

Celebrating UNH Manchester Class of 2021

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

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Delivering the unexpected – this isn't just what Howard Brodsky encouraged [UNH Manchester's](#) Class of 2021 to do, but something he did himself during Sunday evening's ceremony.

“The world loves the unexpected,” said Brodsky, the co-founder, chairman and CEO of [CCA Global Partners](#), one of the largest privately held companies in the US and the second-largest in New Hampshire. “As you go into your career, you have the ability to do something unexpected at every stage of your life...If you deliver the unexpected, whether it be at work, whether it be at home, whether it be to a friend, that resonates to put you in a different place.”

Brodsky then called student speaker Rafaela Tonne back to the stage and presented her with a check for \$3,000. “Rafa, to me you are the personification of doing the unexpected in the world, and I wanted to give her an unexpected gift,” he said. “For the incredible journey you’ve done, and I know that you will continue to do the unexpected everything in life.”

Tonne’s journey to the stage on Sunday wasn’t an easy one. After attending medical school in both Bolivia and Brazil without completing a degree, Tonne immigrated to the United States in 2013 and enrolled at UNH Manchester in 2018. “Today, 11 years [after I began my academic journey], on one of the happiest days of my life, I am fulfilling a long-time desire to have a diploma in my hands.” Tonne earned summa cum laude honors and a [biological sciences](#) degree.

Sunday evening’s ceremony celebrated the achievements of 222 graduates, with the proceedings led by UNH President James Dean, Jr. and Dean of UNH Manchester Michael Decelle

“For the rest of your lives, you will benefit from the academic degrees that you have earned, the challenges you have endured and the friendships that you have made here,” President Dean said. “Through your example, you have taught us so much. And today, our university is better prepared for future success because of you. You now venture into the world as more rounded, aware and open-minded citizens who are prepared for lifetime success.”

“You should know that what you have accomplished at UNH Manchester inspires us all,” Dean Decelle continued. “We’ve watched you grow and have learned much from you. We know that you will use your talents to make your mark on the world, as citizens, as leaders in business, government, education, nonprofits, and in your own communities.... It has been a distinct privilege to serve as your dean and I’m very grateful for the opportunity to have gotten to know many of you during these past years. I wish each of you great personal and professional success, and that success commences now.”

The ceremony also included the presentation of the Granite State Award to Claire Virginia Bloom, founder and volunteer executive director of [End 68 Hours of Hunger](#), a private nonprofit organization confronting the 68 hours of hunger local children may experience between Friday’s free school lunch and Monday’s free school breakfast.

Several faculty excellence awards were also presented:

- Excellence in Teaching: [Dr. Maeve Dion](#), assistant professor of [security studies](#)
- Adjunct Excellence in Teaching: [Edward Nelson](#), adjunct professor of [computer science](#)

- Excellence in Service: [Dr. Stephen Pimpare](#), principal lecturer of American politics and public policy
- Excellence in Research and Scholarship: [Dr. Kristen Johnson](#), assistant professor of [biology](#), [Dr. Jeffrey Klenotic](#), associate professor of [communication arts](#)

Congratulations to the resilient Class of 2021!

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UNH MANCHESTER



University of New Hampshire

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