

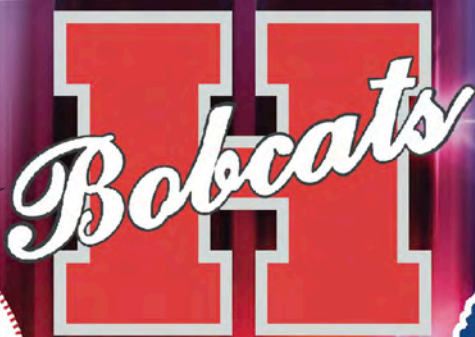


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CLASS OF 2023

GRADUATION

HEMPSTEAD COUNTY EDITION



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GARRETT MEMORIAL

HOPE

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Hempstead Hall buzzes with excitement as Blevin's 19 senior Hornets graduate

Article by Jeff Smithpeters | Photos by Dillan Kelsey

The graduation of 19 seniors from Blevins High School's Class of 2023 took place in Hempstead Hall, starting promptly at 7:00 p.m. with the playing of a recording of an excerpt from Edward Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March and the procession of seniors into the auditorium and to their places in seats on stage right.

On stage left was a podium with the Blevins school seal. The first to speak was Adrianna Barr, a soon-to-be Honors Graduate. She asked that all stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Her voice could be heard reciting it through the auditorium's large speakers.

Next was the Invocation, said by another Honors recipient, Isaac Brooks, who thanked the Lord for safely bringing all attendees to the commencement. "I thank you, Lord, that you have guided us this far," he said. "And I thank you for your guidance in the days to come as you continue to watch not only this class but everyone gathered here today, as we leave and go about the rest of our lives that you may have planned for us."

The Salutatorian Address was given by Honors recipient Alyssa Bonner. She reflected on how quickly time had seem to pass as the Class of 2023 pursued its primary and secondary educations. "It just doesn't seem that long ago that we were enjoying my first field day or getting the spray water out we had Mormons fire out from the local fire department came to visit," Bonner said.

and often reminded us that we are capable of achieving the things that seem impossible."

"No matter what you choose to do. Be passionate about it. And every season of your life strive to be the best student, worker, boss, parent or spouse and never allow yourself to give anything but the best," Bonner said. She was roundly applauded.

Valedictorian Nathan Lovette compared the Class of 2023's school years to a roller coaster ride. "We've had many ups and downs over the years. Some of them were very exciting like field days, pep rallies ... I don't know about the rest of you," he said. "But I'll be just fine with never having to take another test like the ACT."

But Lovette also said "Mostly, though, here in the end, many of us are not ready for it to be over." Here he hearkened again to the amusement park ride comparison. "Just like the roller coaster, when that car slows down after that last curb, the last few weeks we wish it could last just a little longer, and that we could stay together for just a little while. So I'm quickly discovering, as I know our classmates are, the weird ride is just about to begin."

Lovette continued, saying all that he and his classmates have experienced has led to this time of decision and "now is the time for us to find our true paths." He advised his peers: "Seek out the next set of fun twists and turns that await us. We can even look forward to things that scare us because now we know that every experience gained will shape us toward our ultimate goal finding a purpose, a calling, a future."

Lovette finished by making a request. "So classmates, as we head into the future, I charge you with this: never forget how you feel right now in this moment, the excitement of anticipation mixed with nostalgia for the past and a bit of nervousness about what comes next. These are the moments to enjoy, and there'll be many more to come. Embrace every experience and make the most of every single day, because our ride is never truly over." Applause followed.

The next part of the program was the traditional Presentation of Carnations, in which seniors awarded the flower to families and friends in the audience as "Good Old Days" by Macklemore featuring Kesha played through the auditorium speakers.

Blevins High faculty member Justin Mishler read the particular scholarship awards and amounts for several of the students present. The total take for the 19 was \$210,000.

The Roll Call and the Presentation of Diplomas then proceeded, taking no more than five minutes as the seniors were presented their diploma by a member of the faculty each had chosen. When the last one was handed over, Blevins High Principal Natalie Jones said, "Congratulations, graduates, you may now move your tassel!" After they did, Jones resumed, "Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present to you the 2023 graduating class of Blevins High School. Give them another round of applause."

New graduate Braylon Carrigan said a brief Benediction and the 2023 Blevins Hornets Graduates made their way out of the auditorium and into a Hempstead Hall stairwell, where they posed for their last pictures as a class before throwing those mortars skyward.



She revealed she hadn't believed it when she was told as a youngster how quickly the time would seem to pass. But, Bonner admitted tonight, "I can say that the first day of senior year truly feels just like yesterday."

She also explained what she would most recall about her years in school. "The most valuable lessons we learned in school were not written lesson plans. They were taught to us through meaningful conversations and experiences. We learned to show compassion and how to get along with one another, even when it's difficult. Our teachers pushed us to pursue our passions



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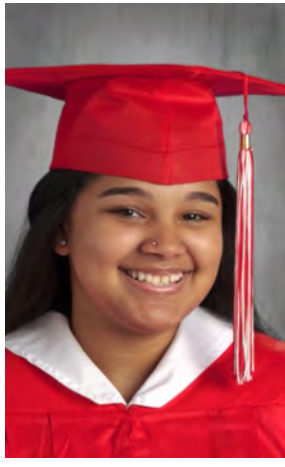


BLEVINS

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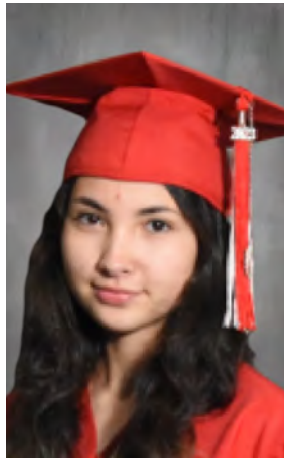
Lilian Allen



