collick shared that having someone who listened without judgment was what kept her going," says Dr. Orduña. "I believe we all need a mentor in our lives, someone who helps steady us when we encounter life's bumps in the road."

She began her nursing career at Nebraska Medical Center and quickly learned the operating room (OR) was a better fit than bedside nursing. "I loved being part of an expert team focused on caring for one patient," she says.

Collick says several early career experiences helped shape the kind of leader she wanted to become an ultimately influenced her to seek a new opportunity. Those experiences were pivotal in developing her leadership philosophy: be kind to people, make time to mentor, and encourage growth.

She accepted a nursing position at Boys Town National Research

Hospital working in Pediatric ENT, and in 2008, felt a desire to be closer to family in Delaware.

At the time of her move, she was finishing her capstone for her Master in Healthcare Administration from Bellevue University. She initially accepted an OR staff nurse position at Wilmington Hospital in Delaware, before becoming a perioperative service coordinator for three service lines, leading a team of eight people. Leadership then offered her the position of nurse manager for Endoscopy, now leading a team of 35 people. Seven years later, another opportunity emerged - an offer to return to Wilmington Hospital as nurse manager for Perioperative Services, leading a team of 100 people and managing 13 ORs.

"I came back to lead the team where I began as a staff nurse," she says. "It was very humbling."

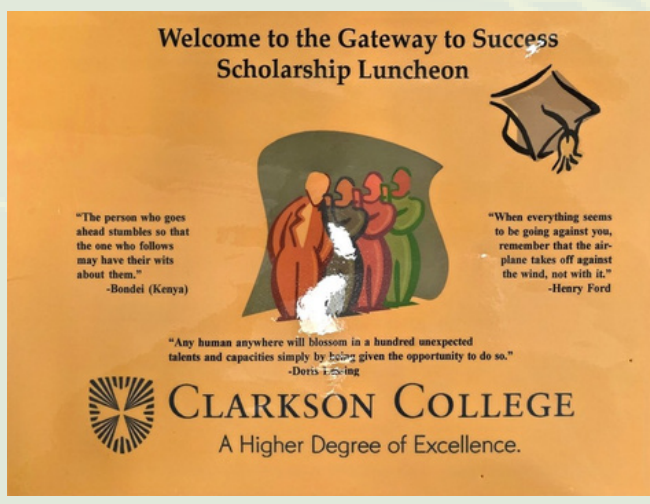
Even in that first leadership opportunity, Collick already knew the leader she wanted to be.

"I used the negative things that happened to me early in my career to remind me to never make anyone feel that way," she says. "I want to be the

mentor many people are missing in their lives. I make time for people. I'm always encouraging them to apply for a bigger job or to take a class, whatever that next step is - I'm the person saying, 'go for it'."

Today, Collick has been married to her husband, Dawan, for 16 years and is the mother of four children, ages 12, 14, 20 and 26. As she celebrates how far she's come, both personally and professionally, she can't help but think back to that pivotal moment when she met Dr. Orduña.

"In a word, I'm grateful," she says. "I knew I was better than my circumstance. And when you believe it, you achieve it. Dr. Orduña came for me. Now I'm doing the same."



Lateshsha Collick is pictured here (left) with her husband, Dawan, and her four children. She kept the placemat from her Gateway to Success Scholarship Luncheon all these years because it meant so much to her.

Honoring the best

2025-2026 graduates celebrated at commencement ceremonies August 7 and 8

Certificate in Artificial Intelligence Literacy

Elizabeth McIntosh **
Allison Peters

Certificate in Cardiac and Vascular Interventional

Sarah J. Kemp ^

Certificate in Computed Tomography

Brittney Beebe
Rilee MacKenzie Carrier λΣ
Cobie Cole ^
Keegan Duhon
Taya Nicole Esterling λ *
Shelby Grace Hatcher *
Tyler J. Jourdan λ
Gisela Sarahy Ramirez Gamero λ *
Breanna Wattier λ *
Samantha Yoder λ *
Perla Adamaris Zamarripa λ *

