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Utah State University Brigham City and USU Tremonton are proud to have celebrated the class of 2021 on Friday, April 30. The class of 2021 consists of individuals earning 71 associate, 188 bachelor’s, 112 master’s and three doctoral degrees.

“What a year!” said USU Associate Vice President for the Brigham City Region Dan Black in his opening remarks. “You have been amazing and persevered through an unprecedented time. Congratulations on finishing your degrees. Whether you are 17 or 73 or some age in between, today you have reached a once in a lifetime accomplishment.”

USU Brigham City and Tremonton celebrated graduates with a socially distanced gathering inside the USU Brigham City campus building that was limited to graduates and two guests but included virtual elements. Black welcomed the graduates and introduced the student speaker, before giving a graduation speech.

The student speaker was Adrienne Nelson, who graduated cum Laude with a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education. In her address, Nelson spoke about her tumultuous road to graduation, from balancing a family of five children to having to complete her GED after years away from school to be able to apply for college. She now hopes to inspire the next generation in following their own dreams.

“Many times in life we are given second chances,” she said. “This was mine. I feel a tremendous amount of gratitude to those who helped me accomplish this dream to graduate and become a teacher. The USU Brigham City family helped me navigate the embarrassment of being a high school flunkie, old lady mom/college student over the last four years.

“From the front desk staff being incredibly helpful and friendly, the advisors’ constant encouragement, and the facilitators laughing through long nights. I greatly appreciate my experience here at USU. I hope my students I now teach, and all those in the future, will be inspired to reach for their goals and their dreams.”

Black then gave a graduation speech, focusing on an experience he had had many years earlier while visiting the ancient ruins of a lost civilization in Guatemala. He shared with the students several life lessons he had gained from his experience and contemplation, including living life to the fullest, the importance of serving others and the need to always be grateful.

“For us today, we are celebrating success and we are about to embark on a positive future,” he said. “For us, we hold in our hands the ability to progress, grow, and make a difference to those around us. My only dream is that you take all that you have acquired over these many years of study and learning and do something awesome with it.”

The students then heard a short message from local alumni chapter president Nicole Watkins. USU President Noelle E. Cockett followed by conferred the degrees virtually, and the graduates received their diplomas.

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