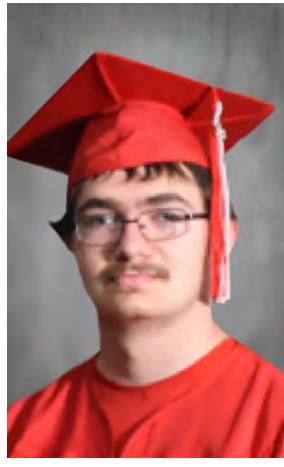
Madison Arnold



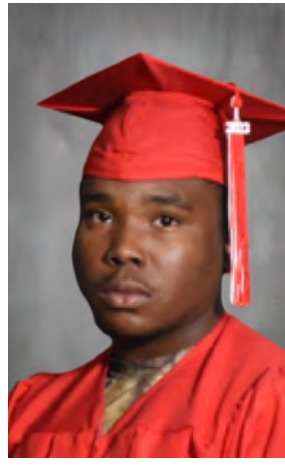
Adriana Barr



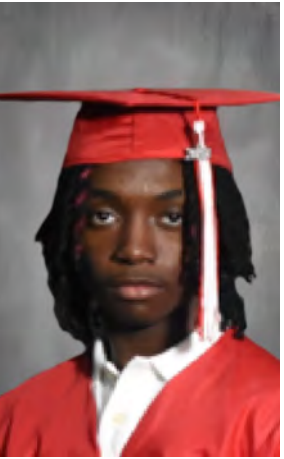
Alyssa Bonner



Isaac Brooks



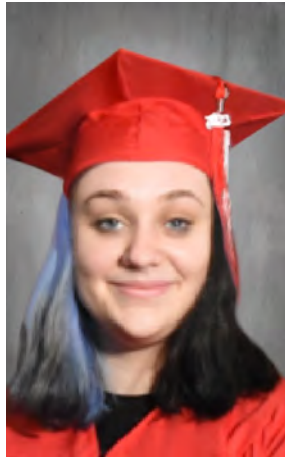
Braylon Carrigan



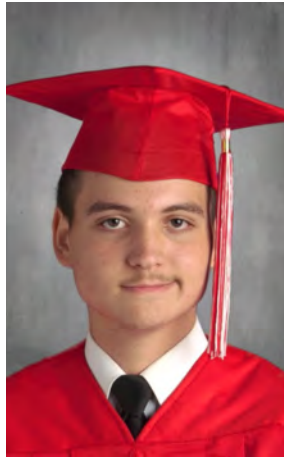
Cameron Elkins



Payton Fox



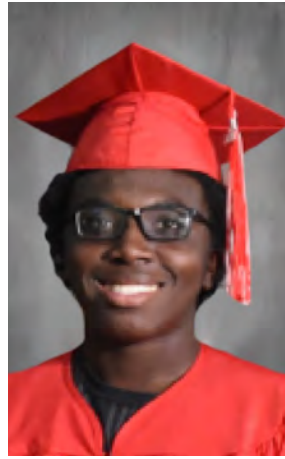
Addison Gooding



Braden Hamilton



Haden Hamilton



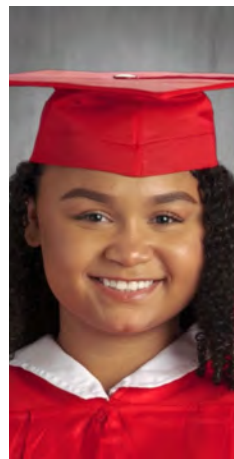
Michael Jones



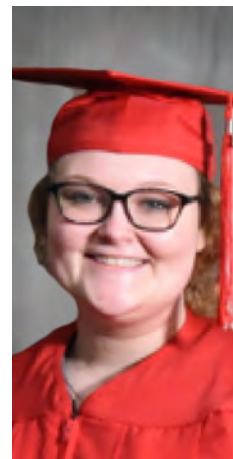
Nathan Lovette



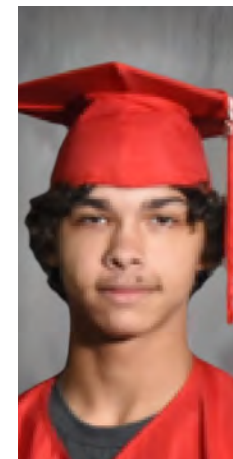
Gil McMorris



Micaela Moreno



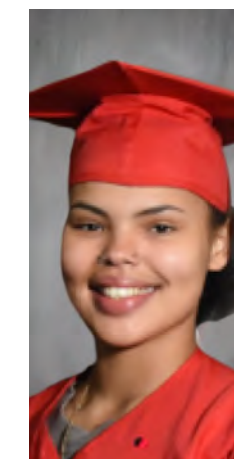
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Garrett graduates 11, announces over \$400,000 in scholarships

by April Lovette

Proud parents looked on as eleven students received their well-earned diplomas Friday night during the Garrett Memorial Christian School (GMCS) Graduation Ceremony at Hempstead Hall. GMCS Administrator Christi Zumwalt presented each senior at the start of the ceremony and youth pastor Chris Vines gave the Senior Charge, but what took center stage for the night were the accomplishments of these eleven students. Their achievements were made obvious by the sheer amount of scholarships announced, proving that while Garrett's graduating class may be small in number, their academic prowess is anything but.

Zumwalt said that as a whole, the GMCS Class of 2023 had been awarded \$402,607 in scholarships so far, and she said that number is likely to grow since some students are still waiting to hear a response regarding other applications. Some organizations, both local and abroad, were in attendance last night to present these scholarships: Hope Lions Club, Hope Junior Auxiliary, New Millennium, UAHT, SAU, and the Cooper family, who was there to present the second annual Parker Cooper Memorial Scholarship. Other scholarships announced were from Farm Bureau, Diamond State Bank, and LifeShare, as well as the respective colleges these students will soon be attending. Two of the scholarships were provided by two anonymous donors, Zumwalt said, and in the form of \$1,000 awarded to both Valedictorian Sophy Tyson and Salutatorian Jaci McKamie.

In their roles of valedictorian and salutatorian, these two ladies also had the task of speaking to the

audience. Tyson said it had been a "privilege to attend Garrett and an honor to be valedictorian" and shared some memories of her time with classmates at GMCS, as well as her appreciation for her education. "Not only do I have many good memories to thank Garrett for, but I also have my biblical foundation to thank them for," Tyson said. "Garrett's mission isn't only for us to succeed academically but also spiritually. Our spiritual well-beings will always be priorities here, and that is why Garrett is special." She said the education she and her classmates received at Garrett taught them how to have Christ-centered lives.

McKamie followed next and shared the many possibilities that await the students after graduation, in addition to her appreciation for how the time GMCS had helped her and fellow classmates to succeed. "As we end this chapter of the book in our GMCS career and begin a new story of our own, we will always have these moments, memories, and special people in our lives together to look back on and thank for getting us to this day," McKamie said. "With that, Class of 2023, we have finally made it to the day we've all been waiting for. We've made it."

Lee Eskridge also spoke and shared details about the senior mission trip. His re-telling of events was lively, prompting laughter from the audience, and his closing with a quote from Richard Bach was heartfelt. Eskridge said, "A farewell is necessary before you can meet again. And meeting again, after moments of lifetime, is certain for those who are friends," and then wished his classmates success in their future endeavors.

For the main event, happy families watched as the seniors walked the stage to receive their diplomas. The applause and cheers for these eleven was as boisterous as would be for a graduating class of 100, and well-deserved, too, considering their long list of accolades that had been announced earlier in the ceremony. Afterward, as these graduates moved their tassels and stood to leave the stage, they wore joyous smiles filled with pride, and it's not a far stretch to understand why. The GMCS Class of 2023 has proven that you don't need big numbers to have mighty accomplishments.



