



HLC Accreditation Evidence

Title: Enhanced Post-Secondary Opportunities

Office of Origin: Vice President of Instruction - Fort Leavenworth



Young JROTC student receives Associate Degree; Barton Community College honors graduates at Fort Leavenworth

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Story and photo by Micah Oelze

Barton Community College at Fort Leavenworth celebrated the graduation of 27 students on Wednesday, June 7 at the Lewis and Clark Center at Fort Leavenworth. The ceremony was in conjunction with other schools who are members of the consortium in the Fort Leavenworth Education Center.

One of those graduates was Josef Leo, a recent high school graduate who also earned an Associate of Arts through Barton at the young age of 17.

Leo attended Leavenworth High School's Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program where he was instructed on becoming a better citizen, one way of which is through education. When he brought forward the thought of taking classes at Barton to his Guidance Counselor, she heavily encouraged the idea along with his JROTC teachers who were impressed with his pursuit of education.

During his first semester at Barton, Leo enjoyed the education he received and was impacted by the instructors. This experience led Leo to pursue his degree at Barton.



Josef Leo poses for a photo outside the Lewis and Clark Center at Fort Leavenworth.

“It is going to be pretty fun being ahead of the curve. I have achieved something that most high schoolers don’t even think about attempting,” Leo said. “I had a great time at Barton, especially meeting the people that helped mold me into the person I am now.”

Leo’s next step is to enter the military. While he is unsure what he wants to do specifically in the military he believes very passionate in serving his country like his father did.

“I believe that since other people have served to defend my freedom, I should serve to defend others as well,” he said.

After his service in the military, Leo plans to pursue his main passion, history, by earning a Doctorate of History and teaching at a university.

Leo along with the other graduates and their friends and families gathered in the conference center for the commencement ceremony which began with Chrystal Buck, a Barton Fort Leavenworth Music Instructor, singing the national anthem. Following Buck, Brigadier General Maria Gervais gave a speech about the dedication shown by the graduates and the importance of the journey they have begun.

“One of the quotes I love the most is by Herbert Spencer who said ‘The great aim of education is not knowledge but action’,” Gervais said. “You have been provided the knowledge and education, it is now your time to act.”

Barton Community College's association with Fort Leavenworth started in the early months of 2012, with the first college program classes held in October 2012. With the support of the Army Education Center and the Army leadership on post, the Barton Fort Leavenworth campus has continued to grow in support of the Army, its Soldiers, their families and the Fort Leavenworth community. The Barton Community College Fort Leavenworth campus provides education and training, as well as selected specialized education and training to students on post and the surrounding community. The campus provides instructional services for LSEC, evening/weekend college courses, and BSEP.

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