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## **NSCC COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY RECOGNIZES 226 GRADUATES**

*ARCHBOLD, OHIO* –Northwest State Community College celebrated the 2024 graduating class at its spring Commencement Ceremony this past weekend, held at Founder’s Hall in Archbold. The ceremony recognized 226 graduates who completed an Associate degree or certificate program with the College during fall, spring or summer term, comprising a total of 231 awards (192 associate degrees and 39 short-term certificates). Fourteen students graduated via College Credit Plus, before they officially graduate from high school. Cassie Rickenberg, NSCC Vice President of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs, noted that 88% of the graduating class lives in the six county service area of Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Van Wert and Williams counties. Rickenberg also noted the students earning various honor society awards – 18 graduates are Phi Theta Kappa, eight graduates are Alpha Delta Nu (nursing), and four graduates are Kappa Beta Delta (business).

Dr. Todd Hernandez, NSCC President, applauded the graduates, noting: “Student by student, family by family, community by community, we will help northwest Ohio maintain a high quality of life and remain a great place to live and work.” Hernandez then invited Megan Hannigan to the podium to accept the President’s Outstanding Student Award.

Kristi Barnd delivered the keynote address to the audience. Brand graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Management from Albion (MI) College, and her Master of Business Administration from Defiance College. Barnd is the CEO of Henry County Hospital. Barnd’s message encouraged community impact, reflection and celebration. She noted, “We spend a lot of time setting goals, creating plans, learning lessons, and sometimes when we finally achieve the “thing” we’ve set out to do we forget to enjoy what we’ve just accomplished. So do that today.”

Jayne Durham was selected to be the Student Speaker of Commencement. Durham was inspired to begin her pursuit of an Associate of Arts degree at Northwest State in 2022 by her husband Chad, and daughter Kally, both former students of NSCC. Driven by her passions, Jayne is currently working towards a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at the University of Toledo, with a focus on creative writing and a minor in Art History. Durham shared her appreciation for her support circle – family, friends, instructors, etc. – noting, “We can all do hard things with the support and encouragement of the people we meet along the way. We’ve proven that by being here today.”

As part of the graduate listing at the conclusion of the event, NSCC recognized its 17 Award of Merit recipients. For over 25 years, Northwest State has recognized graduates within the degree programs for their academic achievements. Award of Merit recipients are chosen by faculty from the respective divisions based on leadership involvement, special talents or abilities in their academic field, and significant contributions to Northwest State. NSCC Distinguished Faculty were also recognized: Linette Will (full-time faculty) and Anthony Menna (part-time faculty). Those interested in viewing the Commencement ceremony on-demand are invited to go to <https://northweststate.edu/commencement>.

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*Northwest State Community College is an accredited two-year, state-assisted institution of higher education that has served northwest Ohio since 1969. Northwest State is committed to providing a quality, affordable education with personal attention and small class sizes. The College offers associate degrees with numerous transfer options, short-term certificate programs, and workforce training programs designed to meet the needs of local businesses and industries. For more information, visit NorthwestState.edu or call 419.267.5511.*

**PLEASE NOTE: Media images are available at  
<https://northweststate.smugmug.com/20240511-Spring-Commencement-MEDIA>**