

## DDP Director's Corner

To say this year has been one to remember is an understatement! In addition to enrolling 231 new DDP students at 11 of our community college partners, and welcoming 105 DDP transfer students to GSU, we also tipped our cap to over 95 DDP graduates who completed their bachelor's degrees during the 2019-2020 academic year. All while coping with an international pandemic, new online learning platforms, and each of our own personal lives. We knew the Dual Degree Program was a resilient group, but you have continued to impress with your dedication and yearly accomplishments!

The Dual Degree Program is a family that you will forever be a part of, and are always here for you when you need us. Even though most of us are working remotely, you are in our hearts and our thoughts. We are an inclusive and supportive community, and we are so glad you are part of it.

Congratulations to all of our DDP graduates, both those completing an associate and bachelor's degrees! The next chapter of your journey is yours to define. Continue to be curious, confident, and compassionate. Embrace new ways of learning, and take feedback in stride. And, don't forget to celebrate YOU!

Best wishes,  
Jessica Specht, Director of DDP

### We are here for you, DDP!

Check out the [DDP Website](#) for summer and fall semester remote office hours.

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## DDP Transfer Checklist

For those of you who are preparing to make your transfer to the university of your choice, here is a checklist designed to make sure that you have completed all the necessary steps to have your application for enrollment processed, take advantage of any scholarship opportunities, are on track with Financial Aid, and complete any other requirements to make sure you have a seamless transition to your final transfer destination. For assistance with any of the items below, please [contact your DDP Transfer Specialist](#). They are ready to help you make a smooth transition towards your bachelor's degree!

- ✦ Applied/petitioned for graduation at your community college
- ✦ Applied to GSU, or your preferred university
- ✦ Ordered transcripts from each institution you have attended, to be sent to transfer institution. (*Current semester courses allowed to be "In Progress"; you will be admitted conditionally so that you may move forward with financial aid, housing, and class registration in a timely fashion.*) If transferring to GSU:
  - **Electronically:** apotranscripts@govst.edu
  - **By mail:** Governors State University, Admissions Processing, 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484
- ✦ Added GSU or other preferred university's school code to your FAFSA for 2020-2021 (GSU's school code is 009145)
- ✦ Applied for student housing (if applicable) – *Be mindful of housing application and deposit deadlines!*
- ✦ Received your program acceptance letter with new student login and email, student ID#, and Academic Advisor contact info
- ✦ Contacted new Academic Advisor for important information regarding your major and course scheduling
- ✦ Logged into your new student portal and registered for classes
- ✦ Received your new student materials (student ID, researched textbooks, etc.), and submitted your [immunization form](#)
- ✦ Once your associate degree has been conferred and posted, be sure to send one final, official transcript from your community college to your new transfer institution. (*A final transcript is necessary to show that you have completed your associate degree, and to provide your final semester's grades.*)

## VIRTUAL TOUR

Explore our campus from the comfort of your home.

## Fall 2020 Transfers – AIM HIGH!

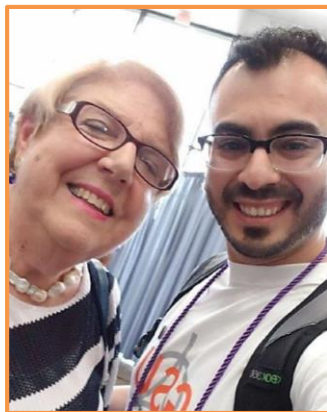
The [AIM HIGH scholarship](#) is an automatic, merit based award that is renewable at GSU for up to four semesters (not including summer.) In addition to the GPA and residency requirement, GSU must have your official transcript **with your associate degree posted** in order to apply the award to your student account. Contact your DDP Transfer Specialist, or the Office of Admissions, for more information!

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

### Please join us in thanking President Elaine P. Maimon as she departs from her role at Governors State University

For over a decade, Dr. Elaine P. Maimon led Governors State University through new initiatives that transformed the campus culture. It was her dedication and follow-through that led to the creation of the award-winning Dual Degree Program. President Maimon was determined to create a pathway that went above and beyond common transfer practices, and provided students with on-site transfer advising, peer mentoring, and exposure to the university culture early and often. Her idea has blossomed into a program that has helped over 1,000 transfer students graduate with an associate degree and move on to complete the bachelor's degree with as little debt as possible. The GSU Promise Scholarship is another one of Dr. Maimon's legacies at GSU, and students will continue to persist through graduation because of it.

