

## News Release

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### **Support helps education student pursue graduate program**

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — When Lorne Balmer enrolled for his freshman year at Indiana University Kokomo, he planned to earn his degree and immediately enter the workforce.

Thanks to support from his professors in the School of Education, Balmer is now preparing for a doctoral program, with plans possibly to come back to teach at IU Kokomo.

“My decision to go to school here has taken me to where I am today. I wouldn’t trade my experience here to go somewhere else,” Balmer said. “I felt like I had a private school experience with the personal attention I received from my professors.”

Tuesday (May 8), Balmer will be among the 493 students receiving diplomas at Commencement, set for 10:30 a.m. in the pavilion east of Hunt Hall.

Chancellor Michael Harris said he is proud of Balmer for graduating in four years, and without debt.

“Lorne has worked hard to reach his goals, and he is to be commended,” Harris said. “He has served as a leader on campus, and I expect more success from him in the future.”

Balmer began his career at IU Kokomo even before he graduated from Kokomo’s Northwestern High School, taking psychology and sociology on campus during his senior year.

“The quality of those classes really convinced me to stay here,” he said, along with his desire to graduate with no student debt.

He's met that goal not only with scholarships, but also by working all through college, first at a grocery store and then in on-campus jobs. He was a reporter and editor for *The Correspondent* student newspaper. He later conducted research with faculty members Melissa Grabner-Hagen in education and Christina Downey in psychology.

Immediately after Commencement, Balmer has an interview for an hourly job at the Great Lakes Educational Equity Center at IUPUI, which could evolve into an assistantship as he pursues an advanced degree in school psychology.

He credits encouragement from Grabner-Hagen for his future career.

"Her guidance has really made a difference in my career plans," Balmer said. "She and Professor (Shirley) Aamidor encouraged me to consider graduate schools. Their guidance, support and scaffolding have changed what I'm going to do with my life."

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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