



Erin Fitzgerald
Graduate, Anthropology

Erin C. Fitzgerald obtained two Bachelor of Art degrees at California State University, Fullerton in 2006 for Anthropology and Psychology. She earned her MA, at California State University, Fullerton, in 2008 with emphasis on Biological Evolutionary Anthropology. She has presented research on HPV at the American Anthropological Association, invited poster session, in Washington D.C. in 2007, which is in the process of publication. She has been a graduate assistant in the Department of Anthropology for three consecutive semesters in 2007-2008. She is a member of several organizations: Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Lambda Alpha National Honor Society, Evolutionary Anthropology Society, American Anthropology Association, Southern California Applied Anthropology Network and Visual Anthropology Club. She has been the recipient of several awards: Untereiner Humanistic Anthropology Award, Professional Enhancement Award and the Meritorious Service Award. She has been accepted in the Ph.D. program at the University of New Mexico, where she will focus on Biological Evolutionary Anthropology, in the Fall of 2008. She was awarded the Hibben Fellowship and a Graduate Assistant position at the University of New Mexico.

Fellow Graduates, Faculty, Family and Friends;

The journey to today has been a culmination of hard work and sleepless nights, with relief that the last paper has been turned in, the last final has been completed and the end of the semester has arrived.

No more driving around in the parking structures to find an open parking space or agonizing over the dreaded oral presentation, which you didn't begin working on until the night before it was due.

For some of us, the dream of today has taken many years to become a reality. Working during the day and attending evening classes, balancing work, family and school.

But regardless of the path each of us has taken, as graduates, we all understand how much the support and encouragement of family and friends have helped us along the way. So Thank you, Thank you so very much!

Our degree in Anthropology has provided us with a wonderful opportunity to see the world and all of its inhabitants from a unique perspective by incorporating many diverse disciplines towards the understanding of humanity.

We ask the “why” and “how” questions dating from our early hominid ancestors to the present.

We are more cognizant of cultural diversity and human variation which is applicable in all aspects of our life and interactions with each other.

Some of us will continue on and earn a Masters or Ph.D., others will take the knowledge they have gained, paving the way with their own personal contributions at work, home and in life.

I can say without reservation that our accomplishments, which has led us here today, is only the beginning of our journey.

To quote Henry David Thoreau - “Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.”

The only limitations we have are the ones we set for our selves. So stand proud and hold your head up high. Each of us had challenges to overcome to get here today, but we did it!

Congratulations, Graduating Class of 2008!