

SPECIAL EDITION



DOANE

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Doane Magazine is a publication for students, parents, alumni, faculty, staff and friends of the University.

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class of 2025

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class of 2025

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Table of Contents



INSIDE

- 01 Dear New Doane Alumni
- 02 Q&A with a four-time Doane graduate
- 04 The Doane Zone interview w/ Cassie Kessler '24 & Logan Capek '24
- 06 Career, Leadership & Service after graduation
- 08 Where are they now? w/ Alexis Hamilton '23 and Austin Drake '23
- 10 Winning 'the Oscars of Teaching'
- 12 History of baccalaureate
- 14 Don't leave campus yet!
- 16 Games and Puzzles

ON THE COVER



We wanted to have fun with our first-ever spring commencement magazine. And what's more fun than double denim? Our student writers and featured staff showed up in their best Canadian tuxedos and struck poses reminiscent of a '90s JCPenney photoshoot.

First row: Sarah Begay '96 and Michelle Faltin '99

Second row: Quint Geis '13 and Zack Perez '24

Third row: Elsy Sierra-Valle '24 and Sabrina Renderos '24

To all of today's graduates —

Congratulations on this amazing accomplishment! The alumni office — as well as everyone else in attendance and across Doane — is here to celebrate your achievements as a first-time or repeat graduate of Doane University.

As you stand poised to cross the stage, truly take this moment in and reflect on what you have been able to achieve. You've accomplished a great deal already, and the opportunities that lie ahead for you in the future are limitless.

It's been Doane alumni, just like you now, who have helped pave a path to distinction for all current and future students. As **President Dr. Roger Hughes '82** always says, “We Build Leaders,” and we pride ourselves on supporting you, our leaders of today, as well as the generations to come.

Your connection to Doane doesn't end once you leave our campuses. The professors, staff, coaches and friends you met here will remain advocates and supporters throughout your lives. We look forward to hearing about your milestone life changes (career, family, home and more), and you always have an open invitation to return to Doane in whatever capacity you can.

Be on the lookout for news from campus, consider attending alumni events happening locally around Doane as well as in your region, and consider giving back to the university through your time, talent, or treasure.

Congratulations again. We can't wait to see and celebrate how you leave your impact on the world.

-The Doane Alumni and Advancement Offices



She Bleeds Orange

A four-time graduate on why she chose Doane — and keeps coming back

Erica Johnson first graduated from Doane in 2003, with a degree in special education with an early childhood education endorsement. She returned in 2005 for her Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction. And again in 2011 and 2018 for masters in Educational Leadership and Education Specialist. Johnson now leads all special education programs for North Platte Public Schools, as director of special education.

QWhat initially drew you to Doane?
Three things — my older sister, Erin Clasen '00, was a senior when I was a freshman. Doane is also known to be an education school, so if you're going to go into teaching, it's one of the top schools to look at. I also played basketball at Doane and really enjoy sports.

QAnd what brought you back for your graduate degrees?
I love Doane. I love the philosophy in the education programs. It is hands-on learning, it's real learning, it's reflective thinking. All of those things are the Doane way. Doane also hones in on leadership, and that was one of the other reasons I came back. Educational Leadership wasn't about being a principal, Education Specialist wasn't about being a superintendent. These programs teach you how you can lead in whatever capacity you want.

QYou're known to say you "bleed orange." What does that mean to you?
My older sister and I say that to each other every now and then whenever we talk about Doane. It was our home! It's where I spent four amazing years, and I loved it so much I just kept going back. We're both still very much involved — Erin is on the advisory board for the Agribusiness program and I'm going to teach the Education Leadership cohort here in North Platte this summer. I even have all of my graduation tassels here in my office.

QWhat advice do you have for our 2024 graduates?
Take everything that you learn and apply it to the real world. Even if you think it's not going to work, or you think it's silly, give it a try because there is a philosophy and evidence supporting what you've been taught.

