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Duluth--- While the color and pageantry of UMD's commencement will escape Byard Hendershot of Two Harbors Thursday night (June 10), the sounds and supreme excitement of the ceremonies will be his to hear and remember.

Twenty-eight year old Hendershot is UMD's first blind graduate.

When Byard and his seeing-eye dog Julie join the other 524 graduates in the procession to receive degrees, fellow students and faculty will share with them the dramatic moment.

For a little more than four years, the blind student and his dog have been familiar figures on the campus, a picture of devotion and patient determination.

Hendershot will receive the Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in political science and history. He hopes to enter law school this fall.

His advisor, Counseling Director Bruce Rutherford, said Hendershot "has adapted very, very well considering his great disadvantage."

One of Hendershot's instructors, Dr. Julius Wolff of the political science department, recalls that "he had a pretty good memory. He did "B" work in my classes and actually was phenomenal when you consider his serious handicap."

Hendershot chose UMD because "it was close to home, a small school but a good one being connected with the University." He has lived on-campus in Vermilion Hall since attending his first classes during winter quarter, 1961.

He spent two quarters at UMD before acquiring Julie from a seeing-eye kennel in Morristown, New Jersey. By the end of his freshman year

(more)

page 2 - Hendershot story

he had decided to try for law school.

Hendershot has applied for admittance to the William Mitchell Law School in St. Paul. "It's a little too early to decide what area of law I will pursue," he said. "I haven't even been accepted yet."

Naturally, he had to make several adjustments and needed special help while at UMD. Because visual identification is so vital in the sciences, this requirement was waived.

To aid him in studying, UMD provided Hendershot with student readers who studied with him 3-5 hours a week. Then a volunteer service in St. Paul helped by transferring his textbook materials onto recording tapes.

In the classroom Hendershot relied on braille to take down lecture notes and the instructors cooperated by giving him most of his examinations orally. He will graduate with a 2.4 grade point average overall.

"The nature of his handicap had made him somewhat reserved," said Rutherford, "but he has more than overcome his initial shyness."

Hendershot is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hendershot, Box 494, Two Harbors. He is one of three blind students enrolled at UMD this year.