

Fourteen new nurses are ready to start their careers as health care providers in the midst of a pandemic.



"I am incredibly impressed with the bravery of the students," said Rachel Duffy, nursing instructor.

2020 started as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife and ended as the International Year of COVID-19 and Social Distancing.

"I'll bet every single one of you can tell me how to quarantine a patient," Charlotte Powell, associate professor of nursing, told the students.

Many in the Class of 2020 are parents who had to juggle their studies while helping their children with remote learning.



Some are carrying on a family tradition by becoming a nurse.

All of them are multi-talented.

One played roller derby and another plays the violin. One is a former volunteer firefighter

and EMT and another is a kickboxer. One is an artist and another loves to bake.

A desire to help others brought them together.

“We have learned how to be caring and compassionate nurses who will help change the world for the better,” said grad Morgan Dierks of Davenport, IA.

After completing the two-year Associate Degree Nursing program, students typically gather for a formal ceremony and receive a black and gold Black Hawk College nursing pin from their instructors.



But this year, the students were pinned by their family members in their kitchens and living rooms during a virtual ceremony.

More than 100 people joined in online for the [Fall 2020 Nursing Pinning Ceremony program](#).

The graduates were pinned by their husbands and boyfriends, their mothers and grandmothers, and even their children.



“Congratulations! You’ve done it and under circumstances that haven’t been seen in over 100 years,” said Dr. Amy Maxeiner, vice president for instruction.

“Nursing school isn’t easy under normal circumstances, and you’ve persevered through it all and then some,” she said.

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