



## HIGHLIGHTS



*Lincoln Trail College honors Nursing Class of '25 at Pinning Ceremony.*



*Lincoln Trail College recognizes four students with special awards.*



*Children's Summer Theater students set to take the stage.*

## **LINCOLN TRAIL COLLEGE CELEBRATES 55<sup>TH</sup> COMMENCEMENT**

**W**ith pride, reflection, and a message to “seize the day,” Lincoln Trail College honored the Class of 2025 during its 55th Annual Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 16, in the Sports Center.

The ceremony began with a processional by the Brassmasters and a warm welcome from LTC President Tona Ambrose, who congratulated the graduates and recognized the people who helped them reach the milestone.

“What an honor to see you all sitting here in front of me getting ready to cross the finish line and graduate!” said Ambrose. “Your accomplishments at this college have proven to us – to your family and friends – and everyone that you are amazing beyond measure.”

Ambrose also introduced the ceremony’s theme, built on the acronym “L.T.C.” — Lean In, Take it up a notch, and Carpe Diem. “Be a difference maker,” she told the graduates.



## UPCOMING JULY EVENTS

- 2** Walk-In Wednesday  
9-3, Williams Hall
- 4** COLLEGE CLOSED - Independence Day
- 9** Walk-In Wednesday  
9-3, Williams Hall
- 16** Walk-In Wednesday  
9-3, Williams Hall
- 21** Last Day to Withdraw from Summer Semester
- 22-23** Mandarin Chinese Youth Camp (Grades 3-6)  
9-11:30 a.m., Williams Hall 108
- Mandarin Chinese Youth Camp (Grades 7-12)  
1-3:30 p.m., Williams Hall 108
- 23** Walk-In Wednesday  
9-3, Williams Hall
- 25** Last Day of Summer Semester
- 28-29** Summer Semester Finals

"Engage actively with life, don't be a passenger. Go after [opportunities] and never be afraid to fail forward."

Two graduating students addressed the audience as commencement speakers.

Kylee Hosman, a student-athlete, reflected on her time at LTC through the lens of a powerful lesson she learned early on: "You don't have to do anything. You get to do everything."

"President Ambrose taught us to see our responsibilities not as burdens, but as privileges," said Hosman. "We didn't have to put in countless hours of studying, writing papers, and pushing through challenges—we got to. And today, we don't have to graduate—we get to."



Hosman encouraged her classmates to carry that mindset with them. "See challenges as stepping stones, not roadblocks. Treat each opportunity as a privilege, not a chore."



Nolan Hillard, a graduate of the nursing program, shared his journey to LTC after first earning a degree in sports administration.

"I never imagined I'd end up here," he said. "But life has a funny way of redirecting us to where we're meant to be. Choosing nursing—choosing this path—has been one of the most meaningful, fulfilling decisions of my life."

Hillard encouraged graduates to "choose a career where you're irreplaceable" and to build lives that reflect both their values and aspirations.

"A degree doesn't define your worth. You do," Hillard said. "Be someone who makes an impact—not just at work, but in life. Because once you become someone who brings value, you become someone who can't be easily replaced."

After Director of Marketing Chris Forde read each graduate's name, Trustee Barbara Shimer officially conferred the degrees and certificates. She had the Class of '25 move their tassels from the right to the left of their mortar boards, signifying them as graduates of Lincoln Trail College.

Dean of Instruction Cyndi Boyce offered closing reflections, recognizing both the achievements of the graduates and the support systems behind them.

"Your time here at Lincoln Trail College has been more than just about academics — it's about community, connection, and resilience," said Boyce. "This day is as much a reflection of your hard work and sacrifices as it is of [your family and friends]."



Boyce encouraged the Class of 2025 to continue growing beyond graduation.

"This is merely the beginning of a new adventure," she said. "Whatever you do next, remember that you have the power to shape your own future."