Thank you, President Maimon! The Dual Degree Program forever appreciates what you have created at Governors State University. We wish you the best as you fulfill new heights in Higher Ed, while serving as Special Adviser to the President of the American Council of Education (ACE). You have touched the lives of your students here at GSU, and you will continue to do so on an even larger scale. Congratulations!





## Important Upcoming Dates

### GSU Application Deadlines for Special Admissions Programs are Fast Approaching!

DDP students, if you are planning to transfer to GSU for the Fall 2020 semester, please be aware that some programs have application deadlines that are quickly approaching. Below is a list of undergraduate programs that have an application deadline in the upcoming summer months. Please contact your DDP Transfer Specialist for assistance in ensuring that you have all materials submitted before the deadline

- ✦ Health Administration: June 15
- ✦ Nursing (RN to BSN): July 1
- ✦ Community Health: Extended to August 15
- ✦ Social Work: August 7

### Thursday, July 9th – DDP Virtual Summer Induction

This particular Induction is for DDP students who are transferring to GSU in the summer or fall of 2020, and have not yet attended a past DDP Induction. Please check your email for an invitation, or contact your DDP Transfer Specialist for more information on how to RSVP!

### August 31st through Sept 4th – Welcome Week at GSU

DDP will be honoring those who recently graduated with an associate degree and transferred to GSU. There will be an opportunity to receive your first DDP cord, and participate in a variety of activities. There will also be a virtual Welcome Back Social for all DDP students to attend!

### September 14th through 18th – DDP Virtual Scholarship Symposium

We are taking this year's DDP Scholarship Symposium online! Look forward to a week's worth of resources that will aid students in finding ways to fund their DUAL degrees. Further details to be provided in the coming months.

### DDP Scholarship Deadline for Spring 2021 transfers is October 2, 2020

If you are planning to transfer to GSU in spring 2021, make sure to apply for the [GSU Promise Scholarship](#), [DDP Honors Scholarship](#), and/or the [DDP Chicago STAR Scholars Scholarships](#). These scholarships are only available to DDP students. Students who qualify for both are encouraged to apply for both, although students may only be awarded one out of those eligible.

- ✦ The **GSU Promise Scholarship** is a competitive scholarship for DDP students who receive the Federal Pell Grant and have at least a 2.75 GPA. It covers full tuition and fees and a book stipend for up to four semesters at GSU (excluding summers). *Undocumented, Illinois residents are eligible for the GSU Promise \$600 book stipend; a residency affidavit must be completed in place of the FAFSA.*
- ✦ The **DDP Honors Scholarship** is a competitive scholarship for DDP students who are current members of their community college Honors Program or chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and have at least a 3.5 GPA. It covers full tuition and fees at GSU for up to four semesters (excluding summers). *Undocumented, Illinois residents are eligible for the full DDP Honors Scholarship; a residency affidavit must be completed in place of the FAFSA.*
- ✦ DDP students at the City Colleges of Chicago may also be eligible for the **DDP Chicago STAR Scholars Scholarship**. It is open to DDP students who are enrolled in the Chicago STAR Scholars program, are active members of CCC's Honors Program or chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, and have a 3.25 GPA or above. There are two (2) scholarship categories. *Undocumented, Illinois residents are eligible for the full DDP Chicago STAR Scholars Scholarship; a residency affidavit must be completed in place of the FAFSA.*

Applications, recommendation forms, and FAQs can be found on the [GSU Scholarship](#) site.