QWhat else would you like people to know?
Your path is your path, and that's what Doane is all about. It's not about 'what's the next step.' It's about taking your path and your journey. And that's what I really enjoy about Doane.



Erica Johnson (left) poses for a photo with her family, son Lathan, 12 years old, husband Mike and daughter Lexi, 18 years old.



Crete Physical Therapy
Congrats to the 2024 Doane Tiger Grads, and especially those who we have had the pleasure of working with over the past few years at Crete Physical Therapy! A special shout out to this year's graduates who have spent time interning and working with us: Macy Fuller, Zach Fye, Chris Vincent, Nick Saiz.



Legendary Travel
Congratulations, Liv. Not only on your graduation but your outstanding undergraduate accomplishments. I can't wait to see you on the basketball court as a graduate.



ABloom Floral & Gifts
Congratulations to all Doane University graduates



Ken's USave Pharmacy
Congratulations to all Doane University graduates

In the Zone

Interview w/ Cassie Kessler and Logan Capek

Cassie Kessler '24 and Logan Capek '24 met during freshmen orientation. They quickly bonded over off-hand humor and a shared love of Cody Ko. As seniors, they co-host *The Doane Zone*, a podcast that showcases the ease of their friendship and skills behind a mic — Cassie as a media communication major, Logan as a theatre major. They interviewed each other in the studio, a portion of which is included below.

QWhat's your favorite opportunity you took advantage of at Doane?

Cassie: I think it's just getting involved with the Doane sports network. Because once I started working for them, I was able to approach our assistant athletic director and tell him that I wanted to do commentating stuff and then got involved in that. And I've had a lot of opportunities since then.

Logan: Just in a nutshell getting involved. The same kind of thing where you know, I was really able to put my toes in many metaphorical puddles.

C: Is that even a saying?

L: I think so. And throwing stuff at the wall and seeing what stuck.

C: *[unable to contain laughter anymore]* You have two different, very very different metaphors.

QWhat's your favorite part of our friendship?

C: We have very, very similar personalities. So I know I can go to you [Logan] with pretty much anything. And it can be like the most out-of-pocket comment ever and I know the worst reaction I'm going to get from you is, 'Oh, okay.'



Cassie's first impression of Logan: "This kid did theatre."

QIt's the day after graduation, what are you doing?

L: I'm going to Greece on the 20th of May. So the 19th is going to be all of packing my bags and making sure I have my passport on hand.

C: What are you going to Greece for?

L: Doane Theatre is going to Greece. And we're going to Athens to see where theatre started.

C: *[whispers]* is it too late to join theatre?

L: But that's what I'm going to be doing is packing and knowing the existential dread that's going to be in my body.

QWhat will you miss the most about Doane?

C: I think probably just the general support system that's here. There are a lot of people in your corner all the time, even when you don't think there are.

L: I'm going to miss the community and the sense of like, always running into people that you know around campus.

I'm also really, really going to miss the constant motivation to be better. And the ability to be pushed outside of my comfort zone. Outside of Doane it's going to be a lot more on myself to do that. And at Doane it's just part of it. You just get pushed to be better.



In the photo, Cassie sits on the sideline at Pinnacle Bank Arena during the Doane men's basketball vs. Nebraska game on October 29, 2023.

Rapid fire w/ Cassie and Logan

QFavorite spot on campus

L: the bench outside of Hansen right next to the bridge

C: the press box in Haddix

L: also the Con, shout out the Con

QMantra you live by

L: 'the front windshield is bigger for a reason than your rear windshield' or 'It's called the present for a reason'

C: adults are responsible for their own emotions

QGo-to drink

L: Mountain Dew Baja Blast

C: are you 12 years old?

L: I love a really solid strawberry lemonade, too

C: I would say Sprite. However, I cannot start or interact with people on a day if I haven't had coffee. An iced latte with oat milk.

QFavorite podcast that you don't produce

L: Dang, they knew. They knew that I would say the Doane Zone. (Available now on Spotify and Apple Podcasts)

C: Word.