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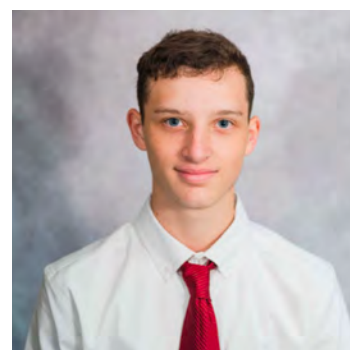
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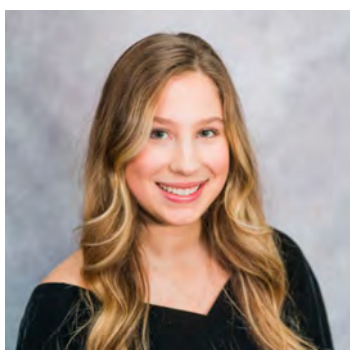
Hayden Quillin



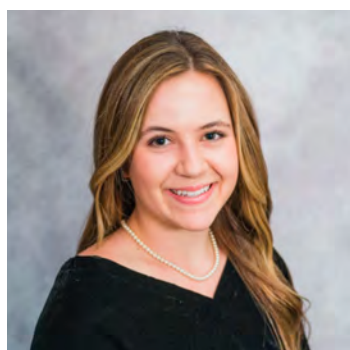
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Caleb Tucker



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Congratulations to the 2023 Graduates!

Hope High graduates 151 in Hammons Stadium as weather cooperates

Article by Jeff Smithpeters | Photos by David Henderson & Elizabeth Richey

Despite a severe storm warning called at 1:13 p.m. Friday afternoon May 19 by the National Weather Service, the online announcement from Superintendent Jonathan Crossley was that the Hammons Stadium ceremony would go on that evening. The storms must have heard. During the commencement, they sailed by to Hope's north, and 151 Hope High School Seniors became graduates as of just before 8:00 p.m.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. The procession of soon-to-be graduates began at 7:00 p.m., as the school's decorated band performed the Elgar Pomp and Circumstances March. The cloud-refracted light revealed that many students wore stoles and cords of gold, blue, red, white and purple down the front of their maroon gowns. These had taken honors based on grade point averages or had earned associate degrees through the Hope Collegiate Academy or had completed programs in a variety of disciplines.

The Welcome was made by HHS Principal Donald Patton. "We're here to honor the graduating class for their accomplishments of the past four years," he said. "They have earned many honors, had many successes, struggles, and even failures, but achieved numerous goals. They are stepping into the future with knowledge and skills that have gained in the classroom, here and elsewhere." He introduced members of his staff in attendance.

Patton then introduced prospective Honors Graduate Calvin Haynes to say the invocation. "Dear Heavenly Father," he began. "We thank you for this time that we have to come here and celebrate the accomplishments that we've made of the work that we put in over the years. ... We thank you for allowing the weather to hold off so that we can have this ceremony. We pray that as we're about to enter a new challenge in our lives and a new step, we pray that you watch over us as you have already ... In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

Next came a rendition of the National Anthem from Arnetta Bradford that was rousing, yet full of subtle beauty. The crowd that filled nearly both sides of the stadium's seating applauded and called out praise.

For Opening Remarks, Superintendent Crossley began by expressing gratitude to the attendees for "celebrating these wonderful students who are graduating on a day when the weather is cooperating. So go ahead and knock on wood right now. Now we're going to keep that going. I'm going to keep that going."

Crossley then requested those attending to look at someone nearby, make eye contact and say, "Hey, I love you." After most did so, he said, "If it made you smile, that's good. Nothing wrong with smiling every once in a while, because here's the thing. We're here to celebrate excellence. But we're also here to celebrate love, the love that it took to get all of these students across the finish line, the love that it has taken every single day for them to get up and come and do their schoolwork, the love of teachers and administrators to help them to get across that finish line. So we are thankful that you are here today." He then introduced members of the

Hope Public Schools Board of Education in attendance, requested a round of applause for their leadership and said he would return with remarks later in the program.

Principal Patton next took the podium, presenting the soon-to-be honors graduates. Those earning a 4.0 grade point average and summa cum laude were asked to stand. These were Kaleo Anderson, Camron Robinson and Calvin Haynes. Then Patton introduced and asked to stand the 11 magna cum laude and ten cum laude graduates-to-be. He read each of their names and each was applauded.

Director of Hope Collegiate Academy Sallie Nix then came to the podium to recognize students in that program involved in the commencement who had "successfully completed their first two years of college and earned their associates degree, which is the accumulation of 60 hours of concurrent credit credits." She asked these to stand. They were applauded.

Hope High Vice Principal Elizabeth Richey then introduced the first student speaker, Camron Robinson, summa cum laude at Hope High and a recent graduate with a University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana associates degree, who will be majoring in medical science at UA-Fayetteville with emphasis on anesthesiology.

Robinson thanked all for coming out and then addressed her classmates, observing "we finally made it," and saying she was honored to be speaking to them. Then she addressed the occasion. "Through all the tears, trials and homework assignments, we are finally here. It is time to move on to the next stepping stones of our young lives. Whether that's going to college, entering the workforce, or taking a mental break to figure out the next steps of your life, it's time to enter this big world and decide who we want to be or who we are."

She gave two points of advice: first, keep going. "Some of you might have already tested this new world," Robinson said. "Sometimes it can bite. I just hope that you all have the determination to persevere, to keep going when the road gets a little rough. When you keep walking, the road smooths out, and life gets a bit easier. There will always be rough patches and adversity. But when you keep going, you learn to get through them all easier. Life is unfair. If not, there would be no lessons for people to learn. The sooner you understand that, the easier it will be to overcome life's challenges."

Next, be kind. "There's already enough evil in the world," Robinson said. "And to change that, we first have to look at ourselves. So start with that man or woman in the mirror, and make that change. Maya Angelou said, 'I've learned that people will forget what you said. They'll forget what you did. But we'll never forget how you made them feel. So be sure to always be kind.'"

Richey then introduced Kaleo Anderson, also summa cum laude whose "future plans are to attend Hendrix College in Conway Arkansas. His plans are to major in accounting."

Anderson began by thanking "my classmates, the rest of the student body teachers, parents and staff who made these four years everything they were." He

then turned toward the autobiographical. "Anyone who knows me understands that I'm not a big talker. So I won't be up here very long. I don't have any wise words for the futures, any allegories, just a brief picture of my story."

