



13TH ANNUAL
**RAINBOW
CONVOCATION**
Spring 2024

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Office of the President

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Northern Arizona University, congratulations!

A convocation is a time to reflect on and celebrate your unique contributions and accomplishments. I hope you feel a deep sense of pride for the years of work it took to get here and the success you have achieved because of who you are.

As you go forth into the world as an NAU graduate, we know you will contribute to building a more diverse, inclusive, equitable, just, and prosperous society. Equipped with the knowledge you have gained, the lessons you have learned, and the determination and resilience you have shown time and again, we are confident that you will rise to the challenges of the future and shape a better world.

Continue to give back and be a leader, approach the future with optimism and curiosity, and draw on the foundation of knowledge and experience you have built here at NAU. Through your accomplishments and actions, you will inspire others to pursue their dreams. We will be cheering for you every step of the way throughout your journey, and we hope you will remain lifelong ambassadors for NAU and stay connected to your Lumberjack family.

We are so proud of you and all that you have accomplished. Thank you for choosing NAU. Again, on behalf of the entire Lumberjack community, congratulations!

With respect,



José Luis Cruz Rivera
President

MAY 2024 RAINBOW CONVOCATION
CEREMONY AGENDA

Welcome

Bryan Bove, Assistant Director of LGBTQIA Student Services,
Office of Inclusion

Opening Poem, “Embracing Authenticity”

Written and performed by Parris Adams, President of the Queer &
Melanated Collective

Presidential Remarks

Dr. Jose Cruz-Rivera, President, Northern Arizona University
With an introduction by Dr. Justin Mallett, Vice President, Office of
Inclusive Excellence and Access

Keynote Address

Dr. Ari Burford, Senior Lecturer, Women’s and Gender Studies

Student Address

Matthew Sorbe, President of PRISM

Pride and Advocacy Awards Presentation

Poetry Reading, “I Remember a Time” and “Existence”

Written and performed by Angela Lee, PRISM

Presentation of the Graduates

Erin Hernández, Campus Living Community Coordinator, Campus
Living Initiatives and Partnerships

Drag Performance

Gwen Dolin and Afro Dite, Flaunt

Closing Inspiration, “Won”

Written and performed by Jaden Reyes, Coordinator, Campus Living
Initiatives and Partnerships

HISTORY OF THE RAINBOW CONVOCATION

Rainbow Convocation recognizes and celebrates the achievements of graduates who identify in the 2SLGBTQIA+ Lumberjack community. This is an important celebration for 2SLGBTQIA+ graduates - many of whom do not receive support or encouragement from their families and communities because of their identities. This is why we kindly ask for attendees to refrain from taking pictures or videos during the ceremony so students and graduates are not accidentally outed without their permission.

The first Lavender Graduation Ceremony, the more common name for Rainbow Convocation, was created in 1995 by Dr. Ronni Sanlo, who was not allowed to attend the graduations of her biological children because of her identity as a Jewish Lesbian. The first Rainbow Convocation at Northern Arizona University took place in May 2012 with almost 20 graduates and the rainbow flag distinguishing their stoles.

The original rainbow flag was created in 1978 by Gilbert Baker (1951-2017), a self-described “Gay Betsy Ross,” for the Gay Freedom Pride Parade in San Francisco, which took place that year at the urging of Harvey Milk and other gay rights movement leaders. The very first flags were created in the attic of The Gay Community Center in San Francisco by using trash bins full of dye and stitching each individual color together.

The first rainbow flag originally used eight colors where each stripe had a significant meaning: pink for sex, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sun, green for nature, turquoise for magic, blue for peace and purple for spirit. Since 1978, the flag itself has changed with the most common version containing 6 colors. This was because pink fabric became too expensive, according to Gilbert Baker, while turquoise and blue were combined into royal blue. Today, the rainbow flag is the most recognized symbol for inclusion and 2SLGBTQIA+ pride worldwide, with continued revisions to create a more inclusive symbol of pride.

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

2024 RAINBOW CONVOCATION GRADUATES

■■■■■■■■■■ DOCTORATE ■■■■■■■■■■

Name	Degree/Major
Caitlin Bemis	Biology
Bonnie Rohrbach	Clinical Psychology

■■■■■■■■■■ MASTER'S ■■■■■■■■■■

Name	Degree/Major
Jessica Alcalá	MEd. in Counseling-Student Affairs
Madison Heck	MS in Applied Chemistry
Chelsea Hutton	MEd. In Counseling – Student Affairs
Breanne Macormac	Career and Technical Education
Henry Mann, Jr.	Masters of Public Health – Health Promotion
Sam Osinga	MA, Psychological Sciences
Erica Peterson	MFA, Creative Writing
Celena Wallace	Communication with an emphasis in Documentary

■■■■■■■■■■ BACHELOR'S ■■■■■■■■■■

Name	Degree/Major
Mateo Altamirano	Psychological Sciences
August Atoms	Biology
Sam Axford	Parks and Recreation
Kaitlyn Baggs	Political Science with Minors in Law Rights & Justice and Queer Studies
Emily Bailey	Psychology with a Minor in Social Work
Dakota Bell	Science in Elementary Education
Camila Noel Berbeti Villarroel	English Literature with a minor in Sociology
Julian Bernhardt	Political Science with a Minor in Psychology
CJ Birkmeyer	Strategic Communications with an emphasis in Advertising and a minor in Studio Art
Caecilia Blehm	Women's and Gender Studies with a Minor in History
Emily Blink	Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Marianna Burns	Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies
Madison Campbell	English in Secondary Education