L: Congratulations by Chris D'Elia or Matt and Shane's Secret Podcast

C: I have to say TMG (tiny meat gang). It's been on for almost seven years now. And I have listened to every single episode.





Always in your corner

The Career, Leadership and Service office provides support and resources after graduation

Writer
Elsy Sierra-Valle '24

Graduating may seem like the moment that graduates ‘close the yearbook’, although that doesn’t always have to be the case. Doane alumni are able to continue to benefit from the same services the Career, Leadership and Service (CLS) office provides current students.

For recent graduates, their needs may look different from their time at Doane, but the CLS continues to provide support and resources to alumni for the rest of their careers. Following graduation, alumni will experience numerous changes in their lives, which is why the CLS emphasizes the necessity and importance of having a place that they can come back to, when needed.

“Career Development is an ongoing process,” said Sarah Begay, associate director of career development at Doane. “We encourage students to seek out opportunities that fit their strengths and interests which will help them evaluate the experiences that they have after leaving Doane.”

Alumni can also use the CLS office as a way to give back to Doane’s community. Recent graduates tend to look for ways to give back to Doane and one way is by attending networking events that the CLS office hosts for students. This helps new professionals connect with current students while also keeping the alumni involved and connected with Doane.

Overall, recent graduates can benefit from the CLS office by using their resources and through the power of networking. Doane continues to connect people together, even after graduation.

HERE TO HELP

Schedule an appointment with the CLS team via Handshake or career@doane.edu

- Help with navigating job search and applications
- Feedback on resumes, LinkedIn profiles
- And more!



Q&A with Quint Geis '13

The director of Career, Leadership and Service offers advice and memories

QHow have you grown — personally and professionally — since graduating from Doane?

In many ways I think the education at Doane prepared me to continue to pursue growth after graduation, which I am grateful for. Doane is where I grew in my faith and found connection to others who wanted to grow in their relationship with Christ. Doane is where I met my wife and where our relationship grew and blossomed. Doane is where I found my career field and learned that I could support college students in their development. All that to say, it’s been the building blocks and since graduating Doane, expanding my experiences has been a goal.

QHow can students still use CLS after they graduate?

CLS staff can meet with Doane alumni in any part of their career journey to talk about next steps or brainstorm the way forward. The same sense of relationship and connection that students experience while they are at Doane carries into the way we engage with our alumni.

Additionally CLS is always looking to connect with alumni to come back and share their experiences with students. We pride ourselves on having guest facilitators in our classes whether it’s in relation to your career development, experiences with leadership or why you serve, alumni voices are a powerful resource for our current students. If you have interest in coming into one of our classes or offering your voice to the development of students, please let us know.

QAny parting words of wisdom to the seniors?

There will be a transition in this next step. Whether you are a traditional or non-traditional student, there will be some change after graduation — give yourself some grace in the process. As you wrap up your time at Doane, think about who the people are who you want to stay connected to and find ways in which you can stay in touch moving forward.

QWhat’s a favorite memory you have of this senior class?

This senior class on the Crete campus had a challenging time as they looked to come to a residential focused university experience mid-pandemic. As I reflect back on that first year of the seniors on campus I cannot help but be overwhelmingly proud of how they responded when they got the opportunity to lead here on campus. The seniors in many ways have repaved the path for the coming classes to make their Doane experience transformational and for that I am forever grateful.

AN EASY DECISION

Alexis Hamilton found her voice at Doane; now she speaks up for families in need.

Writer
Zack Perez '24
Photos courtesy of
Alexis Hamilton

Alexis Hamilton '23 graduated from Doane with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and minors in Sociology and Leadership Studies. In addition to her academics, Alexis was the president of Psych/Soc Club, the mediator and secretary of Gamma Phi Iota, an admissions ambassador, a community adviser, and a member of the Leadership Program and Doane Leadership Educators.

