

## **AU Outstanding Seniors address classmates at commencement**

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ALFRED, NY During commencement exercises Saturday, Ian Phillips urged his Alfred University classmates to seize opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others. "When we think about the rest of our lives, the transition isn't simple. We have to build our own lives, our own happiness," said Phillips, who earned a B.A. degree with majors in history, philosophy and political science. "It won't be defined by the jobs we have, but by the work we do and by the impact we have on others." Phillips, the Marlin Miller Outstanding Senior Man, spoke during the 170th annual commencement exercises Saturday morning. A two-term president of Alfred University's Student Senate, he told fellow graduates they have the chance to shape not only their own future, but also the future of others. "I believe we need to give back a bit more than was given to us," said Phillips. "We have a lot of work to do." Phillips is a graduate of Auburn (NY) High School, and is the son of Kathleen Phillips of Auburn and Ben Phillips of Weedsport. Andreina Simet, Marlin Miller Outstanding Senior Woman, called commencement the "fulfillment of a long-awaited dream" as the first in her family to graduate from high school and then college. Four years ago, when she first came to Alfred University from Brooklyn, people would ask, "Where's Alfred?" and I used to say, "I'm not sure how to describe it," Simet recalled, referring to Alfred's rural location. "Alfred grows on you, and I have had an incredible experience here," said Simet. "Now, when people ask me 'Where's Alfred University?' I have a better response. I say 'Alfred is my alma mater, and it's right here, in a special place in my heart.'" Simet, who earned bachelor's degrees in economics and marketing, was chair of the Student Senate Cabinet the last two years. She is the daughter of Maria De LaCruz of Brooklyn, NY, and is a graduate of Murry Bergtraum High School. Recipients of the Marlin Miller Outstanding Senior Awards were chosen for the honor by a campus-wide committee on the basis of their scholarship, extra-curricular leadership and personal character. Candidates for the award are nominated by faculty and staff. Along with a hand-crafted tile made by Wayne Higby, professor of ceramic art, each receive \$5,000 in cash, thanks to an endowment created by Robert L. McNeil Jr. of Wyndmoor, PA, a friend and business colleague of Marlin Miller. While AU has for several years presented outstanding senior awards to the man and woman in each class, in 2004 the awards were named in honor of Miller, a member of the AU Board of Trustees since 1972, a former chairman of the board, and the University's largest donor. Miller is former president and CEO of Arrow International, a medical devices manufacturing firm in Reading, PA.