**All application materials are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 2, 2020!**



**Don't forget to "Like" and follow the DDP's Facebook page to view our event photo albums and be notified of future events!**

## DDP Scholarship Recipients for Fall 2020

Congratulations to our DDP Honors and GSU Promise Scholarship Awardees for the Fall 2020 cohort:

Farah Adi (MVCC)	Ruben Lopez (PSC)
Mya Beauford (CCC-Harold Wash)	Lonzo Lynn (SSC)
Ricarda Brown (MVCC)	Iliana Manrique (CCC-Daley)
Tre'vion Brown (PSC)	Abel Oliva (SSC)
Samantha Fierstein (KCC)	Heaven Powell (PSC)
Eunice Gomez (MVCC)	Sandra Qudsi (MVCC)
Antonia Guajardo (KCC)	Marwa Ramadan (MVCC)
Laila Jaber (MVCC)	John Ruiz (PSC)
Cassaries Johnson (PSC)	Shannon Ryan (PSC)
Tiffany Johnson (CCC-Olv Harvey)	Pablo Tellez-Ocampo (Triton)
Rishel Jose (MVCC)	Brittany Stover (JJC)
Alana Koster (SSC)	Huda Yasin (MVCC)
James Langer (KCC)	

*"I'm looking forward to my journey towards Governors State this fall! I'm thrilled to be part of the Dual Degree Program and very humbled to be a scholarship recipient."*

**Antonia Guajardo**  
KCC, Class of 2020

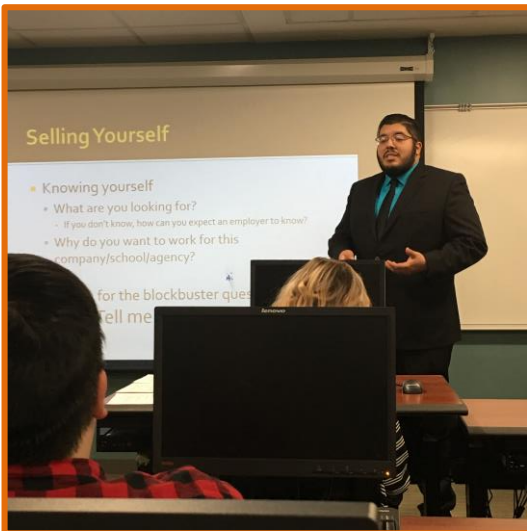


Don't forget, if you are transferring to GSU in Spring 2021, make sure to apply for the [GSU Promise Scholarship](#), [DDP Honors Scholarship](#), and/or the [DDP Chicago STAR Scholars Scholarship](#). These scholarships are only available to DDP students, so you have less competition than with other scholarships. Students who qualify for multiple are encouraged to apply for all those they are eligible for, although students may only be awarded one. See Page 3 for more information on how to apply!

## Event Photo Highlights

### DDP Career Symposium

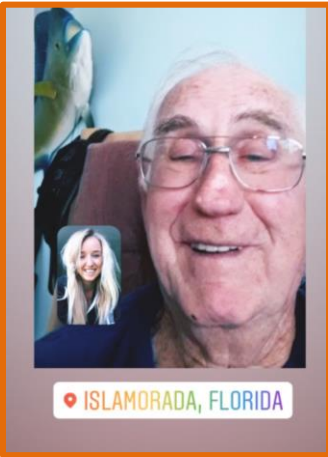
On February 28<sup>th</sup>, DDP students from both GSU and our community college partners gathered in Engbreton Hall to learn about resumes, interviews, internships and more! This year's Career symposium was a great success, and we hope that everyone that attended has even more tools to plan and execute their career path. The Center for the Junior Year Peer Mentors presented an interactive skills exploration exercise, and the Career Services and DDP staff provided interactive resources for selling one's self in person, and online!



