Congratulations to the Class of 2016

This year, 491 undergraduate and 156 graduate students will receive their DU diplomas from the divisions of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Psychology was the most popular major with 102 undergraduates receiving a degree from that department.

Join fellow AHSS alumni, faculty and students for a celebratory breakfast on Saturday, June 4, at 7:30 a.m. to honor our newest AHSS alumni. RSVP to this free breakfast. Read more about commencement, at which former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is the speaker.

“Commencement is a joyous time on campus when we recognize the accomplishments of students who have completed degrees. It brings my fellow faculty and me great pride to see these talented students graduate and enter the next phase of their lives,” said Dean Danny McIntosh, who is a professor in the department of psychology.

“It is a privilege to have taught you during your intellectual journey at DU. I wish you the best in your future endeavors.”
Recipients Come from as Far as Japan to Accept Awards

In May, the divisions of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences recognized the 2016 recipients of the annual AHSS Alumni Achievement Awards. AHSS has 26,000 alumni globally and, in light of their many successes, the AHSS Advisory Board established an alumni achievement awards program in 2012. Nominations were collected and a committee comprised of the Advisory Board and Dean Daniel McIntosh reviewed the competitive pool of applicants. Below are this year’s award recipients:

Lifetime Achievement Award: Maria Guajardo (PhD ’88, psychology), pictured with Dean Danny McIntosh
Community Engagement Award: Scott Gratson (PhD ’02, human communications)
Alumni Service to AHSS Award: Melanie Herrera Bortz (BA ’88, psychology)
Recent Alumni Achievement Award: Keely Buchanan (BA ’01, digital media studies)

Read more about each recipient.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

New Alum Seeks to Defy Educational and Political Status Quo

Joshua Gaskins knows what it’s like to overcome adversity. Born and raised in Baltimore and Los Angeles, Gaskins learned quickly what it meant to be a black male in a diverse and turbulent city, and that politics can shape a person’s chance at mobility.

In June, Gaskins will graduate from the University of Denver with a BA in political science. He hopes to use his education to give back to communities like Baltimore and Los Angeles where “the statistics are staggering in the black community.”

“Growing up at the bottom of the socioeconomic spectrum allowed me to witness a side of America that most Americans are unaware of,” said Gaskin. “This had a strong effect on me and motivates me to work hard and want to help other young African-American males that might be on the wrong path, similar to my situation.”

Struggling to make sense of the limited opportunities for black men in America in the realms of higher education and politics, Gaskins found inspiration in former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Read more...

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Professor Incorporates International Research into Curriculum

Students have the unique opportunity to learn from professors who conduct research around the world. Professors in media, film and journalism studies (MFJS) work and gain experience in countries from Germany to Costa Rica, and from Kenya to Romania. Professor Nadia Kaneva is one MFJS professor who brings her international research into the classroom.

Kaneva’s research focuses on nation branding and public diplomacy. She is interested in how countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have tried to reinvent their international image and their national identities since the end of the Cold War. Her broader research critically examines nation...
branding on a global scale, branding as a cultural phenomenon and the influence of post-socialist media on gender and identity.

When Kaneva came to DU in 2007, she had the opportunity to create a new graduate course, Brands and Identities, which she designed based on her research interests. This class explores how branding is present not only in the things that we buy, but also in how we think about gender, how we present ourselves as professionals and even how we elect presidents. As part of the course, students also learn about nation branding, and Kaneva incorporates some of her ongoing research into the curriculum. Read More...

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Creative Writing Grad Student Signs with Penguin for Debut Novel

Mona Awad, a second-year student in DU’s PhD creative writing program, has achieved a feat many young writers only dream about, signing with publishing giant Penguin for her debut novel, “13 Ways of Looking at a Fat Girl,” out in Feb.

The book has garnered online buzz: Elle magazine's list of “16 Novels by Women Everyone Will Be Talking About in 2016” called it “honest, searing, and necessary” and praised it for peeling “back the curtain on the struggles of entering womanhood — from body image, to relationships to merely navigating the oh-so-cruel world.” Similar accolades came from Bustle.com, Marie Claire and Cosmo, and the book has received favorable reviews in Kirkus, Time Magazine and the Chicago Tribune.

Awad — who celebrated the book’s release with an appearance at the Tattered Cover in Denver — sat down with the University of Denver Magazine to talk about the book and her experiences in the DU program. Read more...

FEATURED EVENTS

OPEN-AIR CONCERT: July 3, 7:00 p.m. — Sixth Annual Carillon Summer Recital Series

Join us for a carillon concert at the Williams Carillon at the Ritchie Center, featuring Hunter Chase, Chicago. This is the first concert of the summer series. The best listening place to enjoy the free concert is in the courtyard at the south end of the Ritchie Center, which is located on the SW corner of Buchtel Blvd. and University Blvd. A carillon is a set of chromatically tuned stationary bells, usually hung in a tower and played from a keyboard. For updates, call the Lamont Concert Line weekly recorded message at (303) 871-6412.