



A Special Day for USD

By Thomas Hatzenbuhler
For the Plain Talk

The 39th USD Winter Commencement honors more than 500 graduates. A sea of graduates, garbed in both red and black—those completing bachelor's degrees and master's or doctorate degrees, respectively—along with the friends and family members thereof filled the Dakota Dome this Saturday for the 39th USD Winter Commencement Exercises.

More than 500 graduates were conferred degrees by USD at this year's winter session commencement exercises, marking the ever-important transition between one's status as a student and the next step in the graduate's life.

"I'm pretty excited [to graduate]," said Emily Theisen, who received a master of science degree in occupational therapy. "It has been a long journey getting here. I've become really close with all my

classmates, and I'm really looking forward to what tomorrow brings."

Still, others contemplate a continuation of their educational career even on their day of matriculation.

"I am considering enrolling in law school in the fall," explained Robert Barron, who received a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice. "I have already been working full-time, so I may just continue working if I don't get into law school. Today is a big step for me, and I am excited to graduate."

The 2014 winter graduates also received advice and words of encouragement from this year's commencement speaker, South Dakota State Senator Deb Peters.

Peters, who works out of District 9, is a 1997 USD graduate, who said she felt no nerves before speaking to the students.

She spoke of how honored she was to give the speech, one so many



University of South Dakota president James Abbott speaks during the school's 2014 graduation ceremony last Saturday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

THOMAS HATZENBUHLER / FOR THE PLAIN TALK

notable figures also had done in the past.

"Today I am humbled," Peters said. "...humbled that I have the opportunity to speak to you, the class of 2014. At one point, the person who had this privilege spoke to Al Neuharth, who went on to establish the largest circulated newspaper in the country. Another commencement speaker spoke to one of the greatest icons in the history of journalism, Tom Brokaw.

"Two others spoke to United States Senators Tim Johnson and John Thune and yet others spoke to our SD Supreme Court Justices. And yet many others spoke to ground breaking physicians; educators; innovators; scholars; industry leaders; and individuals who made this world

better for being a part of it."

Peters assured graduates that "greatness lies ahead" and that they were graduating from "the best public university in our state."

Peters also shared some thoughts about her days as a USD student during those final days prior to commencement. "When I crossed this stage, the last thing on my mind was thinking that one day I would have the privilege to come back here and speak," Peters shared. "I was too excited to be done with finals and the late nights cramming during finals week. Sad that I was never going to get summers off again. But, thrilled that after 17 years of school, I was

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1101 Announcements - Events

ELK POINT UNITED PARISH, 603 S Pearl Street, Elk Point, Pastor David Bambas, EPUP seeks to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ who are fully devoted to loving God and others. Sunday worship at 9:30 AM (nursery available); Adventurezone at 10:30 AM for preschool (3 as of Sept.) thru 5th grade. For more information call 605-356-2008, epups@iw.net or epunitedparish.org

FAITH FELLOWSHIP of the Open Bible on Bypass 50 and Highway 19: Sunday Celebration 10:30 a.m. Pastor Tony Armbrust, 624-2921.

Faith Lutheran church 401 Main Street, Makell, NE. Sunday School: 9:00; Worship: 10:00 Communion: 1st and 3rd Sundays (605)658-0240 (home) (402)-692-3323 (church).

FAITH UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH

ELCA, 44874 303rd St/Po Box 168, Volin, SD 57072, (605)267-2277. Sunday Worship: 9:30am with Holy Communion the 1st & 4th Sundays. WOW Wednesday program beginning at 6:30pm for all children 3 yrs old - 7th grade, and confirmation classes for those in grades 8th & 9th.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Vermillion, is a welcome place reaching out to all God's people. Located at 16 N. Dakota St. Adult Sunday School 9am; Sunday Worship 10:25am; Children's Church after Children's Sermon (PreK-5). Welcome Table-serving free meal Mondays 5:30-7pm. Youth Group with Meal (Gr. 6-8) Wednesdays 5:30-7pm. High School Youth Group 7pm. Adult Choir Rehearsal 7pm. Praise Band rehearsal 8pm. Friday Morning Book Study and Breakfast 6:45am. Call (605)624-2179 for more info. Pastor Rick Pittenger.

GAYVILLE LUTHERAN CHURCH

9:00 am Worship, Sunday School 10:15 am.

GOSPEL CHAPEL CHURCH

708 Jessie St./Highway 12, Newcastle, NE. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday worship 10:30 a.m.; AWANA Wednesday at 7 p.m., 402-355-2305. Pastor Chuck Myers, 402-355-1335.

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GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH SBC, Pastor Steve Ford, 1102 E. Main. Phone 624-4949. Adult's and Children's Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. Prayer Meeting Wednesday Night 7 p.m.

HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

1800 Constance Dr. Worship Sept.-May 10:30a.m. AWANA Small groups; 9-10:15. Worship May-August 10a.m., 605-624-4862.

www.hillside-cc.com Like us on Facebook!

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Elk Point, SD: Worship Service 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

KOMSTAD COVENANT CHURCH

Rural Beresford and Centerville, SD: Matt Styles, Pastor. 18 miles north on University Road. Phone 563-2402. Sunday School 10 a.m., Worship Service 11 a.m.

ONE HOUR

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PLEASANT VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rural Vermillion: Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Holy Communion First Sunday of every month. All welcome.

PROVIDENCE REFORMED CHURCH

830 Madison: Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. "We Welcome You To Historic Protestant Worship And Fellowship."

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www.usdnewman.org for weekday Mass and Adoration times. 605-624-2697.

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