## Event Photo Highlights

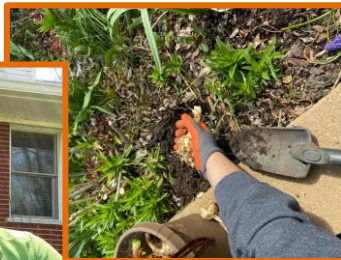
### DDP Monthly Community Service

Each month the DDP coordinates a community service event. However, due to COVID-19 closures and restrictions, DDP was not able to plan our usual in-person service events. Therefore, we asked DDP students to tell us how they are maintaining a safe environment, while still helping their families, friends, and their communities. As usual, our DDP students were up to the challenge! Here are some of their good deeds:



*Greetings Dual Degree Program Members,  
My name is Stefanie Neylon. I am DDP Honors Scholarship recipient. What a great idea to do a virtual community service project! I am so proud to be a part of the DDP at GSU! I have attached a screenshot of my grandfather and I on video chat. My grandparents are quarantined in the Florida Keys. I am teaching him and my grandmother how to video chat on their phones and video chatting them daily to check in! ❤️*

*I've been using my mom's hijab as a mask due to the shortages and they work! I have donated some clothes to the donation center near my home. I've also kept my niece and nephew entertained by going on walks and restoring an awesome random tile we found in my backyard. I've also given numerous personality tests to the members of my family which resulted in a lot of laughter and interest in my field of study. ☺️  
(Amal Assad, DDP Honors Scholarship recipient)*



*Mental health plays a big part in my life. I know being under these circumstances of COVID-19 I was feeling anxious and was scared if my family gets sick. As the stay at home order was placed for a bit longer. I was exhausted from being inside the house all day. My mom and I decided to plant more in the garden. The garden right now is full of many different flowers. In the pictures, you'll see me planting lilies and roses. Planting helped me stay busy and feel less anxious. May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Please check up on family and friends. We are in this together. Also, remind to be kind to your mind because our mental health is important.*

*(Lorena Diaz, GSU Promise Scholarship recipient)*

*Hello DDP! We are currently going through some hard times with the COVID-19 pandemic. What I have learned is that despite the current conditions, we can still find ways to help other people in need. During the COVID-19, I have been helping my grandmother every Sunday by going grocery shopping for her. As we all know, senior citizens can be very vulnerable to this disease. Therefore, I have been dropping off groceries and other necessities like water and air fresheners to my grandmother's retirement home to make sure that she stays safe at home.*

*After doing this I felt very happy and proud because I am helping my elderly grandmother to stay safe, and by doing this, I am also preventing the spread of COVID-19. I do plan on continuing this act not only for my grandmother but for the other people who live in her retirement home as well. Stay Safe!*

*(Deijianie Santana, DDP Honors Scholarship recipient)*



## CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Please join us in congratulating our DDP students who have graduated from GSU during the 2019-2020 academic year!

Riziq Abdelruhman (MVCC)  
Nour Abdulla (MVCC)  
Gabriela Acero (CCC-Olive Harvey)  
Evamarie Bouie Acox (PSC)  
Diana Alarcon (JJC)  
Jowan Ali (MVCC)  
Jasmine Alvarez (CCC-Daley)  
Margaret Andres (PSC)  
Adriana Arellano (CCC-Daley)  
Karen Avalos (KCC)  
Diana Azam (JJC)  
Brigid Barton (PSC)  
Peter Brassea (PSC)  
Myron Brooks (CCC-Daley)  
Jasmine Byrd (PSC)  
Barry Cheeks (CCC-Kennedy King)  
Tamar Clark (PSC)  
T'Kyla Clayton (SSC)  
Sarah Coccaro (PSC)  
Aja Cochran (JJC)  
Delaney Creamer (JJC)  
Keelin Crotty (MVCC)  
Joshua Diaz (Triton)  
Cynthia Harrison Dukes (PSC)  
Sachen Emery (PSC)  
Margaret Epperson (PSC)  
Ahmad Ezaldin (MVCC)  
Jennifer Forbes (PSC)  
Gloria Gallegos (SSC)  
Beverly Gayden (SSC)  
Rasheeda Gholar (PSC)  
Candice Gibson (SSC)  
Carolyn Gorny (SSC)  
Timothy Grazulis (KCC)  
Marquitta Guthrie (SSC)  
Emilia Barrera Herrera (PSC)

Jeanelly Ibarra (MVCC)  
Jerrica Jarrett (KCC)  
Randy Jasien (SSC)  
Irene Jimenez (SSC)  
Sarah Jopek (MVCC)  
Zahua Joudeh (MVCC)  
Brandon Juarez (JJC)  
Kathryn Keblusek (JJC)  
Briyana Kelly (CCC-Olive Harvey)  
Jeremy Keltner (SSC)  
Lukasz Kikla (MVCC)