"They really took me in [and] Doane became my family," Hamilton said of her university experience.

Through her time at Doane, Hamilton was able to build lasting relationships with students and professors.

"They helped allow me to believe in myself and my opinions when it came to things, so not only do I know how to speak up for myself but I can speak up for these families," Hamilton said of two psychology professors, Dr. Jocelyn Schock King and Dr. Heather Lambert.

The community adviser position proved to be a valuable experience as well. Hamilton was able to see firsthand issues which gave her the foundation to understand her current job. This involvement is nothing short of extraordinary and provided a transition to life after college.



"They really took me in [and] Doane became my family," Hamilton said of her university experience.



Alexis uses her passions for wrestling and psychology in both her jobs to develop young female athletes and families in need.

Currently, Hamilton is a family development and self-sufficiency specialist at West Central Community Action in Council Bluffs, Iowa. This agency develops programs that help families reach self-sufficiency.

"It is really hard for families to dig themselves out of poverty," Hamilton said.

This job allows her to help families get on their feet. In time, she hopes to work with foster children.

Hamilton is also the assistant wrestling coach at Marian High School in Omaha, where Martha Hinneh became the school's first state champion in girls' wrestling. Girls' wrestling didn't become a sanctioned sport through the Nebraska State Athletics Association until 2021. Alexis says she's happy watching these girls compete on the big stage as wrestling was a huge constant in her life for over six years as a kid.

SUPPORT THROUGH SPORTS

Austin Drake takes his Doane sports experience to help fellow athletes

Writer
Jastiny Jackson '25

Austin Drake graduated in 2023 with his bachelor's degree in business administration. Reflecting on his time at Doane, Drake emphasizes the importance of networking and building relationships.

"I learned that it's not about what you know, it's about who you know, especially when it comes to business," Drake said.

During his junior year, Drake faced a personal tragedy with the loss of his mother. However, he found solace in the unwavering support of his coaches and friends, which taught him the value of leaning on others in times of need.

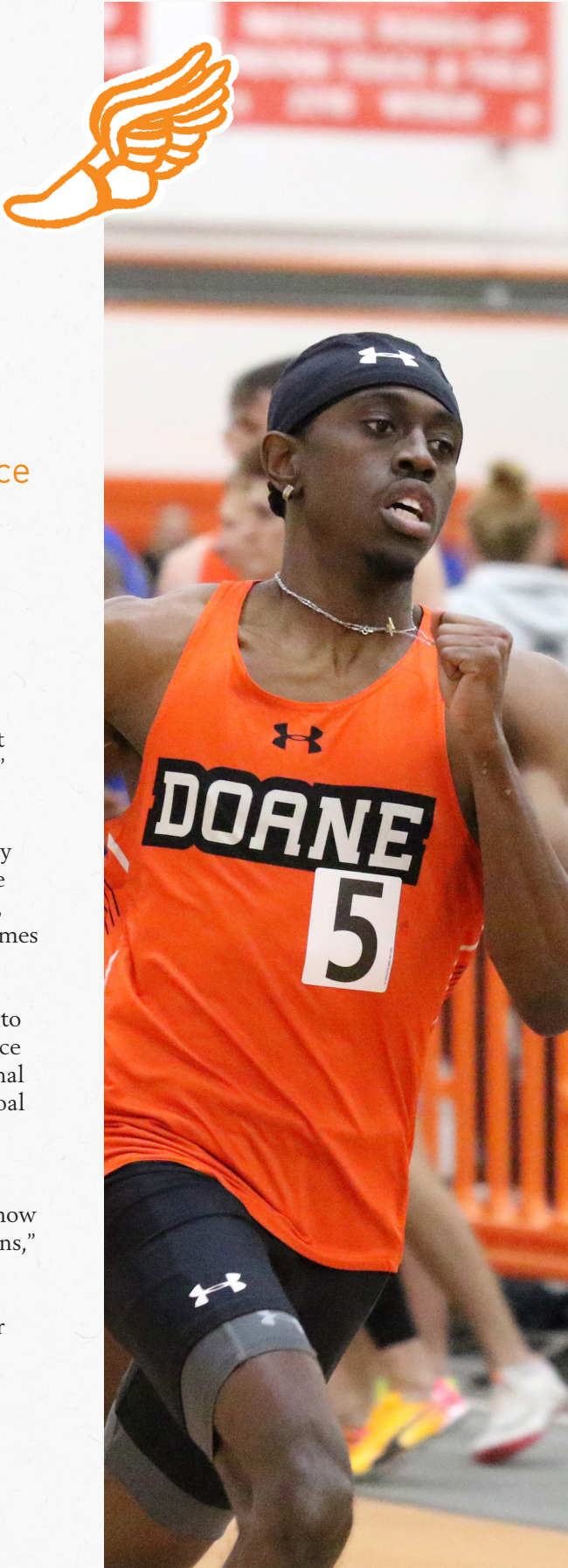
In January 2023, the birth of his daughter led Drake to pursue a career that would serve as a positive influence on her life. He set his sights on becoming a professional sports agent in his hometown of Dallas, Texas. His goal is to advocate for athletes, ensuring they receive fair contracts and sponsorship deals.