Certificate in Health Information Management

Deanna Andersen
Crystal Lara-Galvan
Nyualou Loghry *
Molly Weber

Certificate in Human Services

Jenna Pfeiffer Σ *
Jennifer Sorensen-Nelson Σ *

Certificate in Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Emma Elizabeth Black
Miranda Camberos λ
Rilee MacKenzie Carrier λ Σ
Cobie Cole λ
Samantha Marie Croft
Keegan Duhon
Ky Duong λ
Gwyneth Mae Rivera Encio
Shelby Grace Hatcher *
Katelyn Elizabeth Jones λ *
Sophie Redler λ
Bridget Shirbroun
Abigail Anne Urban λ
Candelaria D. Vargas Paiz λ

Certificate in Medical 3D Printing and Visualization

Keegan Duhon

Certificate in Medical Imaging Informatics

Aubrey Nicole Bousquet λ
Rilee MacKenzie Carrier λ *
Taya Nicole Esterling λ *
Tyler J. Jourdan λ
Zachary Mau **
Stephanie Pettitt **
Shyanne Vargas

Associate of Science in General Studies

Yousra Mohamed

Associate of Science in Health Information Technology

Tiffany Youngblood

Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant

Thurston Anderson Jr. *
Sarinda Mae Bateman *
Will Baxter
Philipp Beigl *summa cum laude*
Nathan M. Book
Eli Bourgeois
Shelby Brodtkorb
Sydney Casey *with distinction*

Margaret Crowe *summa cum laude* *
Cesar Garcia * *cum laude*
Pratchaya Kaney Joynooaeng *magna cum laude* *
Cassandra Krebs *
Tyler Lesac
Jasmine Lewis *
Josiah Luera *
Jared Mattley *summa cum laude*
Mckenna Miller *cum laude*
Makhfiratjon Mirzoeva
Mackenzie Norton *
Preston Paschall
Jessica Sheila Pearson *
Ella Pelletier *summa cum laude* *
Genna Roark *summa cum laude* *
Kailey Roberg *with distinction*
Noah Thompson *magna cum laude* *
Kayden Wallis-Collier *

Associate of Science in Radiography
Zarian Arends
Taryn Askvig
Emma Elizabeth Black
Aubrey Nicole Bousquet λ
Miranda Camberos λ
Rilee MacKenzie Carrier λ Σ
Belen Castaneda *magna cum laude* λ
Cobie Cole *with distinction* λ
Samantha Marie Croft *magna cum laude*
Keegan Duhon
Ky Duong *cum laude* λ
Gwyneth Mae Rivera Encio *magna cum laude*
Kelsi Gaston
Ethan Gates
Brianna Gelok
Nhu-Y Ngoc Huynh *with distinction* λ
Katelyn Elizabeth Jones *cum laude* λ Σ
Tyler Jourdan *summa cum laude* λ
Katlyn Rose Loudon *cum laude*
Paige Luft λ
Bridget Jean Nickman *summa cum laude* λ
Aiden O'Connor *with distinction* λ
Cameron Olson λ *
Sophie Redler λ
Bridget Shirbroun
Abigail Anne Urban *magna cum laude* λ
Chelsea Vang *magna cum laude*
Shyanne Vargas
Candelaria D. Vargas Paiz *magna cum laude* λ
Hannah Vogler
Emily Susan West
Kennedy Whipple *cum laude* λ
Jade Wohlers
Carlee Zellars

Associate of Science in Radiography
Zarian Arends
Taryn Askvig
Emma Elizabeth Black
Aubrey Nicole Bousquet λ
Miranda Camberos λ
Rilee MacKenzie Carrier λ Σ
Belen Castaneda *magna cum laude* λ
Cobie Cole *with distinction* λ
Samantha Marie Croft *magna cum laude*
Keegan Duhon
Ky Duong *cum laude* λ
Gwyneth Mae Rivera Encio *magna cum laude*
Kelsi Gaston
Ethan Gates
Brianna Gelok
Nhu-Y Ngoc Huynh *with distinction* λ
Katelyn Elizabeth Jones *cum laude* λ Σ
Tyler Jourdan *summa cum laude* λ
Katlyn Rose Loudon *cum laude*
Paige Luft λ
Bridget Jean Nickman *summa cum laude* λ
Aiden O'Connor *with distinction* λ
Cameron Olson λ *
Sophie Redler λ
Bridget Shirbroun
Abigail Anne Urban *magna cum laude* λ
Chelsea Vang *magna cum laude*
Shyanne Vargas
Candelaria D. Vargas Paiz *magna cum laude* λ
Hannah Vogler
Emily Susan West
Kennedy Whipple *cum laude* λ
Jade Wohlers
Carlee Zellars