He told of when in March of 2020, the COVID pandemic interrupted his ninth grade year in its second semester. "School as we knew it changed. I remember sitting in the living room waiting for Governor Asa Hutchinson, to inform us what the remaining year would look like. We made it through the pandemic together, from AMI packets to virtual learning, social distancing, and all the other changes. To our teachers, I want to say thank you. For every change we went through, every obstacle we had to maneuver, and through all the meltdowns, you all never gave up on us."

Referring to his years playing football, Anderson said, "To my football coaches, I want to give a huge thanks. I found my passion, place and voice on the field. Everyone looks at our record each year and calls it unsuccessful. But what they don't know is that you all have not only equipped us with the tools to be successful on the field, but also in life. I'm forever grateful."

Anderson then thanked his mother and described her commitment to continuing her own education to the point of vying for a doctorate as he has pursued his: "You taught me everything about studying, hard work, perseverance and determination. I remember we were reading books together when I was younger and had



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study time in the living room. And you always expected nothing but the best for me. Mama, I made it through this phase with you being the biggest supporter to my life, every sport I played, every extracurricular activity, every class. You also helped me with my decisions, while allowing it to be my choice. You have equipped me with the tools on me to start this new chapter in my life."

In Anderson's close, he told his classmates, "It is okay to be unsure about what your next chapter will be. It is okay to make mistakes. And it's also okay to say I need help. But always remember the words from my favorite scripture Philippians chapter four, verse 13. 'I can do all things through Christ, which strengthens me.' Thank you all for allowing me this great opportunity. Go Bobcats."

Richey then introduced the Hope Public Schools superintendent as the event's Honorable Speaker. Of him she said, "I can confidently say that Dr. Crossley is passionate about creating equitable pathways to success for the next generation. He is also passionate about elevating the student experience and breaking down barriers that hinder students from thriving in the classroom ... Welcome with me Dr Jonathan Crossley."

Crossley began by saying he had decided rather than giving the hour and a half version or the 15-minute version, he would give the five-minute version. He then said this year's graduation is different. "You guys, the Collegiate Academy and all of you who are sitting here today went through the COVID year frantically. So you already know inherently challenges and how they come at you and how you have to adapt and be innovative to make those changes. So I was thinking, 'What could I say to this class that I would have wanted someone to say to me when I was 17, 18, 19 years old?'"

Citing Luke Chapter eight verses 22-25, Crossley told the story of Christ and his disciples trying to cross a great lake on a small boat and being led into a severe windstorm. At this point, his disciples awaken Christ from his nap. He then is described as having "rebuked the wind and the raging waves" to bring about calm waters. After this he asked of his disciples, "where is your faith?"

Crossley said, "While you may think this Scripture is odd, the message that I have today is that the storm is the stage." He then told of being aged 22 and receiving a phone call from the aunt that had "paved the way for me to enjoy people and enjoy being in front of people" and had been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. In the call, Crossley said, she said she had only a month left but had some advice for him. "I want you to know something that needs to carry you for the rest of your life ... Love God, and love others, put them before yourself."

He then asked a question. "What if the true test and the true challenge, graduates, adults, community members, what if the true test is that we have is to get through the storm? Then to be faced with another storm, to learn to grow, to do that better to go to the next stage, to work out your faith in fear and trembling, because we all have a long way to go?"

He then addressed the class of 2023 again. "I'm glad that you've persevered. I'm glad that you've gone across that lake and fought that giant to go on your next journey. So whether that's a tough two-year college, a four-year college, the workplace, whatever your future may hold, know that you have a support system inside of this stadium and beyond that will carry you to your next phase. We love you. We are thankful for you. Please come back, give back and overcome."

He closed with some final advice about how adversity

often comes and what to do when it does. "When challenges come at you, they come at you in all ways, but they will help you grow and develop the most when you are the most tired. That's how they come your way. So students I'm going to say this: when you are your most tired, turn to your support system."

Counselors Delma Stuart and Doni Watson took turns in announcing the names of each prospective graduate as they came forward to receive their diplomas, posed for the photographers and resumed their seats.

Principal Patton presented to Superintendent Crossley the fact that the students had fulfilled their requirements. Crossley accepted this fact. Then Patton declared that the graduates could now move their tassels.

The graduates' mortars were thrown into the air of an overcast but still rainless day and as they marched off again, the band playing Elgar's most famous march, the weather looked good.



Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth Richey



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Not pictured: Colton Turner and Brayden Hamilton

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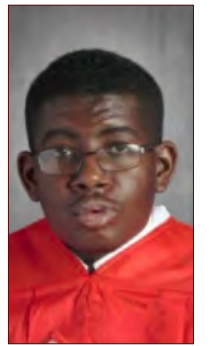
Class of 2023