"I want my daughter to be her own boss and to learn how to set yourself up for success through your connections," Drake said.

He plans to pursue his MBA and offer his services for free until he establishes a client base.



"I want my daughter to be her own boss and to learn how to set yourself up for success through your connections," Drake said.





Writer
Blair Kampovitz '25
Photos courtesy of
the Milken Family Foundation

Leslie McIntosh hugs her students during a surprise school assembly that was held to announce her as the Milken Educator Award recipient.



THE OSCARS OF TEACHING

DOUBLE DOANE GRAD AWARDED THE PRESTIGIOUS MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD

Leslie McIntosh '18E, '22E, an educator and Doane University alum, was awarded the prestigious Milken Educator Award in November of 2023. This award, otherwise known as the "Oscars of Teaching," shines a spotlight on McIntosh's achievements in the education field. Her journey to excellence includes two degrees from Doane — a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and a Master of Education in Educational Leadership.

The glowing recommendations from her colleagues and peers inspired her decision to pursue her degrees at Doane.

"Many other colleagues had wonderful experiences," McIntosh said. "Doane was an easy choice."

Her educational journey at Doane equipped her with insights and

expertise, which she has skillfully applied in her role as a fifth-grade teacher at Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Middle School. She also mentions the support and resources Doane provides like networking opportunities that have impacted her career.

The Milken Educator Award includes a \$25,000 cash prize and opportunities to travel for professional development. It's a testament to McIntosh's leadership and unwavering commitment to education — and the lasting impact of her educational journey at Doane University.

It also reaffirms her confidence in her alma mater and career choice.

"If I had to do it all over again, I would definitely pick Doane," McIntosh said.



"If I had to do it all over again, I would definitely pick Doane," McIntosh said.

But First, Baccalaureate

Graduating seniors reflect in interfaith environment the night before commencement

Dozens of students don their caps and gowns the evening before spring commencement. Not for a last-minute fitting, but for a unique opportunity to reflect on their Doane University experience.

The baccalaureate ceremony is open to all graduating students, their families and the university community. Over the last few years, the event has become more interfaith to reflect the diversity of religious backgrounds and spiritual identities of the student body.

Luis Sotelo, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, said it's an important tradition to uphold.

"This interfaith baccalaureate is a special time for our students to reflect on how their religious, secular, and spiritual identities have inspired them on their educational journeys at Doane," Sotelo said.

Rev. Dr. Robert L. Polk '52, Doane's first Black graduate, was a guiding partner in this year's programming. He selected songs and hymns and delivered remarks about his time at Doane, his leadership in ministry, and his legacy as a lifelong bridge builder for positive change.