Bartlomiej Kiszka (MVCC)  
Brittany Kubitz (MVCC)  
Brandon Kyle (PSC)  
Jillian Lee (PSC)  
Tasha Leflore (PSC)  
Robert Lewis (MVCC)  
Omar Martinez (PSC)  
Micah McMillan (PSC)  
Daj'za Mitchell (PSC)

Eric Niewinski (MVCC)  
Nchekwube Okeke (PSC)  
Karli Olszowka (JJC)  
David Palmer (KCC)  
Ishita Patel (MVCC)  
Jonathan Pennington (PSC)  
Savanna Petric (JJC)  
George Pitsoulakis (JJC)  
Aya Ramadan (MVCC)  
Kelly Richardson (MVCC)  
Christopher Robison (JJC)  
Jalyssa Rodriguez (MVCC)  
Sherry Rodriguez (MVCC)  
Joshua Russell (PSC)  
Allison Savini (KCC)  
Greyson Schunke (KCC)  
Sakeenah Shakir (CCC-Olive Harvey)  
Neda Shalabi (SSC)  
Alexander Shea (KCC)  
Elizabeth Shirk (CCC-Harold Wash)  
Taylor Simmons (KCC)  
Anthony Smith (PSC)  
Ashley Smith (CCC-Olive Harvey)  
Elizabeth Solis (CCC-Daley)  
Amanda Spayer (KCC)  
Vanity Spruill (SSC)  
Carley Sullivan (MVCC)  
Yocheeta Tanniehill (PSC)  
Alan Taylor (KCC)  
Chayni Villagomez (PSC)  
Brandon Williams (CCC-Daley)  
Charle Williams (PSC)  
Iyesha Wilson (CCC-Olive Harvey)  
Amber Wood (KCC)  
Lenawadia Ziada (MVCC)  
Anastasia Zubek (SSC)

**And, additional congratulations to the following DDP students who graduated with University Honors:**

Keelin Crotty (MVCC), Randy Jasien (SSC), Lukasz Kikla (MVCC), Eric Niewinski (MVCC), Aya Ramadan (MVCC), Elizabeth Shirk (CCC-Harold Washington), & Anastasia Zubek (SSC)

**DDP Graduation Yearbook**

Cheers to the Governors State University Dual Degree Program Class of 2019 & 2020! While unable to celebrate in person at Commencement, we hope that you were still able to celebrate with your family while we celebrate you from a distance!

~ Students listed are in no particular order of AWESOME ☺ ~



**Tasha Leflore**  
Prairie State College Alumna  
Bachelor of Social Work

*"I appreciate everyone who encouraged me to thrive in my education. I had to stay focus regardless of all the unexpected circumstances. I made it!!!"*

**Marquitta Guthrie**  
South Suburban College Alumna  
Bachelor of Social Work

*"DDP has given us great opportunities for success through volunteers work and showcasing our talents. As a DDP graduate, I am beyond grateful to be able to receive both my degrees in the field of helping. Congratulations my fellow DDP graduates and to my Social Workers remember, alone we can do so little; together we can do so much!"*



**Ashley D. Smith**  
City Colleges of Chicago –  
Olive Harvey College Alumna  
Bachelor of Arts in  
Interdisciplinary Studies,  
Minors in Social Work and  
Psychology

**Jillian Monét Lee**  
Prairie State College Alumna  
Bachelor of Arts in  
Business Administration,  
Concentration in Finance

*"My time at GSU has been amazing! I've studied abroad in Italy (Summer 2018), I was a news anchor for the school's New Broadcast TWAG, and was a Peer Mentor for the Center for Junior Year (C1321). My transition from Prairie State was smooth and effortless thanks to DDP! Thank you so much for all you have done!"*



**Eric Niewinski**  
Moraine Valley Community College Alumnus  
Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, Concentration in Marketing

*"I'm so glad to have been a part of the DDP program. It truly enriched my transfer experience. From community service events, to building relationships with other DDP/Honors program students, the lessons I've learned through my bachelors will stick with me throughout my career."*