Aidan Aguilar



Itzel Aguilar



Isaiah Amenra



Kaleo Anderson



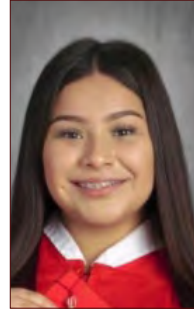
Aldair Arizmendi



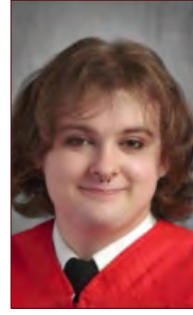
Tylesha Armstrong



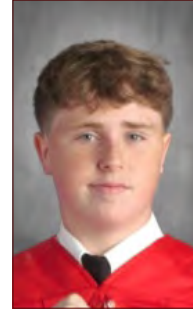
Cole Ayers



Ruby Azanza



Britney Baker



Zakery Bingle



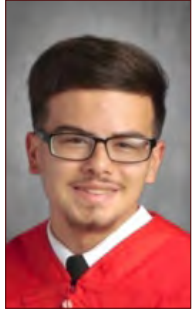
Marco Borboa



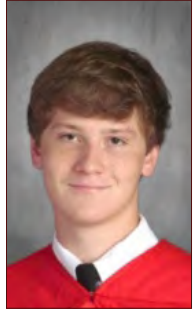
QuanNyzzia Bradley



Jasmine Brito



Pedro Cantu



Dawson Carter



Irvin Castrejon



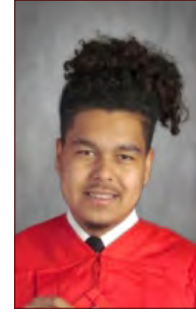
Annette Chavez-Mauleon



Kentrell Coleman



Miracle Coleman



Alexander Cortes



Camri Cox



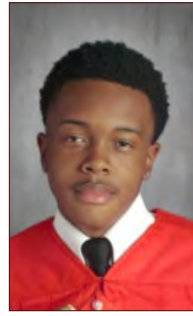
Esmeralda Dominguez



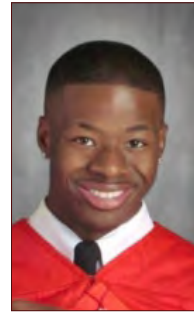
Gilberto Dominguez



Jaslyn Ellis



Jamarion Evans



DeShaun Farmer



Zy-kell Farris



Elsa Fejza



Jamaría Flemming



Tatyana Flemons



Casandra Frayre



Ciatta Freman



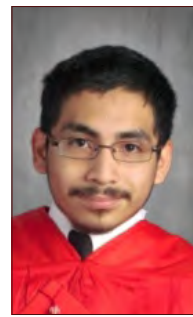
Emily Garcia



Nyah Garland



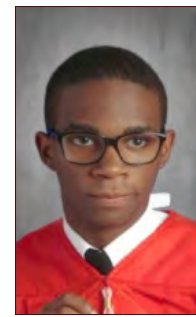
Teshera Gilbert



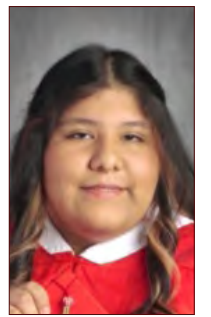
Carlos Gomez



Michelle Gomez



Latarion Grant



Ariana Guerrero

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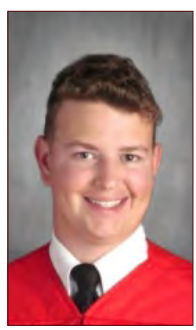
Chance Gulley



Anthony Hall



A'Necia Hardiman



Calvin Haynes



Keon Henderson



Reyes Hernandez



Jakiya Hickman



Cy'Ara Ingram



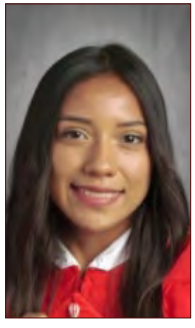
Jacquelin Jimenez



Yahir Jimenez



Darius Jones



Lara Jaelyn



Ke'Von Leaks



Stephanie Leija



Harlie Lockhart



Markell Mack



Britzi Marrufo



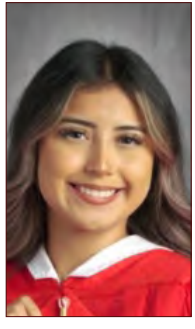
Suvari Marshall



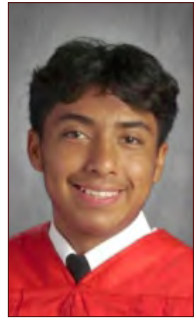
Aiyanna Martin



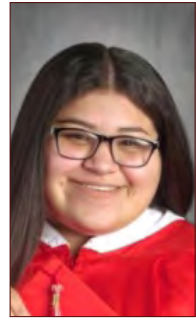
Alexis Martinez



Damaris Martinez



Sergio Martinez



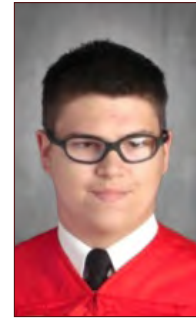
Thalia Martinez



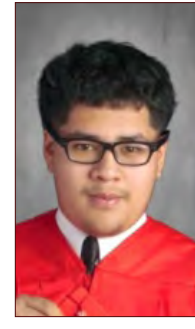
Kelston Mask



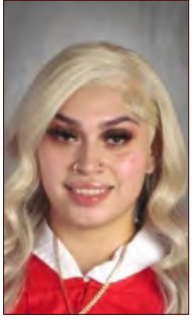
Na'Kenya McClellan



Dakota McKamie



Cristian Medina



Jaslyn Mendoza



William Moody



Kristin Morrison



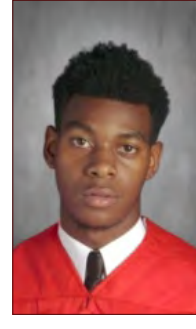
Alisha Muldrew



Abigail Munoz



Janiya Nash



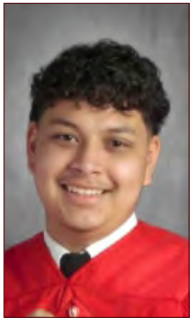
Chaddrick Noble



Mya Ogden



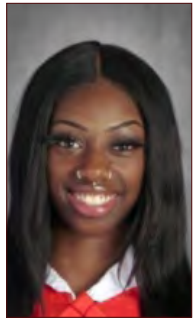
Armando Olivio



Fransisco Ortiz



Da'Mariye Patrick



Diamond Pearson



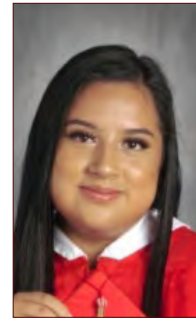
Janai'Siah Pegue



Ashlyn Pickering



Kendrien Pigeo



Ermelinda Piza



Zakiah Randle



Shanya Rankin

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Emy Resendiz



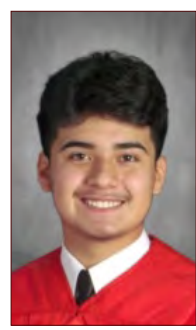
Manuel Ritana



Dasia Ricks



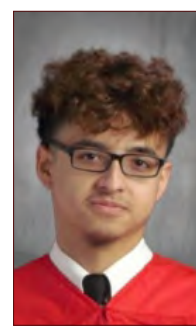
Camron Robinson



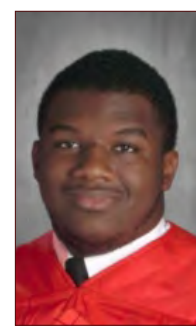
Hugo Rodriguez



Jasmin Rodriguez



Zachary Ruiz



Jaden Sampson



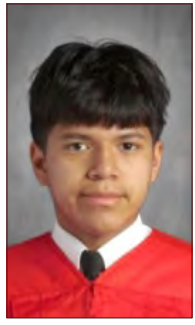
Andrew Sanders



Dayhanara Santamaria



Victor Santamaria



Cristopher Santos



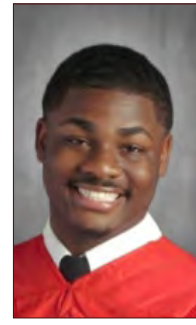
Da'torrion Scott



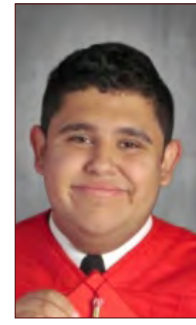
Jaylei Simington



Janiesha Smith



Zikeus Smith



Roy Torres



Ruth Torres



Mariana Turcios



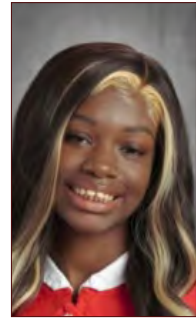
Elizah Walker



Nautica Walker



Saniyah Walker



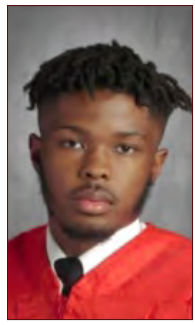
T'Khyah Walker



Ja'qualin Watson



Marvin Wheaton



Kylin White



Alexis Williams



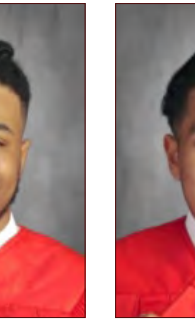
Madison Williams



Draelon Williams



Xavier Wilson



Adrian Yeppez



Tristan Young

NOT PICTURED :

