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Barton Community College students honored in Topeka

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Story and photo by Brandon Steinert

Six students from Barton Community College in the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society were recognized Thursday for being selected as members of the PTK All-Kansas Academic Team during an award luncheon at the Ramada Inn in Topeka. Prior to the luncheon, inductees toured the state capital building with Barton administrators and visited with state legislators.

Coryell Deege and Presley Smith from the Barton County campus, Jessica Maxwell and Christa Grider from the Ft. Riley campus and Casey Divito and Raegan Cross from the Ft. Leavenworth campus all attended the award ceremony and luncheon, which included a keynote address from Phi Theta Kappa President and CEO Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner.

Dr. Tincher-Ladner told the crowd the honorees are among the highest-achieving students in the nation. She said statistically all of them will graduate, 80 percent will earn bachelor's degrees and two thirds will have master's degrees within four years. She said community college graduates outperform those who start as freshmen at universities.

"These students were selected for this award. There was no test. They were selected," she said. "It's not who you know, or what you know, but it's how others know you and how they know your work. These students are known by others to help others. They are the very best in scholarship, leadership and service that Kansas Community Colleges have to offer."

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 six students will have a chance at being named to PTK's All-USA Academic Team, which will be announced in March.