



**Wharton County
Junior College**

Office of Marketing and Communications
911 Boling Highway
Wharton, Texas 77488

NEWS RELEASE

Toll free: 1.800.561.9252, ext. 6322

Office: 979.532.6322

Fax: 979.532.6493

WCJC HOLDS COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

WHARTON, TEXAS – Wharton County Junior College recently held its 70th Annual Commencement Exercises for graduates receiving either an associate of arts degree, an associate of applied science degree or the associate of arts in teaching degree. Two ceremonies were held on Saturday, May 14, with associate of arts graduates receiving diplomas at 10 a.m. and associate of applied science graduates walking across the stage at 2 p.m. More than 230 graduates participated in the two ceremonies.

A special commencement address was provided by Dr. Belle Wheelan, President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. In her address, Wheelan spoke of the advances made in technology, entertainment, politics and civil rights in the 1970s – when she earned her bachelor's and master's degrees – and compared them with what's been done in those fields today.

With an educational career that spans more than 40 years, Wheelan stressed to the WCJC graduates that hard work, innovation and a desire to make a mark on history are all critical components for success. Wheelan told the students that they have a “great responsibility” in building upon the foundation laid by her own generation.

During the ceremonies, students and one faculty member were recognized for outstanding achievement. WCJC officials presented the President's Award, the Outstanding Service Award, the Dean's Award and the Award for Excellence in Teaching.

The President's Award went to Danielle Igbokwe, a Nigerian native who now calls Waco home. This award is presented annually to a graduate based on excellence in leadership, scholarship, participation in extracurricular activities and the promise of future achievement. Igbokwe, an Associate of Arts degree recipient, further won a Dean's Award for maintaining a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

Two other students also received Dean's Awards. These were Matthew Krenak of Richmond and Christopher Reyes of Bay City, both of whom graduated with Associate of Applied Science degrees.

The Outstanding Service Award – which is presented to the graduate who best exemplifies a spirit of service to the college and the community – was presented to Jacqueline Hernandez of Rosenberg.

The WCJC Award for Excellence in Teaching was presented to mathematics instructor Jennifer Mauch. The award recognizes full-time faculty who have dedicated themselves to making a difference in the lives of their students.

The 70th Annual Commencement Exercises were held in the Pioneer Gymnasium on WCJC's Wharton campus. Special music was provided by the WCJC Choir under the direction of WCJC Band Director Joe Waldrop and accompanied by Dr. Kevin Klotz and Debra Lemson, WCJC's instructor of music.

WCJC President Betty McCrohan provided the welcome. Dave Leenhouts, WCJC's vice-president of student services, presented the Outstanding Service Award while Leigh Ann Collins, WCJC's vice-president of instruction, presented the academic excellence awards and presented the Class of 2016. Graduates' names were read by WCJC instructor of history, Dr. Paul Spellman, and diplomas were awarded by Danny Gertson III, chairman of the WCJC Board of Trustees.

#