Following the awarding of degrees and certificates, the evening concluded with a recessional to Edward Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* performed by the Brassmasters Brass Quintet.

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## ***LTC CELEBRATES NURSING CLASS OF 2025***

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Lincoln Trail College honored the Nursing Class of 2025 in a heartfelt Pinning Ceremony that celebrated the hard work, compassion and dedication of the graduating students as they prepare to enter the nursing profession.

The ceremony began with a welcome from Associate Professor of Nursing Angie Williams, who spoke about the symbolism behind the nursing pin. She explained how the pin represents more than just the completion of a program—it's a badge of honor that reflects a commitment to care, service and integrity.

This year's keynote speaker was LTC alumna Megan Farmer, a 2020 graduate of the nursing program. Now an experienced nurse, Farmer shared stories from her time in the field and offered advice to the soon-to-be graduates.

After each graduate was introduced and pinned, Instructor Laurie Jenkins led the group in the Florence Nightingale Pledge—a tradition that underscores the values of the profession and the responsibility that comes with it.

The Pinning Ceremony is a time-honored tradition in nursing, marking the transition from student to nurse and serving as a moment of pride for the graduates, their families, and the faculty who supported them along the way.

## LTC AWARDS HIGHLIGHT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND IMPACT

Lincoln Trail College recognized four outstanding students with special awards during its 55th Annual Commencement ceremony.



Kylee Hosman received the Bev L. Turkal Excellence in Leadership Award. The Bev L. Turkal Excellence in Leadership Award is presented to a full-time Lincoln Trail College student who has shown great Leadership qualities and skills. This award is given to honor Bev L. Turkal, a true Leader in Education, whose passion was to make a difference and change the lives of children, teens, adults and lifelong learners. Bev believed to be a strong Leader one must live life, care, and show empathy, must have high energy and be competitive to accomplish the goals set to make things happen!

Hosman was praised as a student who leads by example in the classroom, on the volleyball court, and in the workforce. Her nomination highlighted her proactive approach to student engagement and her deep commitment to Lincoln Trail College and the broader Illinois Eastern Community Colleges district. She was recognized as a passionate advocate for students, striving to build an inclusive campus community.

Sean Stone was honored with the J. Rod Harmon Excellence in Service Award. The J. Rod Harmon Excellence in Service Award is presented to a full-time Lincoln Trail College student who has demonstrated outstanding service to the college or the community. Rod Harmon served as a faculty member at Lincoln Trail College for 27 years and served as the Executive Director of the Lincoln Trail College Foundation for 20 years. He is well known for his rich sense of humor, dedication to his wife Diana, and commitment to creating opportunities for all residents of Crawford County to have access to a high-quality education.

Stone was nominated for his leadership in Phi Theta Kappa and the VITA Tax Program, where he played a key role in developing chapter projects and organizing induction ceremonies. Through the VITA program, he provided tax assistance to elderly, low-income, and disadvantaged individuals in the community. He was also commended for his strong academics, positive attitude, and respectful demeanor.



Two students received the Joseph C. Piland Excellence in Scholarship Award. The Joseph C. Piland Excellence in Scholarship Award is presented to a full-time Lincoln Trail College student who has demonstrated outstanding academic merit and sustained excellence in the classroom. The award is given to honor Joseph C. Piland, who was the first President of Lincoln Trail College. His vision and passion for education were instrumental in the development of a comprehensive community college for Crawford County.

Lucas Smith was named the recipient in the Career and Technical Education category. A Broadband Telecom student, Smith maintained a 4.0 GPA while working full-time at night. His instructors praised the quality of his work as exceeding that of many professionals in the field. Smith is also the first person in his family to earn a college degree.



Kelliann Clapp received the award in the Transfer Education category. She was described as a student with strong moral character and integrity who leads by example in the classroom. Clapp plans to continue her education at Eastern Illinois University, where she will major in Art Education. Her artwork was recognized for its excellence and for demonstrating a strong command of both technique and artistic expression.