Associate of Science in Health Information Technology
Tiffany Youngblood

Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant
Thurston Anderson Jr. *
Sarinda Mae Bateman *
Will Baxter
Philipp Beigl *summa cum laude*
Nathan M. Book
Eli Bourgeois
Shelby Brodtkorb
Sydney Casey *with distinction*

Bachelor of Science in Health Information Administration
Jessica Jefferson Σ
Leyton Robert Luke

Blanca M. Vasquez *magna cum laude* Σ *

Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management

Kelly J. Goetz *with Medical Coding Minor*
Jenna Marie Heald *with distinction*

Bachelor of Science in Medical Imaging

Brittney Beebe *summa cum laude* λ
Emma Elizabeth Black
Alyssa Byars *with distinction* λ *
Hannah Cada *with distinction* λ *
Rilee MacKenzie Carrier λ Σ
Cobie Cole λ
Taylor Alyssa Davis *
Daniel J. Diessner *summa cum laude* λ *
Taya Nicole Esterling λ *
Emily Gifford *summa cum laude* **
Shelby Grace Hatcher *
Katelyn Jones *cum laude* λΣ
Tyler Jourdan *summa cum laude* λ
Sarah Kemp *magna cum laude* λ
Izabella Klein *
Sydney Malena Mejia λ *
Savannah Storm Pusch λ **
Gisela Sarahy Ramirez Gamero *magna cum laude* λ *
Ashley Siers λ **
Jason Ka Sing Tang *summa cum laude* λ *
Maggie Theisen *
Jesus Valdovinos-Alvarez *
Breanna Wattier *summa cum laude* λ *
Olivia D. Weeder *summa cum laude* λ *
Samantha Yoder *summa cum laude* λ *
Perla Adamaris Zamarripa *with distinction* λ *

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Dillon Michael Adkisson
Doraceli Aguirre
Grace Carolle Ahoivissi *summa cum laude* *
Dreylin Fernanda Alfaro *
Kaylee Ambrose *with Psychology Minor, summa cum laude* Σ
Alyssa E. Avalos *
Amy Avila *summa cum laude* *
Riley D. Backus
La Cretia A. Bechtold
Marybel Bey *
Priscilla Birdsley *with Psychology Minor* **
Jordyn Christine Blaha **
Katrina Boesch *
Sheridan Lola Bolter **
Ashley Nicole Brown Σ
Alaina Cardenas Tello *
Jordan Ann Carlson
Meghan Carper **
Christin Carson
Karley Castro *
Syerra Nycole Chatmon **
Braeden Chipman *summa cum laude* *
Austen Clark *summa cum laude*
Mary Cleveland *summa cum laude* *
Tracy Cooper *summa cum laude*
Anastasia Crowell *
Nahomy Steffany De Paz Chicas *with distinction* †

