

# TOP FIVE GRADUATING SENIORS

**Hector Coco** is a Dean's List student who will receive his Bachelor of Science degree in Individualized Studies at Buffalo State College this May. He has excelled academically and has maintained a 3.86 cumulative GPA in addition to being a full time Buffalo Police Officer, husband, and father. As a transfer student from the University at Buffalo, Hector was drawn to Buffalo State College for the opportunity to create a major that made sense to him, through the INS program. His major consists of a minor in Mathematics and a minor in Spanish, creating Bilingual Mathematics. Being from the Dominican Republic and having immigrated to the United States at the age of 13, Hector knows all about the struggles of being a student learning English as a Second Language (ESL) in America. Hector's goal is to help ESL students across America become successful in life through the creation of an entire bilingual department at the college level that will offer bilingual college courses to help these students reach their full potential.

(Biography information under Alumni Association Award)

**JaLisa Conyers** has been on the Dean's list every semester since enrolling as a transfer student in the Fashion and Textile Technology program at Buffalo State. She has maintained a 3.8 GPA while working 30+ hours per week at two different jobs. She did a Summer Internship for a local printing and apparel company (I'm Living B) which resulted in her being hired as an employee. While studying abroad in Siena during the Fall 2017 semester, she styled a photo shoot and became a published stylist for Buffalo Spree. JaLisa has received many scholarships including the Elaine Polvinen Endowed Scholarship, the Siena Scholarship Award, and the Marion Thomas Swenson '39 Fashion Award. She is directing and has created textile prints which was featured in Buffalo State's Runway Fashion Show on April 27, 2019. Passionate about changing the stigma that surrounds plus-sized women in the fashion industry, JaLisa created a blog that promotes stories about self-love and positivity while providing more fashion options for plus-sized women.

**Aristotle Copeland**, a graduating senior, is majoring in Philosophy while also pursuing a minor in Digital Music Production. He has consistently been on the EOP Honors and Dean's Lists every semester since he started at Buffalo State in EOP's 2015 summer program. His career goal is to become a lawyer after graduation. He has received recognition for his academic work and leadership roles in EOP, his academic department and the College in general. His awards include: Dean's List from 2015 - Present, EOP Honors from 2015 - Present, Phi Sigma Tau Honors Society from 2017 - Present, and the National Society of Leadership and Success from 2017 - Present. His campus leadership roles include: Secretary of the NAACP from 2018-Present, Public Relations Chair of Groove Phi Groove Social Fellowship Inc, from 2018 - Present, Resident-Assistant in the Fall 2018, EOP Summer Institute Student Assistant in 2017 and 2018, and Work Study at Buffalo State, 2016-2017. Aristotle takes risks, seeking opportunities to grow that allow him to share his knowledge with others while learning. Aristotle participated in the NSE in Hawaii and earned 4.0 for that semester (Fall 2017). He is a leader, is inquisitive, and likes to learn new things, particularly about people and cultures. He is open minded, searches for knowledge and seeks to experience new positive things. He is a very smart, conscientious student. Aristotle is a Foster Grant recipient. He has had a support system that has helped him in the process of becoming independent.

**Abdulkhaliq Edan** is an ESL student who came to the United States from Iraq in 2015. He loved tutoring students in Mathematics for several years at Salahddin High School in Iraq and knew he wanted to pursue his education in Mathematics. Upon arrival in the U.S., he enrolled in Erie Community College and received his Associates Degree in May of 2017. Transferring to Buffalo State College, he enrolled in the Mathematics Degree program, beginning his studies during the Spring of 2018. Since his arrival, Abdulkhaliq has maintained a 3.90 GPA (taking 18-22 credit hours per semester) while also working and raising his family, which includes his wife and three sons. He loves teaching and the education environment, and he is very grateful for EOP and the opportunities he has received in the U.S. Abdulkhaliq will continue his studies at Buffalo State in the Fall 2019 semester as he enrolled in the Master of Science program in Professional Applied and Computational Mathematics.

**Tanasia Hicks** has been on Buffalo State College's Dean's List every semester since enrolling as a transfer student in the Spring of 2017. With a major in Criminal Justice alongside a minor in Legal Studies, she currently maintains a competitive 3.85 GPA. Tanasia has been the recipient of several honors based on her academic success. Aside from her academics, she is passionate and dedicates her time to organizations centered around the legal field and advocacy for children. She is the former Vice President of Buffalo State College's Criminal Justice Student Organization and is currently completing the Child Maltreatment Advocacy Certification. In addition to these accolades, Tanasia dedicates her time outside of class working at the Jewish Community Center as an Assistant Teacher, providing care and education for children as young as three years of age. Her future plans include enrolling in law school to pursue her JD and MSW in a dual degree program. With the depth of knowledge she has in these fields, Tanasia aspires to combine her passions for the legal world and to restore broken families.