



# Alumni Fall **highlights**

## Good day fellow Alum,

Thinking back to the fall of 1987, I will never forget my first day at DCB (then NDSU-BB) as I was in the gym going through orientation and a good friend came running across the gym waving a piece of paper in the air hollering that the school was paying him to be there. Little did we know at the time that it was a student loan and eventually he would have to pay it back. Oh, the things you learn in college!

I also remember thinking that every Canadian within a 100-mile radius was attending DCB, they were everywhere! Please remember that this was 1987, social media was not a thing and the only contact with Canadians I had before that was playing youth hockey against them and eating their red box toffee. I will never forget the day I learned that Canadians had High School boys' volleyball as a varsity sport, my mind was blown.

I attended DCB for two years and received my Associates degree in Agriculture which set me up nicely for the next step of attending NDSU. I felt fortunate being able to attend a two-year school that had the levels of professors it had. Being taught by Red Johnson, Chuck Lura, Dan Duerre, Betty Rehfuss, bless her heart as she had to get me through college algebra and STATISTICS, these people truly cared about us and were always willing to give a student the extra help they needed.

I mention the above professors and the care they showed their students because the current DCB staff has the same philosophy when it comes to helping their students. Both of my sons have attended and graduated from DCB, and they can name professors that helped make it possible. They appreciated the extra help that was always available when they needed it.

When talking about DCB, the reputation of the sports programs always comes up, but as I get older I also realize the OUTSTANDING tradition of academics and the high level of education that it provides. The employees of DCB cared about me when I attended, and that same tradition continues today!

The DCB Alumni Association raises funds to award scholarships to students who return for their second year. College tuition is costly, and our organization tries to provide as many scholarships as possible to offset the cost of tuition. Our goal every year is to raise as much as we can to assist these students.

**Brent Moum, '89**  
**Proud Alum & Logroller Member**



## Thank You For Your Support!

\$25 Annual Dues per person. Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Alumni Contribution Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 I want to provide a scholarship (\$250+) Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Current address \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Spouses' name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Grad Year/Major \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to DCB Alumni Association*

Please charge my credit card:  Visa  Mastercard

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** call (701) 228-5613 or  
email [dcbalum@dakotacollege.edu](mailto:dcbalum@dakotacollege.edu).



# Attending DCB - The Best Decision I Made



As a child growing up in Lakota, North Dakota, Mahalia Cruz knew she wanted to work in health care. "When I was 11, I wanted to be a pediatrician, but when I found out schooling takes an average of 13 years, I thought nursing would be a better fit,"

said Mahalia. She enrolled in the nursing program at Dakota College at Bottineau in 2016, but her career goals soon took another path. "I got interested in the business side of health care, so I switched to the medical administrative assistant program. My ultimate career goal is to be a hospital administrator."

Family and finances both played a role in Mahalia's choice of DCB. "I always wanted to go to college, as no one in my family ever had. But as a foster child and single mom, I didn't have the financial resources for college. I was amazed and so grateful when I found out that grants would cover my tuition. So affordability was a big factor for me."

Mahalia appreciated the mentorship and guidance provided by DCB instructors. "My advisor and professor, Russ Gagnon, was a huge mentor and a source of guidance during my time at DCB. He offered education information, shared his experiences, and he always wanted the best for not only me, but other students as well. Professor Keri Keith, who taught quite a few of my classes, was an absolute joy. She was a strong teacher with a heart of gold. I enjoyed her classes and even asked her to be a professional reference when I graduated from DCB. Those two and their teachings have stuck with me as I've continued my education and started on my health care career."

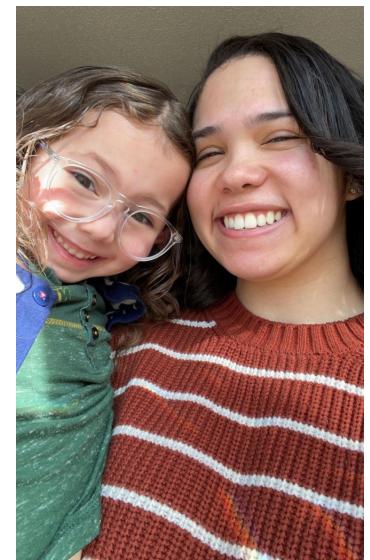
The option of being able to take classes on campus and online was important to Mahalia, as a full-time student and mother of an infant daughter, Piper. "Initially, being an online student was challenging as I had never experienced it before. Ultimately, I enjoyed online education as it allowed for flexibility, which was important to me as a mom. The professors really knew their subjects, and in some classes where I needed help, emailing or calling my professor was always an option." Mahalia graduated with an A.A.S. in medical administrative assistant in the summer of 2019 and moved back to Lakota to be near family.

Her experience in online education at DCB served her well as she graduated from the University of Mary in April 2021 with a bachelor's degree in health care administration earned through their online program. She's recently been accepted into the university's master's program in business administration with a specialization in health care.

Mahalia's job as an eligibility worker for Benson County Social Services in Fort Totten is giving her hands-on experience with health care administration. "I'm responsible for what we call 'presearch,' which means going through our programs to find all of the information needed for the interview process, conducting the interview, and verifying all information provided. Then I register the application and finalize all information needed to process the case. It's a lot of very detailed work, but the more I do it, the more comfortable I'm becoming with the process."

Mahalia's career goal is clear. "I want to run a hospital. I think to be in health care, you have to be passionate. You have to be aware of your surroundings and your environment. It's fast-paced and always changing, so be prepared to roll with the punches. Health care is a home for those in the community, as people will always need medical attention, advice, and expertise. Specifically, as a health care administrator, be aware of the medical staff you are hiring, be aware of the day-to-day operations going on in your medical facility. Do what's best for the patients coming into and out of your facility and this will in turn benefit your hospital, staff, and operations. Health care has such amazing opportunities for those willing to apply themselves. I'd say if you're considering a career in health care, go for it!"

Mahalia sees her education as not only a foundation for her career, but also an inspiration to her daughter, now 4 1/2 years old. "Dakota College was the perfect fit for me as my daughter was seven weeks old when I started school and two when I finished. DCB was flexible, helpful, understanding, and motivating. Going to college and continuing my education is by far the best decision I made for my daughter and for myself. It has opened a world of opportunity for us and I am thankful for my education every day. There is one thing that can never be taken from you, and that is your education. Educate yourself, use your education, and remember that it is something unique to you that can never be taken away. It's worth it."



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