Marcos Eduardo Diaz *with Psychology Minor* **
Clarisse Kambou Djappi
Carley Ann Donner *
Mandalynne R. Dore *summa cum laude* † **
Melanie Jie-rong Dou *summa cum laude*
Rachel Dyer *
Jake Thomas Elliff **
Hannah Engstrom *with distinction*
Melissa Escobar **
Alyssa Ann Falknor **
Sarah M. Fandel *
Aleks Fisher *
Ximena Flores-Sanchez *summa cum laude* †
Stephanie Grace Friedman *with Psychology Minor*
Edgar Fuentes **
Yessenia Garcia *
Paige Noelle Gregalunas *summa cum laude* *
Emily Gifford *summa cum laude* **
Kayleen Gruhn
Alvya Cathryn Harris *with distinction*
Kylie Hartung *cum laude* *
Tearny Haston *with distinction* *
Marey Haya * *
Brooklyn Marie Heinen *summa cum laude* *
Madelynn M. Horacek *
Katie J. Hutton *summa cum laude*
Aubrey Jo Janousek *with distinction* *
Carter Lee Johnson **
Rayna M. Johnson
Lauren Therese Jurek *cum laude* *
Olivia Kinen *
Brian Krewson *magna cum laude* *
Adriana Kroeker *summa cum laude* * *
Christine Lynn Kyler *magna cum laude* **
Elise Larson
Anna Michelle Leenerts *with distinction*
Megan Joy Lopez
Brianna Loza *with distinction*
Allyssia Luker *
Devynn Nicole Lund *with distinction* *
Abbey Madison *
Madison Janae Maldonado
Catherine Mashanic
Alexis Masters *with distinction* **
Shelby McCarthy **
Tierra McDaniel *with distinction* *
Morgan Marie Meier *
Grace Kelly Merritt
Lainey Nicole Meyer *
Avery Noelle Millard *
Shauntee Mims *cum laude* *
Bianca Munoz *magna cum laude* **
Katie Myers * *
Jordan Breanna Nelson **
Huong T. Nhan *
Alison Areli Ocampo *with Women's Health Minor* **
Gina Marie Olson
Lisette Pelayo *summa cum laude*
Alena M. Peters *summa cum laude*
Hannah Grace Peterson *summa cum laude* **
Jenna Pfeiffer *summa cum laude*
Kitzha Alondra Pineda Cruz
Jorge Junior Ramos
Grace Randell
Britney Ray *cum laude* **
Arianna Reeves *with distinction*

Emily Louise Reynolds **
Heyly Rivera *magna cum laude*
Simon Rizal * *
Rachel M. Ruth *
Rachel Schaffart *cum laude*
Kyleigh Schmit *summa cum laude*
Amanda Marie Schroeder **
Camia Sellers
Kaitlyn Smith *cum laude* *
Guadalupe Soria Lopez *cum laude* †
Ce'Ara Renae Spears † **
Caitlin Spurgin
Taviana Stano-Cornelio **
Breanna Steager *magna cum laude* **
Camille Streit *magna cum laude* *
Jalynn Strong *with distinction* **
Olivia Struble **
Reghan Noelle Svoboda *
Riley Szatko *summa cum laude*
Kasey May Teel **
Jennifer Thomlison *with distinction* *
Morgan Waddell **
Susanna R. Weber **
Corrine Welch *summa cum laude* *
Stephen Wellman *summa cum laude* *
Cole Andrew Wilber **
Samantha Willits
Serena Nicole Wilson † **
Ty Patrick James Windshausen **
Brooklyn Nickole Wrice *
Qiri Zhang *summa cum laude* *

Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant

Cole Michael Nebel *with Pre-Health Professional Minor* **
Jimmy Nguyen *with Pre-Health Professional Minor, summa cum laude* * *

Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Informatics

Lori A. Davis **

Graduate Certificate in Leadership

Maria L. Young *

Graduate Certificate in Nursing Clinical Practice Instructor

Emily Hagge
Kaneesha K. Reed

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Health Information Administration

Paula DeFreece *
Sydney Lee Searl *

Master in Healthcare Administration

Lisa L. Bird *
Tanya Lee Brabender
Lisa Ann Butler-Walker **
Christina Lynn King Σ
Ahmed Naciri *
Nichole R. Nemece
Megan Ostransky
Megan Short Σ
Dana Winn **

Master of Science in Nursing, Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

