

TOP FIVE GRADUATING SENIORS

Andrew Butt's academic accolades include being the recipient of the President's Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Students and the Arts and Humanities Dean's Award for Excellence. Andrew is an exceptional Dean's List student graduating Summa Cum Laude in May with a Bachelor's Degree in English and a minor in Philosophy. He currently maintains a 3.88 GPA. He is the captain of the Mock Trial team, which competed in the American Mock Trial Association's 2018 Great Lakes Regional Tournament. He was also selected for the McNair Scholars Program. While working a part-time job at Wegmans, Andrew has had an impressive undergraduate academic career and has been taking graduate level courses in the English Department. His academic success will give him a bright future as he has been accepted into several Master's Degree programs and two doctoral programs: SUNY Stony Brook and SUNY Albany. Andrew is an academic mentor in EOP's Academic Center for Excellence, and he embodies the values and dedication of the Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program.

Sydney S. Johnson is a senior majoring in early childhood education. She is a transfer student who was able to thrive at Buffalo State. She has been on the dean's list since the fall of 2016, and her ultimate goal is to become a teacher. She is loved and respected by her peers. With hard work and the support of her friends and family, there has been nothing that can stop this young lady from achieving her goals.

Mohamed Koanda is the recipient of the SUNY Undergraduate Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence. He moved from West Africa, Burkina Faso to the United States of America in 2011 at the age of 15. Mohamed is a Computer Information Systems major with a minor in Mathematics with a 3.92 GPA. After going through difficult times in Africa, where he had little support to attend school, he has dedicated his life to helping others in need in any way he can. As an EOP student, a Burrell Scholar and a Student Athlete, Mohamed also became an Academic Tutor and a Resident Assistant. Mohamed really enjoys learning and helping his peers succeed in school, especially the first-year students. During his junior year in college, he created a GPA calculator program on Windows platform, using Visual Studio, to allow students to calculate their anticipated semester GPA. Inspired by programming, he hopes to pursue a career in software engineering and become a full stack web developer. Mohamed hopes to return to his home country of Africa some day and create an academic center to assist students in need. Mohamed spends his free time running track, playing soccer and visiting his family. He was the recipient of the EOP USB award in 2017.

Gabriela Ramirez Pujols was born and raised in the Dominican Republic. Gabby moved to NYC at the age of 16, and after graduating from high school, she came to Buffalo State. Majoring in Social Work with a minor in Sociology, Gabby has excelled academically and currently has a GPA of 3.91 along with having received Dean's List and EOP Honors. Additionally, Gabby is both a McNair Scholar and a Burrell Scholar. She has been recognized by EOP at the Honors Convocation as the top student of her class through all levels [Fr, So, Jr, Sr] and earned a GPA of 4.0 in five of her seven previous semesters. After graduating in May 2018, she plans to pursue a graduate degree in Social Work. Gabriela has conquered personal and financial hardship which has served as an inspiration for her to overcome any obstacle in her way and continue excelling as a person and as a student. She has volunteered her time to give back to the Buffalo community by participating in community service projects such as Bengals Dare to Care Day and serving in the Saint Vincent de Paul dining room. She currently volunteers with the New York Public Interest Research Group while also completing an internship at the Erie County Medical Center. Gabby worked as an EOP Academic Mentor for the Academic Center for Excellence and as a mentor for the First Year Mentor Program.

Zamzam Noor moved to the United States from Uganda in 2013. After receiving her GED, Zamzam enrolled in Erie Community College. She graduated with honors while managing to work full time to provide for her child. During that time, Zamzam volunteered at a homeless shelter. Volunteering at a homeless shelter taught her that people need someone to empower them and advocate for them. Zamzam currently has a GPA of

3.81 in Social Work. After receiving her Bachelor's degree, her goal is to continue to law school. She feels that the immigrant Somali community in Buffalo is in need of an attorney and advocate to represent the community. With all of her life experiences and both a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and a law degree, Zamzam feels that she could greatly assist the Somalian community. Zamzam is currently in the process of preparing for the LSAT.