

Marie Duncan - Senior Director, Alumni Events and Operations

5 December 2024

My son, who is a student here at U of I was graduating and contacted me as he had not received his ordered cap & gown with graduation coming in just a few days. He was in a panic and very upset. He has worked so hard and was looking forward to celebrating with his family. Now this is why so many of us say U of I is a family. He and I made a couple of phone calls and multiple staff jumped in to help. It truly is heartwarming. Marie really saved the day by finding him the necessary regalia just two days prior to graduation. We can't thank her enough. THANK YOU! We are so proud to be a part of the U of I family! ! Thank you for supporting our students.

Amber Ziegler - Academic Advisor

6 December 2024

Amber's compassion for her students is admirable and inspiring. She supports them with a holistic perspective, ensuring they not only have what they need academically, but providing care and concern for their overall wellbeing and student experience. She learned her role and established trust and care with her students incredibly quickly - she's amazing!

Zachary Wnek - Academic Advisor

6 December 2024

Zach is always willing to step in to support his team and students - seeing a need and finding a way to meet it. He provides helpful insights that allow his teammates to operate more efficiently and shows genuine care for his students' academic experiences and overall wellbeing.

Colton Raichl - Academic Advisor

6 December 2024

A tried-and-true Vandal, Colton brings a positive energy to his daily work with students and coworkers. Students in his care feel encouraged and equipped to tackle challenges and his team benefits from his willingness to problem-solve and stay the course.

Ceci Raichl - Academic Advisor

6 December 2024

Ceci is so creative and compassionate and uses that skillset to support her students and her team. She is trustworthy, quick to offer support and help her students and team succeed, and makes others feel welcome in her presence. She's wonderful!

Jen Goodwin - Associate Director

6 December 2024

Jen brings so much experience and genuine care to her work. She is smart, easy to talk to, and passionate about helping students and alumni land their dream job. She makes U of I and the workforce better!

Kaylena Townsend - Academic Advisor

10 December 2024

Kaylena is an incredible leader for the Advising team and resource for all students at the University! She's been busy working with other departments to create better access to information for staff and students, making resources for students, and managing a changing caseload all while transitioning into a leadership role for our team. Kaylena is truly not just an asset for our team, but is an incredible person to work with and interact with. She's really the whole package! Thank you so much, Kaylena, for the dedication you have for our team, students, and university!

Ryan Foss - Academic Advisor

17 December 2024

Ryan is such a great colleague! He is always quick to help out when someone on the team needs support. This is especially true with his knowledge of the Office of the Registrar. There have been many times even our most veteran advisors have had to turn to him for clarification. He always patiently helps. Though quiet, Ryan is also one of the funniest people on the team. Though he may not make jokes often, they are always very funny and very clever. Finally, Ryan's calm demeanor is always appreciated. No matter the challenge, he sets about tackling it with calm determination. It is such a pleasure to get to work with such a wonderful colleague!

Shelby Carrel - Academic Advisor

17 December 2024

Shelby is so great! Shelby is best described by the quote "still waters run deep." She is so willing to listen to others and contemplate their ideas. It is clear that she is more interested in understanding, analyzing, and synthesizing ideas. However, whenever she does have something to say it is always worth listening to. Even though she is relatively new to our team, the whole team respects her opinions so much. Furthermore, she is always ready to quietly take on any task. This semester she has had to pull extra weight, and she did so with a stoicism and unassuming manner that demonstrate her desire to support the team without need for praise--though she deserves all the praise! Shelby may be quiet, but her presence is loud!

Amber Ziegler - Academic Advisor

17 December 2024

Amber is such a great addition to our advising team! She is not only so kind, patient and helpful, but is also such a positive force for the team. Whether she is sharing something positive, uplifting, or just cool in the Team chat, or just bringing her upbeat attitude to our weekly staff meetings, we all appreciate her. For example, she told us today about the Blue Herons she saw on the way to work. Furthermore, her energy and passion for helping students is self-evident in everything she does. Finally, she is just so cool. There is not a topic that--at least in my experience--she does not have some kind of an interesting take on. This benefits the whole team not only on professional issues, but on all sorts of things. It is so great to get to work with Amber!

Grant Gassiot - Campus Visits Coordinator

19 December 2024

Grant had an amazing Fall semester bringing in and coordinating incredible campus visits numbers for the Fall 2024 season. He did a fantastic job of managing all of his campus tour guide staff and ensuring their success. He deeply cares about all of the families and guests that come through the welcome center doors. He was incredibly accommodating to different group requests and made every group and individual feel valued while visiting this campus. He used many complex multitasking and scheduling skills to ensure smooth events every single day. He never fails to keep the office lively with his great ideas. He has been incredibly helpful especially towards me being new to my role and helping explain the ins and outs of campus that I did not even know as an alum and current student. He goes above and beyond in his role, and I am beyond thrilled to be able to work with him.