Lindsey Ayles **
Briana D. May
Alexis Rachelle McCormick **
Charles Ian Sloan **

Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner
Michael Angelo Mallare Alsol *
Luke D. Altstiel **
Allison Elizabeth Jane Anderson *
Mickenna Barankevich *
Angelo Barbaruolo
Emmanuel Bempah Σ*
Eric Benson **
Auriel Blake **
Valerie Bower *
Meghan Brockman †
Cassie Leigh Brugman † **
Jenna Lee Carrell Σ*
Alicia Marie Collicott *
Victoria Collins *
Sara Ann Crisp **
Anna DeGroote *
Lindsay Eyer *
Kelsey Gard **
Montana Gilbertson
Natisha Marie Giombetti *
Emily Rae Grubbs Σ
Jessica Dianne Hall
Abby Lynn Huber Σ
Nicole Lee Huber *
Lindsay Marie Johannes *
Corey Johnson **
MaKenzie Johnson **
Shelby Kingery
Amanda Kuchar *
Lauren Elizabeth Lionberger **
Haley Marie Lunning Σ*
Carlile Jean Malesa *
Casey Russell Marriott **
Jennifer Martin †
Siv T. Mayernik **
Kali Lorraine Mazurie **
Mandy J. McCarthy **
Jamie Marie Meister **
Joslyn Mountjoy
Rena Nielsen
Chrystal Rees **
Nadine Abbas Robertson Σ*
Ashley E. Sanger † **
Grace Catherine Sloan **
Leah Snow **
Stephanie M. Sones
Ann Swirzinski
Abigail Tabaka
Jerica Thor
Jocelyn Tierney *
Abby Titus *
Jaclyn Walker Σ*

Master of Science in Nursing, Nursing Education
Lisa Drew **
Amber Dworshak **
Amanda Ellis **
Megan Hill
Alohilani Nonies *
Carlos E. Sibrian *
Mandy Lynne Woodral Σ †

Master of Science in Nursing, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
Grant Eugene Duffy
Sabina Lopchan
Chisolm McDonald † **
Shaelean Amanda Melchor **
Efakone Eunice Olympio
Syed Shoaib Qadri *
Jennifer Rae Robinson **
Karli Steinkraus
Courtney White *

Master of Science in Nursing, Nursing Healthcare Administration
Kaylene W. Hrubsky *

Post-Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Administration
Tricia De Boer Σ †
Coral Sepulveda

Post Graduate Certificate in Nursing, Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
Michelle Sarah Huerter *
Ivy Orellana

Post Graduate Certificate in Nursing, Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
Adia Sikyta *

Post Graduate Certificate in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner
Kayla Carter **
Jennifer Dawn Gregalunas †
Cynthia Hatesohl
Heather Hinote **
Jersee Johnson *
April McGinnis **
Stephanie Renee Wagner **

Post Graduate Certificate in Nursing, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
Enyonam Abalekpor Σ †
Jennifer Borer
Charlotte Ophelia Dohn **
Heather Noerrlinger **

Doctor of Education, Healthcare Education and Leadership
Sarah Ann Crane Σ
Lyndsay J. Gibbs **
Sonya Hiserote *
Cynthia A. Hunte
Melanie McCluskey †
Samantha Alcobia Medeiros **
Kaitlyn Uwazurike *

Doctor of Education, Interprofessional Leadership
Jennifer Paola Thurman *

Doctor of Nursing Practice, Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
Ifrah Abdi
Rylie Albers *
Carter Crispin **
Emily Haselhoff Σ †
Linda Lorene Murphy **



Honor Societies
† Member of Omicron Epsilon Chapter Sigma Theta Tau
International Honor Society of Nursing

‡ Member of Delta Chapter Lambda Nu National Honor Society for the Radiologic and Imaging Sciences

Σ Member of Sigma Alpha Pi, National Society of Leadership and Success Interdisciplinary Honor Society

Doctor of Nursing Practice, Family Nurse Practitioner
Alyssa Ann Barber **
Monserat Flores
Samantha Lin Ohrt Σ*
Adryanna Orduna **
Jocelyn Ramos Σ †
Kendra R. Rauk
Devan Michelle Rice **
Jaime Robertson *
Abby Joy Schweers-Reid *
Marissa Grace Valencia-Napolitano *

Doctor of Nursing Practice, Nurse Anesthesia
Jared Ethan Chapman ^
Macy Ann DeBerg ^
Elizabeth Anne Flynn ^
Egor Aleksandrovich Gall ^
Joshua Gasper ^
Kylie Gunia ^
Hunter Z. Hartvigson ^
Brittany Lee Jack ^
Caitlin Koenig ^
Eric Lange ^
Brynlee Kaye Loptin ^
Minca Kaitlyn Owen ^
Valerie Peyton ^
Dominic Henry Prewitt ^
Caitlin Rerucha ^
Kelly Thibodeaux ^
Alyssa Thielen ^
Scott Ayres ^
Abigail Besougloff ^
Andrew John Bomgaars ^

Doctor of Nursing Practice, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
Chai Sylvester **
Rachel Anne Wheeler

Academic Excellence Award Recipients

These awards are presented to the graduate in each program with the highest grade point average who meets policy requirements.

Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant
Jared Mattley
Ella K. Pelletier

Associate of Science in Radiography
Bridget Nickman

Bachelor of Science in Community Health
Elisha Muhleka
Jennifer Sorensen-Nelson

Bachelor of Science in Health Information Administration
Blanca M. Vasquez

Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management
Jenna Heald

Bachelor of Science in Medical Imaging
Emily Gifford
Tyler Jourdan
Breanna Wattier
Samantha Yoder

Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Kaylee Ambrose
Austen Clark
Tracy Cooper
Melanie Dou
Ximena Flores-Sanchez
Paige Noelle Gregalunas
Katie Hutton
Adriana Kroeker
Riley Szatko
Corrine Welch
Qiri Zhang

Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant
Jimmy Nguyen

Master in Healthcare Administration
Christina King
Ahmed Naciri
Nichole Nemec
Dana Winn

Master of Science in Nursing
Mickenna Barankevich
Alicia Marie Collicott
Lisa Drew
Amber Dworshak
Montana Gilbertson
Abby Huber
Nicole Lee Huber
Alohilani Nonies

Doctor of Education in Healthcare Leadership
Lyndsay J. Gibbs
Melanie McCluskey
Kaitlyn Uwazurike

Doctor of Nursing Practice
Alyssa Ann Barber
Kendra Rauk
Devan Michelle Rice
Chai Sylvester



Honoring the best

Excellence of faculty, staff, and students recognized with annual awards



Dr. Patricia Book Perry Faculty of the Year and Employee Maltese Cross Service Award

As an assistant professor in the General Education department, **Danna Swartz** is an encouraging educator who inspires confidence. A lifelong learner, she is committed to building interprofessional relationships across the globe. Her acts of service extend to the Salt Co. non-denominational student group, mission trips to the Dominican Republic, and support of the Rosebud Indian Reservation. Swartz also consults at the College Writing Lab, presents at local and national conferences, and is pursuing a doctoral degree in the Clarkson College EdD program.



Dr. Otto Bauer Distinguished Service Staff of the Year

Enrollment and Academic Advisor, **Kris Boardman**, is dedicated to the mission of Clarkson College. He creates and implements improved processes, going above and beyond to assist the College. He is a member of the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) committee and enthusiastically assists with campus-wide events. He sets high expectations for himself to lead, having participated in the Emerging Leaders Program and on the Staff Senate Executive Committee. The award honors Dr. Otto Bauer who served as an advocate and mentor for many years.



Student Maltese Cross Service Award

Serena Wilson ('26) somehow found time to accumulate more than 1,500 hours of community service while completing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. Now enrolled in the DNP program, she dedicates hours to the nursing profession through her leadership. She was instrumental in the revitalization of the Clarkson College Student Nurses Association (SNA) and rose to the rank of president of the Nebraska SNA. Serena continues to inspire others to serve by leading through invitation.

As **Maltese Cross Service Award** winners, Ms. Wilson received a \$3,000 monetary award from the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska and the Bishop Clarkson Episcopal Foundation, and Ms. Swartz received a \$500 monetary gift from Clarkson College.

Faculty Academic Scholarly Project Award

Jenette Smith, EdD, DipACLM, MS, ('20), assistant professor in the EdD program, and **Michael Ehrecke**, People and Culture Administrator, will collaborate to create a course on effective conflict management with direct learning opportunities and avenues to meaningfully connect with partner organizations. The course will serve as continuing education for students, community learners, and alumni, with digital badging capabilities, and will be a revenue generator for the College. The award honors the legacy of Dr. Patricia Book Perry, the first president of Clarkson College.

"Service is contagious, and little acts can have tremendous impact."

Danna Swartz



CLARKSON CHATTER

1940s

Ruth Pamela McEwan ('48) died March 23, 2026, in Loganville, Georgia.