## LTC SPRING ACADEMIC HONORS



Lincoln Trail College has released its academic honor lists for the Spring 2025 Semester. Three lists have been established by Illinois Eastern Community Colleges to indicate students who have achieved academic excellence. They are the Chancellor's Honors List, the President's Academic Honors List, and the Dean's Academic Honors List.

To qualify for any of the honor lists, a

student must be enrolled full-time (12 hours or more) and must be taking college-level classes.

To be named to the Chancellor's Academic Honors List, students must achieve a grade point average of 3.90 or greater on a 4.0 scale; between 3.75 and 3.89 for the President's Academic Honors List; and between 3.50 and 3.74 for the Dean's Academic Honor's List.

The following students have earned Spring 2025 academic honors:

### CHANCELLOR'S ACADEMIC HONORS LIST

Chayse Aldrich (Robinson, Ill.), Alina Alford (Knightstown, Ind.), Collin Alger (Robinson, Ill.), Luke Anderson (Effingham, Ill.), Ava Bogard (Allendale, Ill.), Krystal Boone (Sullivan, Ind.), Leigh Carnes (French Lick, Ind.), Cyrus Chester (Oblong, Ill.), Kelliann Clapp (Robinson, Ill.), Madison Davis (Oblong, Ill.), Kaley Flynn (Oblong, Ill.), Eliot Gallaher (Maryville, Mo.), Harleigh Haddix (Hutsonville, Ill.), Kendall Hart (Stoy, Ill.), Kylee Hosman (Grayville, Ill.), Elise Lampert (Jasper, Ind.), Maxwell Layne (Columbus, Ohio), Gracie Lemmon (Oblong, Ill.), Shelby Lewis (Robinson, Ill.), Foster McDonald (Huntington, Ind.), Benjamin Meier (Ft. Mitchell, Ky.), Chance Moscardelli (Harrisburg, Ill.), Adam Newell (Xenia, Ohio), Bella Nottger (Williams, Ind.), Peyton Osteen (Altamont, Ill.), Kashtyn Perisho (Martinsville, Ill.), Elahna Perry (Pekin, Ill.), Jaycee Phillips (Greenville, Ky.), Kollin

Ramos (Lawrenceville, Ill.), John Rich (Flat Rock, Ill.), Samuel Rickman (Martinsville, Ill.), Adyson Smith (Clinton, Ind.), Lucas Smith (Greenup, Ill.), Dalton Spahn (Bridgeport, Ill.), Sean Stone (Princeton, Ind.), Brynnadalyn Varner (Lewis, Ind.), Joelee Wiseman (Robinson, Ill.), Kaydence Woodsmall (Marshall, Ill.), Bianca Wyatt (Solsberry, Ind.), and Melanie Wyatt (Solsberry, Ind.).

## **PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC HONORS LIST**

James Attwood (Kettering, England), Tyler Bailey (Oblong, Ill.), Cameron Baker (Robinson, Ill.), Claire Boehm (Altamont, Ill.), Facundo Casero (Robinson, Ill.), Grace Davidson (Robinson, Ill.), Kaitlyn Didion (Granger, Ind.), John Gafner (Vincennes, Ind.), Lorann Garrett (Fairfield, Ill.), Andrew Gilliam (Lexington, Ky.), Kevin Hilton (Cincinnati, Ohio), Avery Jahraus (Saint Elmo, Ill.), Gabriel Omoregie (Dacula, Ga.), Jacqueline Reel (West Union, Ill.), Griffin Schabel (Avon, Ind.), Ryan Sigale (Robinson, Ill.), Joshua Silva (Marshall, Ill.), Hayden Trier (Louisville, Ky.), Aiden Vandehatert (Fairfield, Ohio), and Paige Waggoner (Robinson, Ill.).

