

► Class Night

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ported us along the way. "As we move forward into new opportunities and new challenges, help us trust Your plan for our lives. Give us wisdom to make good decisions, courage to face uncertainty and faith to follow wherever you lead us. "May we use the talents and abilities You have given us to encourage others and make a positive impact in the world around us. Bless this night and everyone gathered here. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Sophie Whalen approached the podium after the invocation. On behalf of her classmates, Whalen shared recognition for those there witnessing this moment in their lives, those that supported them along the way and the teachers, staff and administration that made this time possible.

"The Class of 2026 would like to take a moment to thank those who have played a part in helping us reach this milestone in our lives," Whalen began. "Thank you to the Greene County School District Superintendent, Mr. Charles Breland, and the members of the Greene County Board of Education, the Greene County High School Administrators. Thank you to the faculty and staff of Greene County High School and Greene County Vocational Center for making our last four years so special. Also, to our respective elementary and junior high schools, Leakesville, McLain and Sand Hill. Thank you so much for helping to build our educational foundation.

"Last, but certainly not least, we would like to say a very special thank you to our parents, grandparents, guardians and family members," Whalen added. "We would not be here today without all of your love, support and guidance."

GCHS Principal Caleb Prentiss approached the podium to begin the presentation

of awards and scholarships. "On behalf of Greene County High School's faculty and staff, I would like to once again welcome you to the Senior Class Awards Night," Prentiss said. "The GCHS Class of 2026 is an outstanding class, and tonight, I am proud to begin the awards ceremony by recognizing our Top 10 Honor Students."

The GCHS Class of 2026 Top 10 awards were presented as follows: Class of 2026 Valedictorian Sarah Barfield, Salutatorian Lillian Rau, Historian Caroline Holder, number four Sophie Whalen, number five Jacie Ethridge, number six Brody Turner, number seven Riley Kate Byrd, number eight Keri Graham, number nine Laken Turner and number ten Shanna Johnson.

The STAR student and teacher awards were presented next.

"This year we have the tremendous opportunity to recognize one of our students who has distinguished herself through effort, achievement and outstanding performance throughout her high school career," Prentiss said. "This student was selected as the STAR student based on her ACT composite score and GPA. At this time, I would like to commend and recognize our STAR student and STAR teacher, Sarah Barfield and Leah Burch."

Burch moved to the podium to announce The 2026 GCHS Hall of Fame inductees along with the GCHS teacher that positively impacted the lives of this year's inductees. Those recognized are as follows: Sarah Barfield and teacher Kandie Ham, Graham Breland and teacher Pauline Williams, Riley Kate Byrd and teacher Jody Conway, Jacie Etheridge and teacher Alan Cook, Caroline Holder and teacher Bill Ricks, Harper James and teacher Kay Holliman, Jase Mathews and

teacher Brance Crane, Austin Palmer and teacher Chris Turner, Maisan Tribble and teacher Bill Ricks, Brody Turner and teacher Drew Hollinghead and Sophie Whalen and teacher Caitlin Harvison.

"The Hall of Fame Alumni have funded a scholarship program that honors one Hall of Fame student each year," Burch said. "This year's Hall of Fame scholarship is presented to Sophie Whalen."

The next awards to be announced were the Citizenship, Leadership and Best All-Around Student awards, where students were recognized at both the high school and vo-tech center. One male and one female student were chosen for each award.

The citizenship awards, to recognize students who are consistently amiable, polite, well-mannered, selfless and compassionate, were presented to Austin Palmer and Kambrie Lawrence.

The leadership awards, to recognize students who are disciplined, charismatic, humble, persistent and committed to excellence, were presented to Graham Breland and Harper James.

The Best All-Around Student awards, recognizing students who possess the qualities of a good citizen, a leader and someone who shines inside and outside the classroom. The awards were presented to Jase Mathews and Sarah Barfield.

Burch continued with awards, announcing the Mississippi Scholars program, a state-wide initiative designed to recognize high school seniors managed by the Mississippi Economic Council. To earn the Mississippi Scholars recognition, students must enroll in rigorous college prep curriculum, take part in community service and meet GPA, ACT and attendance requirements. Burch announced the fol-



Photo by RUSSELL TURNER | Herald Editor

GCHS graduate Brody Jones is shown accepting one of three Christopher R. Molten All-Star Memorial Fund Scholarship presented during Class Night last week. Cordarius Molten and Zamiyah Knight were also recipients of the scholarship this year.

lowing students, with Prentiss presenting awards: Sarah Barfield, Graham Breland, Sophey Errington, Keri Graham, Akeelah Hartfield, Caroline Holder, Harper James, Shanna Johnson, Austin Palmer, Lillian Rau, Kennedy Slocumb, Gage Stinson, Maisan Tribble, Brody Turner and Sophie Whalen.

Burch then welcomed Greene County CTE Center Director and Counselor Lesha Lott and Celena Hembree to announce Mississippi Tech Masters. Tech Master seniors were awarded as follows: Graham Breland, Sophey Errington, Akeelah Hartfield, Harper James, Austin Palmer, Lillian Rau, Jacob Roberts, Kennedy

Slocumb, Maisan Tribble and Brody Turner. Lott and Hembree announced Jacob Roberts as the recipient of the NADC scholarship, Sophey Errington was awarded the FFA Doing to Learn scholarship and Austin Palmer and

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WHOO
Says
Graduates
Are Special!

Kaley Roberts

Carleyann Lambeth

WE DO!
Congratulations to our graduates
& to the Class of 2026

WILDCAT KORNER
HWX 57 AT HIGH SCHOOL ROAD JUST OUTSIDE LEAKESVILLE (601)394.2503

Congratulations to our graduates



Jamal "Trey" Cuevas



Shanna Johnson



Kambrie Lawrence



Lucy LaRyne Neely



Lexy Pugh



Trinity Sowell

and the Class of 2026

Hip-hip-hooray! It's your special day. We wish you all the best!

OF LEAKESVILLE

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