1970s

Patricia Ann (Maaske) Brand ('71) died Dec. 9, 2025, in Cozad, Nebraska. Her dedication to her patients earned her a place in the Cozad Health Hall of Fame in 2015.

1980s

Michael R. Jones ('88) died March 28, 2026, in Rockwall, Texas.

1990s

Janet Kummetz Hansen ('92) shared, "It is really great to see the traveling opportunities. As an RN and BSN student at Clarkson College, I traveled with a Bellevue.U. art class with my daughter. It was so wonderful! Clarkson College opens so many doors."

From the archives . . .

The name "Clarkson Chatter" was originally used throughout the 1950s and '60s for the collection of updates reported on by the Alumni Association, typewritten, mimeographed, and sent by mail. The method has changed but your stories continue!

2000s

Shelli Weddum ('05, '11) shared, "My son Brady and his beautiful fiance, Macy, will marry Oct. 31, 2026."

Stacy Ethington ('09, '15) has a new position at the Institute for Safe Medication Practices as a Senior Global Consultant.

Marielle Garcia ('20) works for Stanford Health Care in Palo Alto, California, as a clinical nurse on a surgical gynecology oncology inpatient unit.

Jeffrey Sisul ('13) APRN, MSN, FNP-C, is an emergency medicine provider at Mahaska Health in Oskaloosa, Iowa. He has extensive experience in trauma centers, urgent care settings, and hospital-based programs across Iowa. He also served as a flight nurse in air ambulance programs.

Olivia Chapman ('16) has been named MSN-FNP program director at Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa.

Caitlin Jardon ('20) APRN, now practices Adult Medicine at McFarland Clinic in Ames, Iowa.

Jennifer Bruck ('17) APRN, has joined Manning Regional Healthcare Center in Manning, Iowa, to provide women's health services.

Cyndi Wu ('07, '14) PMHNP, FNP, is a dually certified as a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner at Atlantic Medical Center in Iowa.

Caleb Poore ('11) MHA, has been named a member of the Clarkson College Board of Directors.

Faculty

Nina Wardell died June 18, 2026, in Omaha, Nebraska. She was a professor in the Master of Science in Nursing program.

Loretta S. "Lori" Shaw-Warren ('97, '05), died June 19, 2026, in Council Bluffs, Iowa. She was an assistant professor in the Undergraduate Nursing program.

Amy Clark, PhD, former associate professor, has been named provost/vice chancellor for academic affairs at University of Wisconsin-River Falls.



Let's stay connected.

There is no better way to support your alma mater than by staying engaged with our Alumni Association. We would love to hear from you!

Hailey Bykerk

Development and Alumni Administrator
Alumni@ClarksonCollege.edu



Connecting generations

Meet the Alumni Association board



Bill Koile ('08)
President

I have a deep connection to Clarkson College. In addition to earning a Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) degree, I have served as adjunct faculty since 2011 and am pursuing an EdD in Interdisciplinary Leadership. My wife, Amanda, and I live in Valley with our children, Claire and Davis plus two large dogs.



Karen Abboud ('05, '12)
Secretary/Treasurer

I am an Associate Professor in Clarkson College PTA program, plus work in home health patient care and as a lymphedema therapist. I am passionate about my family, my students, service to the profession and community, and being an advocate for PTAs. I love spending time with my family and pets, traveling, enjoying the outdoors, meditation, Reiki, and listening to music.



Jaclyn Kenney ('15, '19)
Director

Following four years as an inpatient bedside nurse on the Nebraska Medical Center Hematology Oncology Specialty Care Unit, I completed an Adult-Geriatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner degree. Since then, I have served as a head and neck surgical oncology nurse practitioner at Estabrook Cancer Center at Methodist Hospital. My husband, Pete, and I live in Omaha with our four children.



Kathryn Partusch ('20)
Director

With my background in the critical care environment, I work as a virtual intensive care unit nurse for CHI and as an instructor for critical care nursing courses at the College. Currently, I am a Clarkson College student in the Family Nurse Practitioner program. I joined the board to foster connections between current students and alumni, along with inspiring the next generation of healthcare professionals.



