



U Prep's Class of 2021 Ceremonies

It's that time of the year again when the U Prep Community collectively celebrates the culmination of our scholars' secondary school experiences. Congratulations to all of our graduates as they start anew on their post-secondary journeys!

This year, all three commencement ceremonies were held at the Detroit Opera, and shared with a full house of family, friends and U Prep crew. UPAD High School began this year's end-of-year celebration showing gratitude to parents and extended family – all who made up the village that molded the graduates throughout their school careers. Each of the ceremonies included a serenade of the Black National Anthem, Lift Every Voice and Sing, but UPA High School's vocalist was none other than, 2020 Alum, Jacqueline Whitfield. She lit up the room and set the tone for all who would follow. Each school showcased their graduates with a video presentation, capturing moments throughout their four years on campus, and the memories created.

UPSM High closed out this year's celebration with wise words from School Director, Dr. John Lockhart who reminded students of the expectations of a U Prep graduate and alum. All ceremonies were filled with inspirational words from class leaders and School Directors, Joseph Hines and Derrick Kellam. Each reassured their graduates that no matter how far they go they will always remain a part of the U Prep Family, and that *the family* is only a phone call away. An additional common thread was the native Detroit keynote speakers who spoke of how being from "the D" impacted their current success in their individual career paths. These speakers included, Brittni Brown, Dr. Robert Simmons and Steven Norfleet.

During this pandemic year, seniors showed extreme resilience and displayed U Prep Pride throughout. We are proud of each and every U Prep grad, and wish them the very best in their future endeavors. Congratulations, Seniors! We wish you the very best as you begin anew on your post-secondary journeys!

We would like to leave you with a few closing thoughts from our new 2021 alums!



Brittany Ivie - UPAD High School Graduate

I want to personally thank the University Prep Art and Design staff for their vigorous teaching and being a helping hand in making this day happen. Without your support we wouldn't be here. Our senior year was hard and no one will ever experience our frustration, pressure, worry or doubt. We bounced forward, not back because we were already there. I almost don't want it to end but not everything lasts forever. Part of me ALMOST wishes that somehow we could go back and start again.

**Treasure Allen - UPA High School Graduate**

I am beyond excited for graduation, it has been a long time coming! I am looking forward to what life offers and holds for me outside of school. I am so thankful for the entire Crew and staff at UPA High School for helping me get to where I am now and for their support along the way. When I first got into UPA I was nervous and shy. Now that I am graduating, with the support of Dean Lawrence and others I have the confidence to ask questions, go for what I want and step into the real world with confidence and achieve greatness!

**Destiny Black - UPSM High School Graduate**

I am excited to go off to school, and experience new things, and meet new people. UPSM helped me build self-confidence. The workload, material and life lessons here have prepared me for what is next in my life. It has been a hard school year with the pandemic so it was great to see everybody at graduation closing out the year, right.