- Oscar Alonso
- Aiden Arnold
- Bradley Baker
- Cordage'A Baker
- Destiny Brown
- Jagger Carter
- Antiwon Cheatham
- Grayson Cole
- Jonathan Cruz
- Hannah Dyer
- Jose Flores
- Jennifer Gomez
- Jerry Gomez
- Clara Gomez-Garcia
- Brayden Hamilton
- Kason Hamilton
- Denashia Harris
- Saul Hernandez
- Joseph Hensley
- Saul Hernandez
- John Hunter
- Byron Jenkins
- Jose Luna
- Daniel Marrufo
- Alecia Martin
- Treasure McPherson
- Austin McWilliams
- Aunesti Pearson
- Ka'liah Purifoy
- Angel Sanders
- Avery Singleton
- My'Quan Sorrells
- Grace Steward
- Colton Turner
- Sarah Ward
- Zoey Zimmer

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Spring Hill graduates 35 in Hempstead Hall on evening of May 15, 2023

by Jeff Smithpeters

Thirty-five senior Spring Hill Bears in night-blue tunics were officially graduated May 15 in a rose-laden ceremony that featured student speeches, a showing of childhood photos and widespread applause in the UAHT's spacious Hempstead Hall.

Of the 35, six graduated with highest honors and six graduated with honors. All these graduates wore gold cords.

Arnetta Bradford gave the National Anthem a stirring rendition before Bo Revels, soon-to-be graduate with honors, provided the Invocation.

Spring Hill High Principal Ronald Smead issued the welcome and said "These 35 seniors have been looking forward to this moment for quite some time. The time is now, and this is their time to shine."

College and Career Counselor Presley Capps spoke on the seniors' future plans. "Our goal for you is to go out and succeed in life," she said. "We know you will be successful. You will always be a part of Spring Hill High School. Equally, I want to say how proud I am of the Class of 2023 They have earned a possible four-year total of over \$800,000 in scholarships ... We hope that when you leave here tonight that you will reach your highest potential, and we will be rooting for you every step of the way."

Giving the Salutatory Address, soon-to-be Highest Honors Graduate Isabella Lewallen listed a few memories she had of her classmates: "There was the time in fourth grade when Tucker [Runion] flipped the desk over on Libby [Flowers], then the time when Darci Jane [Clayton] flipped over in her desk trying to pick up something off the floor in Mrs. Plant's class, and we couldn't stop laughing," Lewallen said. "And we can't

forget about the time when Dalton [Glover] got his tongue stuck on the pole during the winter."

Lewallen also recounted the support she and her classmates felt on Friday nights during football games, more specifically when the team faced adversity and when the student body faced it, too. Her advice to current Spring Hill underclassmen was to "take it all in when you can," adding that "you will never find a place like Spring Hill."

In her Class Address, soon-to-be Highest Honors graduate Emmie Fuller thanked teachers, parents, friends and family members for having a "profound impact on the development of our graduating class." She also advised her classmates of the value of simply "being kind to others around you" and to "make kindness a lifestyle." She closed by saying to her classmates, "Every one of you has something special."

As the Presentation of Roses took place, each graduate-to-be left the stage to award single roses to persons of their choice. At the same time, the screen on the Hempstead Hall stage lowered and onto it was projected multiple childhood photos of each of the graduates. Music played that included Mark Harris' "Find Your Wings" and The Piano Guys' "A Thousand Years."

After this, the presentation of diplomas by Spring Hill Superintendent Jeffrey Steed began. Once the names had been read from William Wade Applegate to Ryan Sinclair Whatley, and the 35 had each come forward, picked up their diplomas, posed with them and took their seats again, High School Principal Smead came to the podium for the second time in the ceremony to officially pronounce the Spring Hill Class of 2023 to be graduates. They could move their tassels from their

right to their left now. When they were presented, blue mortars took to the air.

Darci Durham gave the Benediction prayer, in which she said "Thank you for blessing us with a school that has allowed us to keep you as our main focus and for the fellowship we have found here at SHS. Thank you for blessing us with like-minded staff, teachers and students ... I pray that each of us leaving this building walks out of here and into the world as a light for your word ... Thank you for sending Jesus Christ who died on the cross for forgiveness of our sins. In Christ's name we pray. Amen."

At this, the graduates began filing away to stage left, likely eager to rejoin families and embark on what's next.



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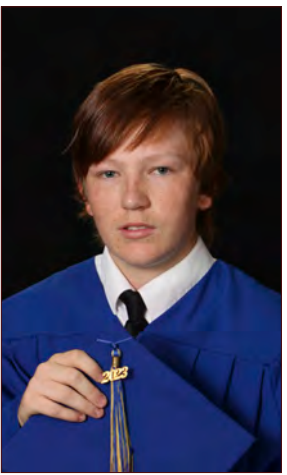
From our Team, to the Class of 2023:

Congratulations!

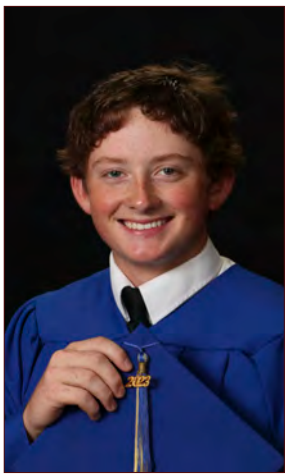
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William Applegate



