

Message from President Cook

December 12, 2023

Hello everyone. It's graduation week at North Dakota State University. I think the best week of the year. I'm here with two of our students Ambrosia Yellow Bird and Simon Kroll and these are two of our best students who are going to be presenting and speaking at graduation this Friday. So, really excited to hear what they have to say and really proud of what they've accomplished over the last four and five years.

So, Ambrosia, I'll start with you. Tell us a little bit about yourself. Yeah, my name is Ambrosia Yellow Bird. I am from the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation and I am an enrolled member of the three affiliated tribes. Wonderful.

Simon, tell us a little bit about yourself. Sure. I'm Simon Kroll. I'm from Royalton, Minnesota and I'm earning my bachelor's degree in computer engineering with a minor in computer science. And you obviously love your major.

Tell us a little bit about why you decided to study that. Yeah. So, I grew up on a family farm. My experience with technology was our family started with a satellite dish in our yard to get weather radar data and ever since then I've just seen technology explode in agriculture. Seeing tractors drive themselves was kind of the tipping point that made me realize I wanted to do something in technology and bring that back to the agricultural space. Love it. Precision Ag, ag tech that's a pretty big deal here at NDSU and an exciting place to be moving forward. So, good luck with that.

All right, Ambrosia tell us a little bit about your major and what do you plan to do? Yeah. So, I study human development and family science. I'll be graduating with my bachelor's of science this semester and I plan to start graduate school in the fall studying counseling and I want to get my LPCC and move back to my reservation and work with my tribe as a family counselor. I love it. Absolutely, both careers sound super exciting.

So, what are some of the fun things that you got involved with on campus? Yeah. So, the biggest thing that I did here was working in the NDSU Child Map Lab, the Motivation, Achievement, and Prosociality Lab, with Dr Wen Wang. I am her senior research assistant and the MAP lab coordinator and I've been doing that since last summer. That is awesome. Love getting our students involved in all the different activities on campus. We have all kinds of clubs. It sounds like you took advantage of that so, congratulations. Love it.

How about yourself, Simon?

Yeah, I was involved in the Farmhouse Fraternity and Engineering Ambassadors. Both are really good opportunities to gain leadership skills and get involved. Wonderful. Friday, you're going to graduate. How do you plan to celebrate? So, a group of my friends have a tradition that after all of our finals are done we always go to an all-you-can-eat sushi place. So, okay I was nervous where you're going with that. So, that sounds like a pretty good situation. That's always fun. Yeah, it's good. We've done it every year since my second year here at NDSU and we're not stopping now.

All right, and then what do you plan to do after graduation, job-wise? Yeah, after graduation I'm going to be a trading analyst and software engineer for a small company in the Twin Cities called Ag Hedge Desk. They're a commodity trader and consultant. Very exciting. Congratulations! Thanks.

All right, Ambrosia. How about for you? How do you plan to celebrate Friday? I have a lot of family coming into town so we will be celebrating here and then probably going to eat at Mango's, my favorite Mexican restaurant, and then on Saturday is my grad party and we'll have Indian tacos.

We'll have about 500 students graduating on Friday, two different sessions. One of the highlights is going to be Norma Peltier. Norma is receiving an honorary doctorate in agriculture. Norma, her late husband Joe, and the entire Peltier family have been absolutely amazing to North Dakota State University in terms of scholarships and money for programs. We have a new Peltier complex popping up on the southwest corner of campus later in the spring and so we're going to be really excited to spend a little bit of time with Norma and with her family celebrating all that they've done for North Dakota State University.

But with that, it should be an exciting Friday. Can't wait to see everybody there and with that, we've got to wrap it up on the count of three. One, two, three. Go Bison!