

GRADUATION 2008



Graduate Mark Poppenhagen and teacher Patrick Kellam tell stories and laugh at the reception following the graduation ceremony.

Four Anne Carlen Center (ACC) students marked the beginning of a new chapter of their lives in May. Dale Bachman, Jr., Zachary Hofmann, Gary Olson and Mark Poppenhagen were honored in a graduation ceremony in the Center auditorium, surrounded by proud family members, friends and ACC staff.

“We will all meet new friends, caregivers and find new jobs,” said Dr. Sue Offutt, an ACC Board member and UND assistant professor. “But when you four go out, I know you will teach those you meet the love and compassion that you learned here.”

Gary’s diploma means he is returning to Bismarck where he can live near his mother, LaDonna.

Michele Well, the ACC education director, worked with Gary throughout his 13 years in Jamestown.

“Students always looked up to you, literally and figuratively,” said Well. “One because you are 6’4”, but they knew you caught on with tasks right away. You always kept us on our toes, and you taught students how to stay on task.”

“We will miss you very much,” she added.

For DJ, his journey following graduation takes him to Valley City.

Remembered for his practical jokes by Tom Kenna, a teacher at the Center, many of DJ’s high jinks came in the pool.

“DJ was always a fan of activities like swimming,” said Kenna. “But he didn’t like to swim. Instead he liked to sit at the bottom of the pool, laughing, as (physical education instructor) Troy Duven went running across the water after him.”



Graduate Gary Olson, joined on stage by ACC Education Director Michele Well, accepts his diploma from Dr. Sue Offutt.



Graduate Dale Bachman, Jr. (DJ) is congratulated by ACC staff Kristy Bruner and Tom Kenna during the graduation ceremony.



Graduate Zach Hofmann and his mom, Patty, smile for pictures following the graduation ceremony. Zach is the first student to stay with the Center following his graduation.

He was also remembered for his ravenous appetite, especially for Little Smokies.

“Don’t get your fingers near DJ’s mouth when he is eating those,” said Kenna. “You may lose a finger.”

Mark, who first came to the ACC in 1998, is moving to Harvey following graduation.

Patrick Kellam, who was also new to the staff when Mark first arrived, joined the youth by the pool on a hot July day.

“Since Mark was having so much fun we decided to have supper by the pool,” Kellam said. “But Mark decided it was more fun to have supper in the pool. From then on, I was a pretty big fan of Mark.”

Kellam would later become a teacher at the Center, having Mark in his classroom.

“I’ve never met anyone who can spin in a circle while pushing a cart and not miss a beat,” said Kellam. “Staff tried it and they either fell or crashed the cart.”

Zachary’s graduation marks a new chapter for the Center. Zachary is the first student to remain on the ACC campus following his graduation.

“You have a number of roles,” said Home Life Services Director Gloria Jones to Zachary. “You are a son, an older brother, a grandson, nephew, cousin, friend, member of a community, and now you are a graduate.”

Jones also recognized Zachary for being a good role model for his peers. “We could always count on you to be a leader,” she said.

ACC thanks all of the graduates for providing us with so many wonderful memories. You touched our lives in a special way, and we are very proud of all of your accomplishments.