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## **NSCC FALL COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY AWARDS 100 DEGREES/CERTIFICATES**

*ARCHBOLD, OHIO* – Northwest State Community College celebrated the Fall 2025 graduating class at their fall ceremony last evening, held as an in-person ceremony in the Voinovich Auditorium. The ceremony recognized the awarding of 100 degrees and/or certificates to 94 students from the divisions of Arts & Sciences; Business & Public Services; Nursing and Allied Health; and Science, Technology, Engineering Technology & Math (STEM) and Industrial Technologies.

NSCC President Dr. Todd Hernandez announced the President's Outstanding Student: Cailynn Young. Young graduates with an Associate Degree in Office Management, and is the fifth person in her family to attend Northwest State. Cassie Rickenberg, NSCC Vice President of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs followed Dr. Hernandez, and provided a statistical snapshot of the graduating class. Rickenberg noted that 87% of the graduating class lives in the College's six-county service area (Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Van Wert and Williams counties), the average age of the graduates is 28, and the grade point average of the class is 3.17.

### **BREAKOUT OF ACHIEVEMENTS**

Of the 100 awards, 75 were associate degrees and 25 were certificates. Awards by academic division included Arts & Sciences (7), Business & Public Services (31), STEM & Industrial Technologies (29) and Nursing & Allied Health (33).

### **STUDENT SPEAKER: JESSICA BOCKOVER**

The student speaker for this year's commencement ceremony was Jessica Bockover of Bryan. Jessica earned her Associate of Science degree from NSCC in 2003, and her Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Defiance College in 2011. Jessica graduated with her Associate degree in Registered Nursing last evening, and is a member of the Alpha Delta Nu and Phi Theta Kappa honor societies. As an adult learner, Jessica noted "To anyone here tonight who may be older and has chosen to begin again after life happened, this is your moment too. And to any family and friends sitting in the audience tonight wondering what else is out there, do not be afraid to take the chance. Dreams do not expire, and we are allowed to reinvent ourselves at any age. I am proof of that."

### **COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER: ABRAM KLOPFENSTEIN**

The keynote speaker for this year's commencement ceremony was Abram Klopfenstein, 2018 NSCC graduate, family farmer, commercial pilot, and Board Member and current Vice President of the County Farm Bureau Board. Of his experience at Northwest State, Klopfenstein remarked "Northwest State is an excellent option for higher education. But don't let 'affordability' become synonymous with 'lesser value.' Attending higher education is to learn relevant information and gain valuable insights that open doors for occupational success, and NSCC delivers time and time again."

### **EMERITUS STATUS HONOREES RECOGNIZED**

The College also recognized two individuals that were awarded Emeritus status, an honorary title awarded for distinguished service to the academic community. The recipients were Ms. Lou Hissong (staff) and Dr. Mindy Stayner (faculty).

Ms. Hissong served as a receptionist, copy center clerk and in the facilities department throughout her two decades of service to the College. Hissong volunteered to serve for many years on several committees, including the faculty-staff campaign and Green Carpet, both assisting to raise money for student scholarships. Dr. Stayner served NSCC for 23 years as a faculty in the nursing division, and was a NSCC graduate, earning her one-year nursing certificate as a licensed practical nurse, and then her Associate degree as a Registered Nurse in 1995. In 2005, Dr. Stayner was recognized as a NSCC Distinguished Alumni. She has held nursing licenses in five states, maintains numerous memberships in professional

organizations, including Phi Theta Kappa honor society and the National League of Nursing, and has presented at numerous national nursing conferences.

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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](http://NorthwestState.edu) or call 419.267.5511.*

***Photography note: a Media-Only gallery is available at  
<https://northweststate.smugmug.com/20251215-Fall-Commencement-MEDIA>***