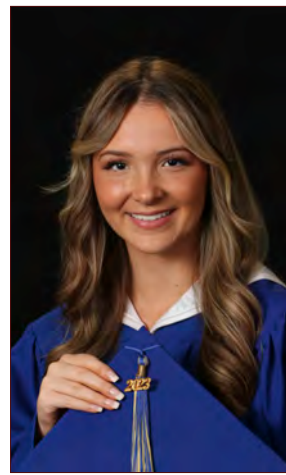
Teyton Barton



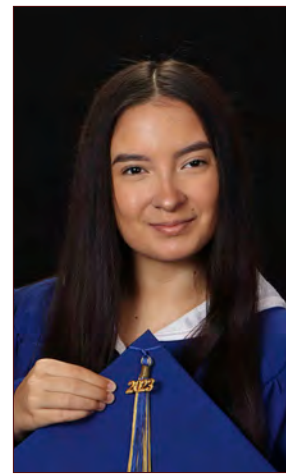
Addie Carrillo



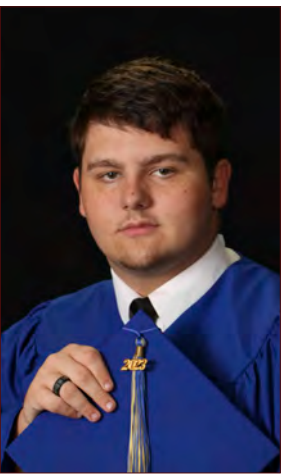
Hunter Chambless



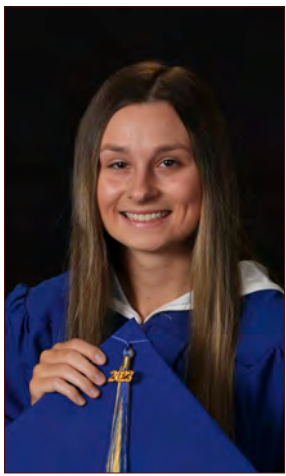
Darci Clayton



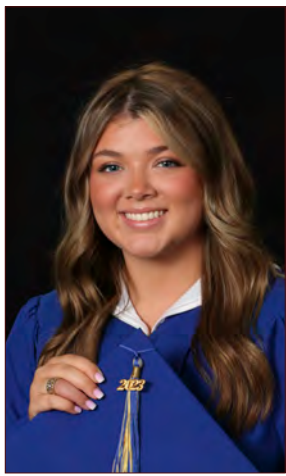
Navaya Colon



Blain Cox



Camryn Dickson



Darci Durham



Libby Flowers



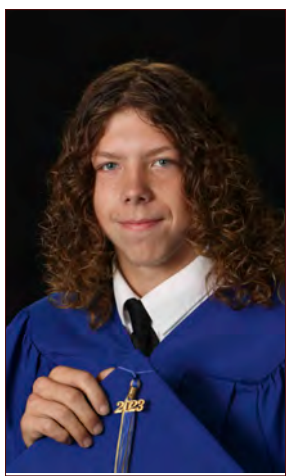
Emmie Fuller



Naomi Gabrielson



Kyle Gibson



Dalton Glover



Joshua Grimmatt



Kasen Korenek



Clairra Lee



Isabella Lewallen

WYLLIE
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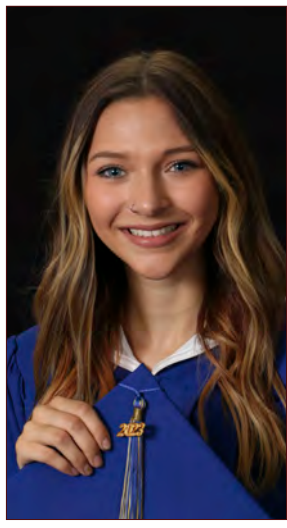
Congratulations
to the
Graduates of
2023!



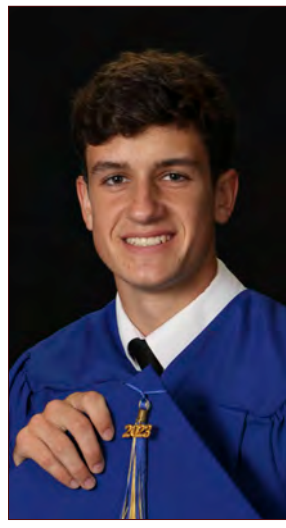
Emily Link



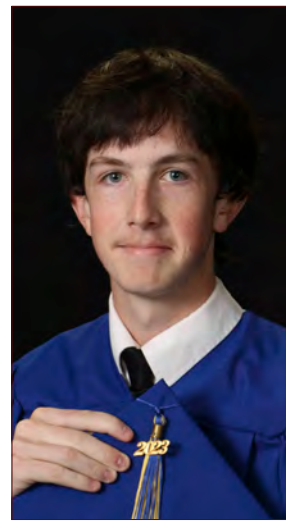
Erin McMaster



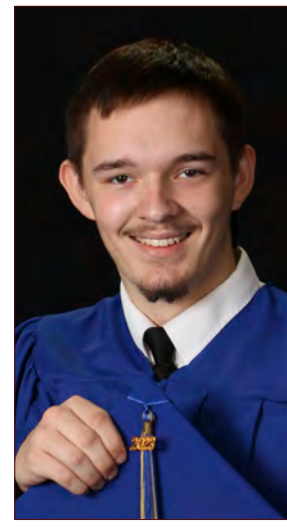
Mikhayla McNeil



Jayce Moore



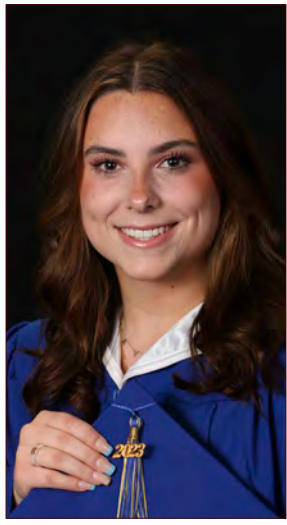
Collin Morris



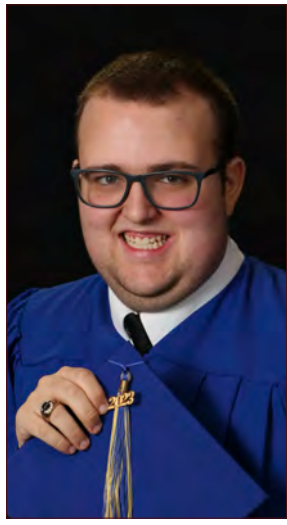
Caleb Perkins



Shelby Perry



Averi Powell



Joseph Powell



Natalie Prosser



Jaden Reese



Bo Revels



Tucker Runion



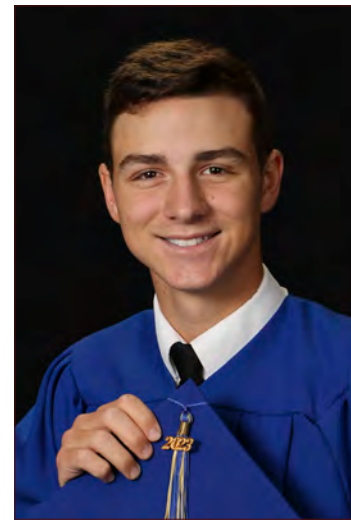
Cally Sullivan



McCall Warren



Cade Watson



Ryan Whatley

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Caps off to you, Graduates, well done!

