



HLC Accreditation Evidence

- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
PTK All-Kansas Academic Team

URL:

Office of Origin:

- Vice President of Instruction

Contact(s):

- Vice President of Instruction

For more information, contact PTK Sponsor Kathy Boeger at boegerk@bartonccc.edu or (620) 792-9203.

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Story and photo by Brandon Steinert

Barton Community College students honored for academic achievement

Four students from Barton Community College in the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society were recognized as members of the PTK All-Kansas Academic Team during an award luncheon Friday at the Courtyard by Marriott in Junction City, where the tremendous opportunities afforded to students by the community college mission were on full display.

Barton's PTK honorees were Wittney Hammeke of Ellinwood and Caiden Duerksen of Wichita, who represented the Barton County campus, along with Avrey Thoman of Manhattan, and NaMari Moss of Syracuse, NY, who represented Barton's Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth campuses, respectively.

PTK is the international honor society for two-year colleges and symbolizes excellence in higher education. Students with a GPA of 3.5 or higher are invited to join PTK. The PTK group at Barton spends significant time sponsoring local events as well as volunteering to support others' events.

The students had to go through an application process and their applications were reviewed by an anonymous selection panel on their respective campuses. All four students will have a chance at being named to PTK's All-USA Academic Team, which will be announced in the next few weeks.

Hammeke is very involved in student groups at the Barton County campus, including as an admissions ambassador, Community Student Organization, and SPARK (an entrepreneurship group), and plans to transfer to Kansas State University to earn a degree in secondary education English and a master's in communication. Her hope is to eventually teach at a community college because she believes in the community college mission of higher education access and affordability. She said she's honored to be selected as a member of the All-Kansas Academic Team and would encourage others to join PTK if they have the opportunity.

"It's about the connections between students and staff and the community through volunteering... it's those connections and accomplishments that make you feel good," she said. "Do it. There are no negatives. You make great connections, it looks good on a resume, we have great leadership from (Business Instructor) Kathy Boeger, you can qualify for scholarships. It's awesome."

Moss echoed Hammeke's remarks. Moss isn't sure where she's going after Barton because she's been accepted to about half a dozen universities across the nation, but she is committed to pursuing an education in biomedical engineering. She hopes to conduct research of her own on a condition called Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, which is something her mother has had to endure for several years.

"PTK is really cool and you get amazing opportunities," she said. "I didn't know being part of an honor society would expose me to so many things, like virtual college fairs where you can go and talk directly to admissions reps and counselors before applying. It was really nice. PTK also helps you stand out from other students and

shows that you're holding your academics to a higher standard. It's surreal that I was selected as an All-Kansas Academic Team Member."

Moss will be graduating with her associate degree from Barton in May, at the age of 19. She will begin the next phase of her education about a year ahead of other students.

Photo cutline: Attendees of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) All-State Academic Team awards banquet were (front row, from left) Dean of Workforce Training and Community Education Kathy Kottas, Business Instructor Kathy Boeger; PTK All-State Academic Team inductees Caiden Duerksen of Wichita, Wittney Hammeke of Ellinwood, NaMari Moss of Syracuse, NY, and Avrey Thoman of Manhattan; Director of Learning Services at Barton Fort Leavenworth Erika Jenkins-Moss, and Director of Fort Riley Academic Programs at Barton Fort Riley Janet Balk, (back row, from left) Vice President for Instruction Elaine Simmons, Trustee Carl Helm, Dean of Military Academics, Technical Education and Outreach Programs Kurt Teal, Math Instructor Jo Harrington, Trustee Gary Burke, Trustee Don Learned and Barton President Dr. Carl Heilman. The PTK All-State Academic Team honorees earned medals and certificates to commemorate their achievement. PTK is the international honor society for two-year colleges and symbolizes excellence in higher education. Students with a GPA of 3.5 or higher are invited to join. The PTK group at Barton spends significant time sponsoring local events as well as volunteering to support others' events.

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