**Cynthia Dukes-Harrison**

Prairie State College Alumna  
Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies,  
Minor in History

*"First I like to say that GSU has been an experience, some days where hard especially the long nights, but it all was worth it. I want to think all my Professor that help me to achieve my goal, I could not have did it without you. Finally, to all my friends I met along the way thanks for your help, your friendship and much love always to everyone at GSU!"*



**Ahmad Ezaldin**

Moraine Valley Community College Alumnus  
Bachelor of Health Science in Community Health,  
Concentration in Pre-Dental, Minor in Biology

*"During my time at Moraine and Governors, I realized that these two institutes were the best option for my education and I'm glad that I am finishing my bachelors from GSU. Shout out to the science department at Moraine and GSU, and shout out to the Community Health professor thank you all for a wonderful four years!"*

**Irene Jimenez**

South Suburban College Alumna  
Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice

*"It was an honor attending Governors State University. The school was usually welcoming and staff and teachers were a joy to meet. I am a more educated and independent person today because of the challenges I faced throughout the years at GSU. I will never forget the experience I had attending GSU, and I hope others who attend have an experience like mine. Jaguars forever!"*



**Brandon Williams**

City Colleges of Chicago -  
Richard J. Daley College Alumnus  
Bachelor of Art in Psychology, Concentration in Pre-Clinical Psychology, Minor in Criminal Justice.

*"DDP is an awesome program that allow students the opportunity for growth and advancement within their lives. The transition from Daley to GSU was seamless because the staff at GSU is very welcoming and caring. I really enjoyed my time at GSU."*

**Daj'za Mitchell**

Prairie State College Alumna  
Bachelor of Health Science in Communication Disorders, Minor in Psychology

*"I have had such an amazing time in DDP! I have grown in my leadership ability, my communication skills and my academic capacity. Having the support from DDP has made a world of a difference in my undergraduate career."*



**Diana Azam**

Joliet Junior College Alumna  
Bachelor of Science in  
Accounting

*"Thank you to Jessica and Mr. Trendell!"*





**Karli Olszowka**  
Joliet Junior College Alumna  
Bachelor of Arts in Early  
Childhood Education,  
Endorsement in Mathematics

*"Jessica knew how to make everything special for my time at JJC and at GSU. It always amazed me how she handled things with grace and with a smile on her face! She knew everyone and made sure we were all okay! Thank you Jess !!"*



**Allison Savini**  
Kankakee Community  
College Alumna  
Bachelor of Science in  
Nursing

*"This program was perfect for my lifestyle as a mom and full time nurse. The instructors were great during the whole program."*



**T'Kyla Clayton**  
South Suburban College  
Alumna  
Bachelor of Arts in  
Business Administration,  
Concentration in Human  
Resource Management

*"My time at GSU has added immeasurable value to my life that will serve me well throughout. A special thanks to my Mama, this degree is for you. Thank you Jessica Specht, Dr. David Rhea, and Lauren Healy for all your help."*



**Tamar Clark**  
Prairie State College  
Alumna  
Bachelor of Health  
Science in Community  
Health, Concentration in  
Health Promotion

*"I am thankful for the opportunity to learn and be a part of a community of faculty, staff, fellow students that comprised my success. I am ready to move above and beyond showcasing all that I've learned and more. GSU has been a blessing to me from my past to my future."*

# *Congratulations!*

The above collection of photos and written statements were provided directly by the student by an online submission application. The above do not include the full graduating class of 2019-2020; only those who submitted a photo and/or personal statement have been highlighted.

Please feel free to continue sharing your photos and experiences on our [DDP Facebook page](#)

## ***In Memoriam***

We dedicate this newsletter to Mianna and Erica. This would have been their graduating year, if fate had not taken them so soon.  
You will always be part of our DDP family ♥



### **Mianna Malone**

Associate in Arts, Kankakee Community College, May 2018  
Pursued a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

### **Erica Paulissen**

Associate in Science, Kankakee Community College, May 2018  
Pursued a Bachelor of Science in Accounting, Minor in Finance

