

# Message from President Cook and Austin Rinke

December 17, 2024

Hello, everyone.

It's commencement week here at North Dakota State University. We will be celebrating graduates on Friday at 2 p.m. at the Sanford Health Athletic Complex, the SHAC.

So joining me here today is Austin Rinke, a standout Bison who's been selected to speak at our fall ceremony which is a very very big deal, sir. So congratulations for that.

So Austin tell us a little bit about yourself.

Yeah.

So I'm originally from Fergus Falls, Minnesota. I'm graduating with a degree in mechanical engineering.

Nice.

NDSU has been amazing. Staff's been amazing. All of you guys have been amazing. It's been a really fun time.

So mechanical engineering, that's a tough degree. So good for you. You've been grinding...

How many how many years has it been for you?

It's been three and a half. It'll take me three and a half total.

Holy cow.

Three and a half years in mechanical engineering.

Yes, sir.

That's pretty darn impressive. Good for you.

So why did you choose mechanical engineering?

Yeah. You know, also, just growing up, getting the...

My dad grew up on a farm, so spending time with just grandpa and grandma at the farm, you get to see all that big equipment go to work, all the augers, the combines, the tractors.

And just took a great interest in that.

Man, what's that all about?

Went fishing a lot. A rod and reel.

A lot of engineering goes into that kind of stuff.

One of the great things about NDSU is we have like 275 different clubs on campus. And we love how students can just get involved in a lot of different ways.

So after three and a half years, what are some of the clubs that you got involved with and what did you love of doing here on campus?

Yeah, so I was heavily involved in a couple of clubs, one being Chi Alpha, which is a Christian ministry.

Yeah. On campus.

So amazing.

Just the people are just amazing.

Yeah, it was awesome.

The people. The people, the people.

Exactly.

NDSU, it feels more like a family by the time you're done. I mean, you see, like you and your wife walking their dogs around campus. That's just so cool.

I was also involved in Engineering Ambassadors, which is an engineering club here on campus. And then I actually just this Tuesday got invited to go to climbing club.

They have free climbing for the climbing club at NDSU

Oh, in the, in the wellness center?

Yes, in the wellness center and just off campus. And I can tell you from experience, my forearms are burning.

That's super cool. Yeah.

After graduation, what are your plans?

Yeah.

So I will be sticking around in Fargo.

Nice. Hard to leave when it's such a great place. And I'll be working for Marvin Windows and doors.

So as a manufacturing engineer.

So we love them.

Marvin is a great partner for NDSU.

I've been up there, in Warroad and a great facility up there, but they have a huge presence right here and kind of the whole kind of Fargo, Moorhead, Cass County region.

So good for you. That's here.

That's fantastic. Very proud of you.

Thank you very much.

How did NDSU set you up for success?

Yeah.

Opportunity, opportunity, opportunity.

From freshman year going to the career fairs. Both in the fall and the spring semester, there's so much opportunity to not only just meet with potential job opportunities, but really just to learn the names of these people.

They remember you after that face to face interaction, and then just the staff connections and walking into a professor's office.

Hey, do you know anybody from Marvin Windows?

Do you know anybody from NASA? Right?

I know a buddy who is working for NASA now.

Wow.

And it's just that stuff like that, that really just gives you the opportunity to do to do great things.

Well, so we have our new Richard Offerdahl Engineering Complex coming on board here in another year.

And so we need to have you come back and get a master's degree and enjoy yourself in that new facility.

Really enjoyed getting to know you and your time here. And but also looking forward to hearing your words of wisdom and inspiration on Friday, I know you're going to knock it out of the park.

Everybody, this fall semester, a total of 882 NDSU students are eligible for graduation and will be entering the workforce. And we're very proud of that.

We graduate the highest number of bachelor's degrees and the highest number of Ph.D.s, across the state of North Dakota.

So we're very proud of that.

And so can't wait to see everybody on Friday at graduation.

Congratulations, students, families, friends, everything.

It's a very big deal. And Go Bison!