

Driving their own decisions

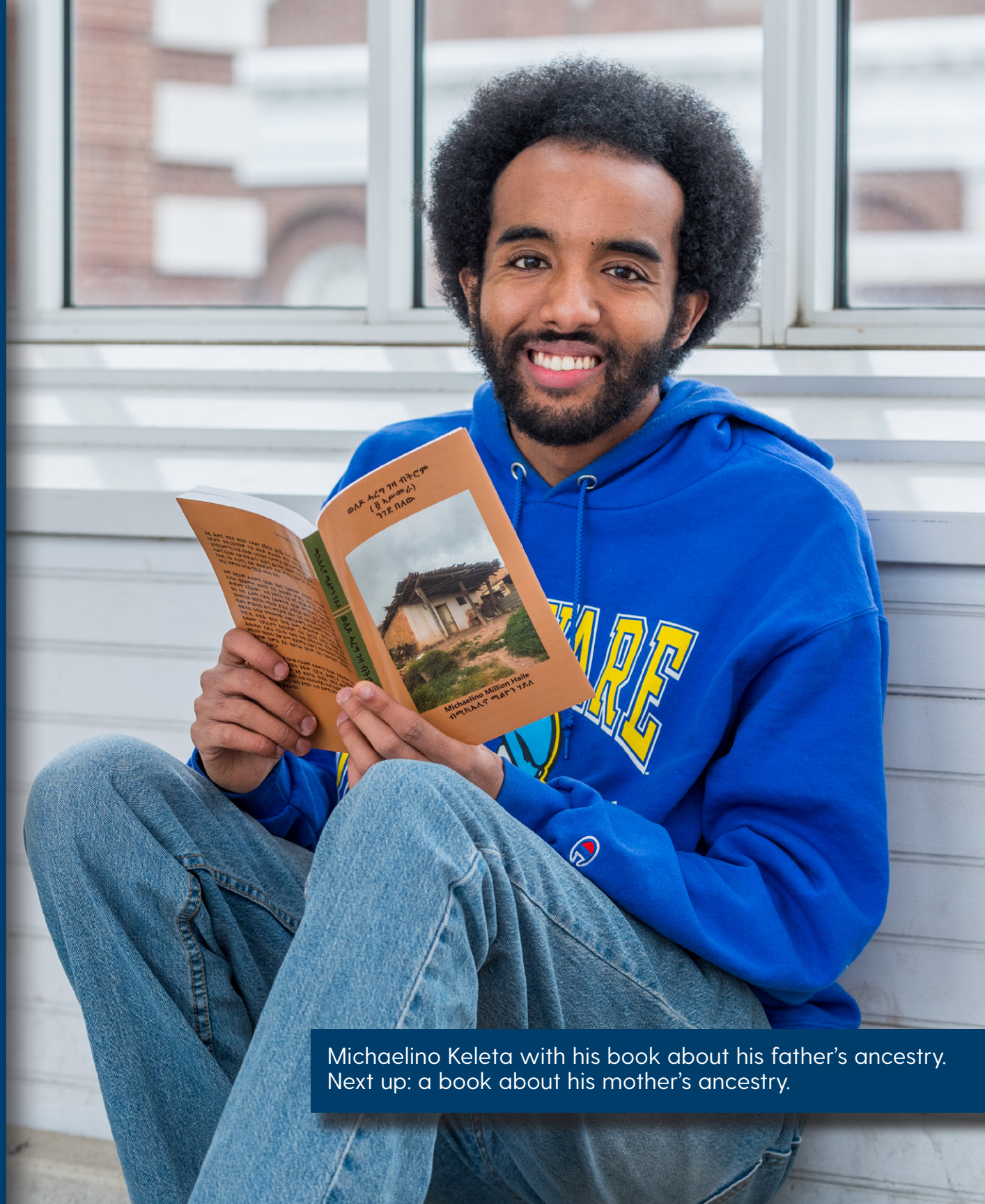
Meet author Michaelino Keleta, whose book about his paternal ancestry in the northeast African country of Eritrea says as much about Keleta's promising future as his family's rich history. Organized during his enrollment in the CDS-led [Career and Life Studies Certificate \(CLSC\) program](#) for students with intellectual disabilities, the book, together with the coaching he received in CLSC, changed Keleta. Before CLSC, "doing things on time was difficult for me," he says.

"We involve the students in driving their own decisions, in developing their own person-centered goals," says CLSC Program Manager [James Sellers](#). "From that we see incredible individual growth."

Keleta says encouragement from CLSC staff gave him confidence to write the book upon completing CLSC. Keleta also works at a payment processing firm. Many of his fellow CLSC alums – there are 60 since CLSC enrolled its first cohort in 2011 – similarly flourish upon finishing CLSC, some by furthering their education and others by entering the workforce.

A fellow 2020 CLSC graduate of Keleta's is pursuing mechanic-based certifications to enhance his skills as an assistant auto technician. Another is pursuing an associate's degree at an area community college. At UD, another coordinates CLSC's alumni program.

Keleta's mother, Amy Ghebre, says her son may return to UD to study anthropology. "CLSC showed him what he's capable of doing," she says. What he's doing now is writing another book. "This one's about my mother's ancestors," he says.



Michaelino Keleta with his book about his father's ancestry. Next up: a book about his mother's ancestry.