## **DEAN'S ACADEMIC HONORS LIST**

Louison Beaumont (Metz, France), Antravin Belcher (Covington, Ga.), Joseph Bonds (Bentonville, Ark.), Sajjen Chester (Oblong, Ill.), Bailey Duke (Montezuma, Ind.), Anna Hargrave (Hutsonville, Ill.), Breanna Heath (Robinson, Ill.), Dawn Holmes (Hutsonville, Ill.), Khamryn Hopkins (Dallas, Texas), Alexander Lankston (Robinson, Ill.), Abby McCann (Newton, Ill.), Brooke Miller (Oblong, Ill.), Madalyn Miller (Flat Rock, Ill.), Kacie Moorecox (Sullivan, Ind.), Kabosh Okpebholoray (London, England), Lyndee Pusey (Oblong, Ill.), Nathan Rich (Flat Rock, Ill.), Alyssa Rodriguez (Mount Vernon, Texas), Corey Schroeder (Robinson, Ill.), Dalton Shipman (Robinson, Ill.), Kassey Shipman (Oblong, Ill.), Gracie Stallings (Saint Francisville, Ill.), Duke Thompson (Robinson, Ill.), Rebecca Trivett (Robinson, Ill.), Katie Winterrowd (Flat Rock, Ill.), and Catelyn Witte (Evansville, Ind.).

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## ***LTC, W TWO CELEBRATE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT***

Lincoln Trail College partnered with W TWO to celebrate academic excellence at the 34th Annual Top of the Class Luncheon, honoring 120 valedictorians from more than 40 high schools in the Wabash Valley.

The event recognized the top-performing students for their commitment to academic achievement and leadership.

Chris Forde, Director of Marketing and Communications for Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, delivered the keynote address. He encouraged the honorees to reflect on their strengths and pursue what inspires them.

“‘Plug in to your passion’ means finding what gives you energy—what excites you, challenges you, and keeps you going even when things get hard,” Forde said. “Because when you do, it doesn’t just light you up—it lights the way forward.”

The luncheon also featured a special performance by Richard Goodall, the Terre Haute janitor whose viral singing performance led him to win America's Got Talent. His rendition of “Don't Stop Believin'” earned a standing ovation from the students and guests.

Lincoln Trail College's participation in the event reflects its ongoing commitment to supporting education and student success across the region.



IECC's Chris Forde (left) and Amber Malone (right) pose with Richard Goodall at the Top of the Class Luncheon.

## YOUNG PERFORMERS SET TO TAKE THE STAGE

Young performers will take center stage this June as Lincoln Trail College presents two productions as part of its annual Children's Summer Theater program.

Students entering grades 1 through 5 will perform Disney's *The Aristocats KIDS* on June 26 and 27 at 7 p.m. in the Zwermann Arts Center Theater. The musical, based on the beloved animated film, follows Duchess and her kittens as they face an unexpected twist in their pampered Parisian lives. With the help of the alley cat Thomas O'Malley and his swingin' band of jazz cats, they embark on a spirited adventure filled with music, mischief and heart.

Students entering grades 6 through 9 will present Disney's *Alice in Wonderland JR.* on June 28 at 7 p.m. and June 29 at 2 p.m. Audiences will journey down the rabbit hole with Alice as she navigates the curious and whimsical world of Wonderland. The show features a mix of classic Disney songs and new favorites, as Alice meets iconic characters like the Mad Hatter, Cheshire Cat, and Queen of Hearts on her quest to find her way home.

Both productions are directed by Mindy Evans and produced by Taylor Dahlberg.

Tickets for the shows are available on [Cur8.com](https://www.cur8.com).





## ***FORDE HELPS LOCAL BUSINESSES THROUGH ROBINSON CHAMBER***



Lincoln Trail College is partnering with the Robinson Chamber of Commerce to present a four-part social media series designed to help local businesses and organizations strengthen their online presence.