UAHT confers 495 diplomas and certificates to graduates during commencement

by April Lovette

On May 16th, the University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana (UAHT) held a Commencement Ceremony at Hempstead Hall where 360 students were awarded 495 degrees and certificates.

After the presentation of the flag and pledge from Scouts Troop 5 and the singing of the national anthem by UAHT's Haley Patillo-Thompson, UAHT Chancellor Dr. Christine Holt welcomed guests and shared a few words with the audience. "What a site to behold," she began as she looked out over the crowd filling Hempstead Hall, a good portion of which were the soon-to-be graduates themselves adorned in all their regalia. Holt told them, "UAHT grooms leaders," and then she shared a few words about leadership and provided a few tips for them as they continue their journeys. Her parting words for the students were, "I want you to be a leader in your family, community, and jobs. We cant wait to see the wonderful work that you're going to do and how you're going to change the world. So congratulations! Go out and blaze your own path!"

Holt also shared with the audience a few special awards for this academic year. Reverend Alvis Hamilton received the Outstanding Alumnus Award, Gabrielle Patterson received the Outstanding Faculty Member Award, Akili Moses Israel received the Spirit of Excellence Award for being an outstanding staff member, and Allison Bonner was named Academic All

Star for this year.

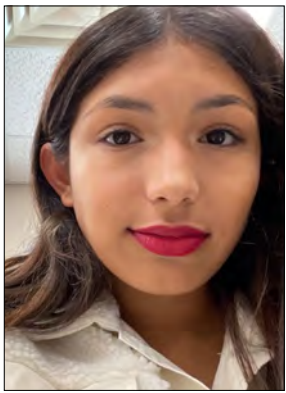
Dr. Donald Bobbitt, UA System President, had a few remarks for the upcoming graduates, as well. "This accomplishment we are going to celebrate this evening is a very significant milestone in your life, as significant as any milestone that we celebrate. You have to ask yourself 'did I do all this all alone?'" Bobbitt said. He then expressed to them the value in thanking those who gave support during their paths to these accomplishments, and told them "I hope you can pay it forward when you can."

Dr. Charles Robinson, UA-F Chancellor, was the keynote speaker for the evening and during his address to the graduates, he expressed to them the value in pursuing their dreams rather than money. He said society places much value on money, and the messages are constant with the many commercials to buy the best, the holding up of athletes as role models, the weekly reminders to buy lottery tickets, and more. However, true happiness, he said, lies in following one's dreams, and then success will follow. "If you pursue your dreams, you will bring the energy and the focus to whatever you are doing, and that will lead you to the money," Robinson said. "What's more important than the pursuit of money is the pursuit of values that allows you to be the kind of person you want to be and lead the life you want to have."

Following the heartfelt messages presented by all of the speakers, the students were then called to the stage to receive their certificates and diplomas. Proud families and supporters looked on as each of the 360 students walked the stage to receive his or her degree/certificate and become an official graduate of UAHT. Included were the students in the Collegiate Academy, 19 students who spent the last few years simultaneously earning their high school diploma and associate degree from UAHT. Chairman of UAHT Board of Visitors Freddie Smith told them and all of the graduates in his parting words, "You have joined a very important family ... and tonight you can say, 'I made it.'"



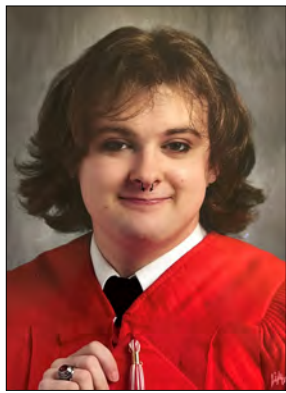
COLLEGIATE ACADEMY *Class of 2023*



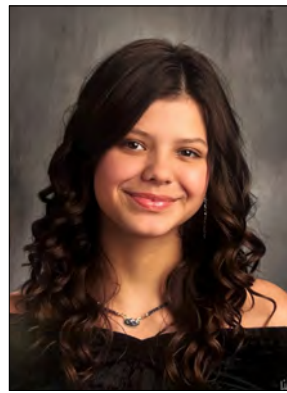
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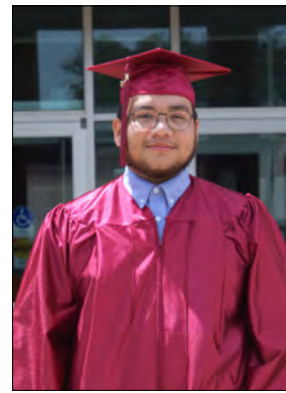
Cole Ayers



Britney Baker



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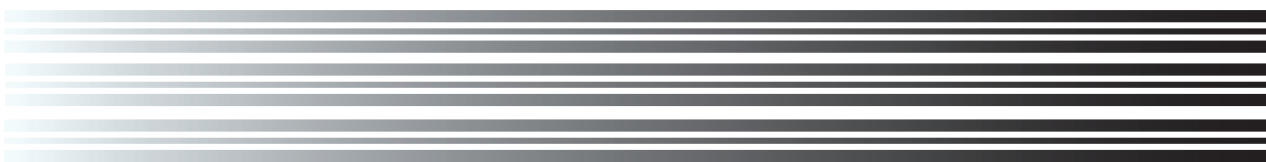
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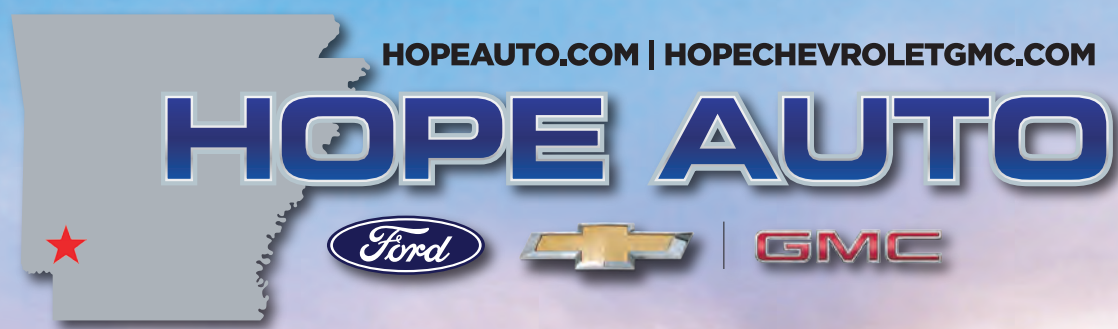
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***A HUGE congratulations to
all our 2023 graduates!!***