Rachel Holm ('24)
President-elect

After 10 years of teaching and serving as ATA administrator at Clarkson College, I was selected as Director of Community and Cultural Engagement. I earned a Doctorate in Healthcare Education and Leadership plus am a licensed master social worker and mental health practitioner. When not at work, I love spending time with my three daughters and husband, being active, and traveling.



Nicole Shives ('24)
Director

At Clarkson College for 10 years, I am an active member of the college community and have chaired many Faculty Senate standing committees and participated in multiple college-wide initiatives. I am a proud graduate of the Clarkson College Healthcare Education and Leadership doctoral program and teach Human Anatomy and Physiology.



Madelyn Flowers ('19)
Director

I am a full-time instructor in the undergraduate nursing program and pursuing a Family Nurse Practitioner degree at Clarkson College. I also work as a labor and delivery nurse and am passionate about supporting women and families during some of life's most meaningful moments. Outside of my professional responsibilities, I enjoy spending time with my husband and two-year-old son.



Connie Ogden ('09)
Director

I retired in 2019 after a fulfilling nursing and leadership career at Immanuel Hospital and UNMC/Nebraska Medicine. Since retirement, I have served as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for foster children. My husband, Dave, and I have two amazing children and five beautiful granddaughters.

A lifelong commitment to education and leadership

Now in its 55th year, the Transplant Center with Nebraska Medicine has earned an international reputation for excellence, offering hope and healing to patients from across the region and beyond.

Today, Clarkson College alumnus Bill Koile helps lead the teams behind that life-changing work as executive director of the health system's solid organ transplant program.

He was promoted to his new post in February 2026, which also includes oversight of Nebraska Medicine specialty medicine clinics. In his executive director role, Koile leads teams that help patients navigate one of the most significant journeys of their lives, bringing together physicians, nurses, transplant coordinators and support staff focused on delivering exceptional care. Guided by a leadership philosophy centered on servant leadership, transparent communication and empowerment, he strives to create an environment where teams can do their best work.

"Aligning these groups around a unified mission is both the central challenge and the greatest opportunity," says Koile, who has been a leader in healthcare for 21 years, many of those spent in an academic medical center setting. The complexities of leading teams in this dynamic environment require leaders who can unite highly skilled professionals around a shared purpose.

"One of the things I love the most about working in this space is the relentless pursuit of excellence and the sheer collaborative energy that defines an academic medical center," he says. "We are constantly addressing both immediate and long-term challenges, refining clinical workflows, and adopting innovative approaches to patient care."

After more than two decades in healthcare leadership, Koile remains

committed to growing as a leader, mentor and educator. He is currently completing his doctoral dissertation for his Doctor of Education in Healthcare Education and Leadership with Clarkson College, which focuses on qualitative research in healthcare leadership and organizational dynamics.

"I am immensely proud to be associated with Clarkson College."

"I wanted to deepen my understanding of effective leadership in complex healthcare environments," Koile notes. "Effectively leading in this space requires deep emotional intelligence, active listening, and relational leadership. You cannot lead from a desk; you have to understand the daily operational frictions your front-line teams face."

As an adjunct faculty member in Healthcare Business at Clarkson College, Koile enjoys sharing lessons learned throughout his career. He

believes his doctorate, combined with his Master in Business Administration from the University of Colorado Denver and Master in Healthcare Administration from Clarkson College, will further strengthen his work as an educator and leader.

"I love bringing real-world, practical leadership and operational experience into the classroom," he shares. "Teaching forces me to stay sharp, and there is nothing better than engaging with students who are passionate about making an impact in healthcare."

As a proud Clarkson College graduate and faculty member, Koile feels a deep desire to give back, which led him to serve as the Clarkson College Alumni Association vice president in 2021, and now president since 2022.

"Clarkson College played a pivotal role in my professional growth," he says. "Serving as president provides the opportunity to support current students, stay connected with fellow alumni, and help ensure the college continues to cultivate strong, compassionate healthcare leaders for our community."



Bill Koile is pictured with two members of his team, Mary Dvorak (left), manager, Liver Transplant Program, and Kari Zelenka, manager, Kidney Transplant Program with Nebraska Medicine.



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See story page 7.



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