The free series, titled Social Media Smarts: Make It Work for Your Business, is open to Chamber members and the public. Each session will focus on a different aspect of social media, starting with the basics and moving into strategy, content creation, and analytics. Attendees can join the full series or select the sessions most relevant to them.

Chris Forde, IECC Director of Marketing and Communications and a member of the Robinson Chamber of Commerce since 2014, is leading the sessions. He says the idea for the class came from conversations with local business owners.

"We heard from a lot of small businesses that they felt overwhelmed or unsure about how to use social media effectively," said Forde. "This series is designed to take away some of that stress and give people real, practical tools they can start using right away."

The first class, How to Get Started, focuses on choosing the right platforms, setting up a business profile, and beginning to post with confidence. Future sessions will cover how to build a strategy, create content that connects, and measure results.

Forde says the series also reflects the College's commitment to serving the region.

"Community engagement is at the heart of our mission," he said. "Offering this kind of training is a way we can give back to the small businesses and organizations that help our towns thrive."

If the series proves successful in Robinson, Forde hopes to bring it to other Chambers of Commerce in the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges district.

"This is something we'd love to expand," he said. "Every town in our district has businesses that could benefit from this kind of support, and we're excited to see where it can go."



## ***PRESIDENT'S CORNER - REFLECTIONS***

I love these LTC Network Newsletters that Chris Forde puts together each month because it's not only fun to read about and celebrate the monthly happenings at the Trail, but also because each newsletter serves as a historical snapshot which becomes part of an important timeline that allows us the ability to refer back to reminisce and reflect on where we've been, goals we've accomplished, faculty and staff we've welcomed aboard and congratulated in retirement, challenges we've faced and overcome, and all of the students who have graduated and achieved success. If you go to the LTC Network Newsletter webpage (<https://iecc.edu/ltc/about-employment/network-newsletter>) you can browse through 174 newsletters that date back as far as 2011, anywhere from 3-pages to more than 10-pages, and it's neat to see how some things have really changed, like hairstyles, technology and student-life offerings, and how some things haven't changed like Dean Cyndi Boyce representing LTC in a trivia night at Oblong Grade School in 2011 (along with Sharon and Mike McElyea, Carrie (Mallard) Brown, and Ann and Greg Wolven) and how Cyndi is still repping the Trail and participating in trivia nights in 2025 (and she's really good at it, too!)



Scan for Network Archives



One other thing that has not changed is the mission of IECC - it has always been to deliver exceptional education and services to improve the lives of our students and to strengthen our communities. As is evident on the first couple of pages of this Network Newsletter with pictures of yet another group of students graduating with certificates and degrees that will improve their lives and in turn, strengthen our communities, this will continue to be what drives our college and district forward, and what we strive to see and read about throughout many more newsletters to come. The 2024-2025 academic year has been a really good one and I'm thankful to the students, faculty, staff, IECC leadership team, the Board of Trustees, the LTC Foundation, and our wonderful community partners/members who have all had a helpful hand in our accomplishments and successes and I'm equally excited for what lies ahead in 2025-2026. Go Trail!



## LTC IN PICTURES



The LTC Nursing Class of 2025 smiles for a group photo ahead of their special pinning ceremony.



Keynote speaker Megan Farmer '20 encourages graduates during LTC's 2025 Nursing Pinning Ceremony.



Graduates from the Class of 2025 smile for a group photo before the 55th Annual Commencement at LTC.



Big laughs, bigger milestones! Shawn Divine and Cyrus Chester celebrate the sweet success of graduation.



Proud mom moment: Program Director of Financial Aid Krystle Riggle beams with daughter Olivia after LTC's commencement.



Members of Phi Theta Kappa pose proudly before Lincoln Trail College's 55th Annual Commencement.



All that she is—and hopes to be—this LTC grad says thanks with a cap full of sparkle and sentiment.



President Tona Ambrose hugs Madison Davis, a familiar face in LTC's Business Office and daughter of the college's Bookstore Manager, Danelle Davis.