Name	Degree/Major
Fern Carter	Chemistry with a Minor in Astronomy
Madison Cathey	Biology with a Minor in Spanish
Susy Chavez	Secondary Education – Physics, BSED
Jessica Leigh Christensen	Parks and Recreation Management
Maria Liliana Contreras	Biomedical Sciences and Spanish
Remy Dasher	Mechanical Engineering
Jarod DeSpain	Physics and Astrophysics
Charlie Dors	Political Science and Sociology with a Minor in Applied Indigenous Studies
Danielle Fear	Elementary Education
Ainsley Fraser	Journalism with Minors in Photography and Queer Studies
Cassie Freedman	Strategic Communications and Theatre
Jude Fulkerson	Creative Media and Film
Graham Gauer	Forestry
Jo Gauthier	Political Science with a Minor in Emergency Management
Aaliyah Angel Gonzalez	Women's and Gender Studies with Minors in Spanish and Sociology
Megan Taylor Greenspan	Psychological Sciences with Minors in Queer Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, and Social Work
Jasmine Guerrero	Fitness Wellness
Hailey Hampton	Creative Media and Film with an emphasis in Media Studies and a Minor in Public Relations
Brooke Harris	Environmental Science with an emphasis in Biology
Dani Hernandez	Criminal Justice with Minors in Psychology and Anthropology
Paola V. Hernandez	Public Health
Emilee Herrmann	Elementary Education with Minors in East Asian Studies and Photography
Kimberly Higuera	International Affairs and Spanish
Saige Holloway	Accounting and Finance
Jeremiah L. Horton	Dental Hygiene
Payson Hudson	Political Science with a Minor in Sociology
Charles Hutchison	Applied Human Behavior
Jackie Jackson	Creative Media and Film with an emphasis in Independent Filmmaking
Jessica Alaina James	Interdisciplinary Studies of Applied Human Behavior

Name	Degree/Major
Ciarán Johnson	History with a Minor in Political Science
Cecelia Keen	English
Quinten Kessler	Women and Gender Studies with a Minor in Theatre
Haley Lappine	Early and Special Education
Kyra Larson	Criminal Justice and Psychology with a Minor in Business
Giana Lewis	Social Work with Minors in Sociology and Psychology
Sydney Lewis	Creative Media and Film with an emphasis in Independent Filmmaking and Minors in Women's and Gender Studies, Music, and Photography
Peter Lopez	Creative Media and Film with an emphasis in Independent Filmmaking
Mia Marotti	Biomedical Science with a Minor in Chemistry
Amanda Kay Martell	Social Work
Jeanine Martinez	Secondary Education – English
Mika Mashack	Visual Communications with a Minor in Studio Arts
Michael McAnerney	Criminology/Criminal Justice and Psychology
Emily McCallie	Women's and Gender Studies and Political Science
Sydnee Messerschmidt	Theatre Studies and Psychology
Madelyn Moore	Interdisciplinary Studies – Administration
Ehsa Murray	Studio Art with Minors in Japanese and Asian Studies
Andrea Newsom	Allied Health with an emphasis in Physical Therapist Assistant
Makayla O'Bannon	Journalism with a Minor in Sociology
Lennon Otero-Strong	Psychological Sciences with Minors in Social Work and Women's and Gender Studies
Hannah Paluch	Theatre with a Minor in Classical Studies
Florencia Piriz	Fine Arts
Arianna Prado	Psychology with a Minor in Women's and Gender Studies
Elizabeth Reninger	Criminology and Criminal Justice with a Minor in Forensic Science
Renee Sadler	Psychological Sciences with Minors in Japanese and Studio Art
Steph Sawyer	Health Science: Diagnostic Medical Imaging and Therapies
Jax Scales	Women's and Gender Studies with a Minor in Ethnic Studies

Name	Degree/Major
Andrew Schmidt	Music Performance with an Instrumental emphasis
Abby Schuh	Environmental and Sustainability with a Minor in Spanish
Gabrielle Siros	Health Sciences: Nutrition and Foods with Minors in Chemistry and Psychology
Lily Skinner	Social Work with a Minor in Sociology
Matthew Sorbe	Accountancy with a Minor in Secondary Education-Math
Kelly Stiegmann	Hotel and Restaurant Management
Rachel Svez	Psychological Sciences with a Minor in Social Work
Aileen Torres	Psychological Sciences with a Minor in Spanish
Daisy Vega Monarrez	Biomedical Sciences with a Minor in Spanish
Charlyse Wapniarski	Anthropology with Minors in Biology and Social Science Forensics
Kenya Woodruff	Elementary Education
Sydney Isis Cabano Zinn	Psychology with a Minor in Criminology

The names in this program do not constitute an official graduation list.

Thank you to the Rainbow Convocation Committee

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