This year's baccalaureate was held in conjunction with a naming ceremony for the amphitheater south of the new residence hall: The Robert L. Polk Open Air Theatre.



"When we allow for an interfaith ceremony, more people see themselves in the event." Sotelo said

Robert L. Polk Open Air Theatre



About Rev. Dr. Robert L. Polk



Throughout his life, Rev. Dr. Polk has broken ground as "the first" Black person in work and other venues of his life. Bob persevered at Doane, even after being rejected for admission in 1949 initially and solely due to race, and he became the first African American to graduate from Doane. Even though Rev. Dr. Polk has witnessed and experienced blatant, harsh racial prejudice and bigotry throughout his lifetime, he has worked to build a more inclusive society no matter the circumstances. Rev. Dr. Polk says his Doane experience gave him the exposure, courage, wit, and wisdom to build bridges between race and culture. This has been the lifelong cornerstone of his ministry.

Clues

1. Near ye olde Merrill Hall, stands this wooden structure, where the first Doane president used to park his horse. No, really.
2. Hungry football fans line up here
3. You can tell the time — debatable how accurate it is to this day — in the shadow of clue #5
4. This structure will ring tonight according to our official fight song. (It actually rings every hour.)
5. Built in 1883, it's the oldest building on the Crete campus
6. "Doane is, was, will be" is carved on this wooden artwork not too far from where you're seated
7. To be, or not to be, that is the clue for this building that's home to our theatre program
8. One small step for grads, one giant paw print for this statue
9. You'll find this Greek-influenced structure among the trees just north of Frees Hall

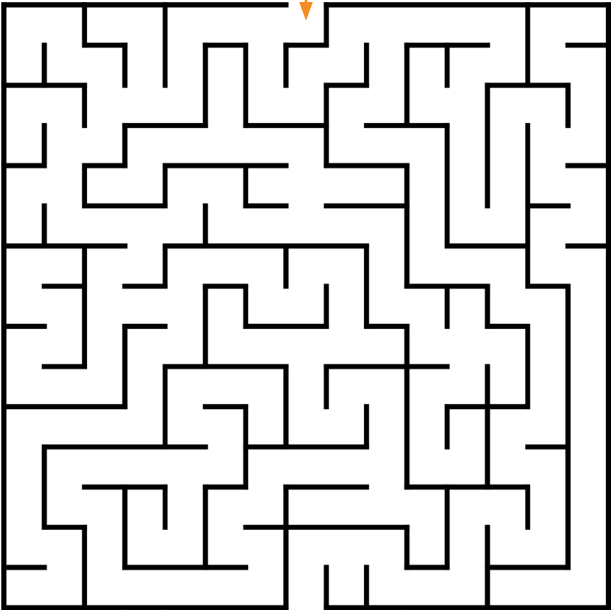
Scavenger




SCAN THE QR
CODE TO VIEW
THE ANSWERS



Get to commencement on time!



Cross the stage and collect your degree!



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alma mater
baccalaureate
Cassel
commencement
congrats

degree
Doane
graduate
Merrill
tiger

Spot the **SIX** Differences



Answers: 1.) The man in the background has vanished | 2.) The ball is now a soccer ball | 3.) [L] Olivia Hall 24 is now seen wearing the number 21 instead of her usual 20 | 4.) [R] Mak Hatcliff 25 has switched to orange shoes | 5.) The Doane 'D' logo on Hatcliff's shorts is missing | 6.) The defender is now wearing a glove on their left hand

DOANE.EDU/ALUMNI



JOIN YOUR FELLOW TIGERS THIS FALL FOR

HOMECOMING

SUNDAY, OCT. 13, 2024

ANNUAL FAMILY EVENT AT THE LINCOLN CHILDREN'S ZOO

FRIDAY, OCT. 18 - SUNDAY, OCT. 20

HOMECOMING WEEKEND (REUNIONS, TAILGATE, SOCIALS, GOLF + MORE!)

