



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Gov. Pillen, Nebraska Department of Education Recognize 28 Students for Top ACT Scores



Governor Jim Pillen and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) hosted a ceremony in the State Capitol Rotunda to recognize graduates from the class of 2024 who achieved a top score on their ACT college entrance exam.

“Earning a top score on the ACT is an amazing achievement involving years of hard work and dedication to academic excellence,” said Gov. Pillen. “The success of each student recognized today also reflects the contributions of parents and educators who have invested in them and supported their work. Congratulations to the students and thanks to the everyone whose involvement has helped these students excel.”

NDE Commissioner Dr. Brian Maher joined the Governor to recognize the students for their outstanding accomplishments.

“Congratulations to the remarkable Nebraska students who achieved a top score on the ACT,” said Education Commissioner Brian Maher. “These students are nothing short of incredible, displaying outstanding hard work and dedication. All of Nebraska should be proud of their accomplishments and we wish them the best in the future.”

Historically, on average, less than one-tenth of one percent of students scores a 36 on the ACT. This year 28 Nebraskans in the high school graduating class of 2024 achieved that accomplishment.

Beginning in the 2024-25 academic year, the University of Nebraska Office of the President will fund a new Nebraska Presidential Scholars Program that will cover tuition, fees, books, housing and all other costs of attendance, plus a \$5,000 annual stipend, for any Nebraska student who scores a perfect 36 on the ACT. The university’s ultimate goal is to provide total cost of attendance scholarships to all Nebraska students who score a 33 or above.

“I join Governor Pillen and Commissioner Maher in congratulating these students and their families on their incredible achievements,” said University of Nebraska Interim President Chris Kabourek. “These young people represent the best of Nebraska – humble, hard-working and ambitious. Each and every one will do big things in the future. I’m especially thrilled that so many of our 5-star students are choosing to stay in Nebraska to chase their dreams thanks to the Presidential Scholars Program. This program is having an immediate impact and we couldn’t be more excited to celebrate and support all of Nebraska’s best and brightest.”

Creighton Prep had the most students with top scores in this year’s graduating class (5). Millard North had four students with top scores.

The graduating students who earned a top score are:

Ruby Barger, Elkhorn South High School

Mark Bausch, Creighton Preparatory School

Charles Bork, Elkhorn North High School

Joseph Conner, Daniel J Gross Catholic High School

Josef Crenshaw, Creighton Preparatory School

Logan Doorlag, Papillion-La Vista South High School

Rachel Fernandes, Duchesne Academy

Jack Goltl, Creighton Preparatory School

Ruby Gutzmann, Blair High School

Caleb Kelly, Pender Public School

Logan Kieckhafer, Elkhorn High School

Lillias McKillip, Lincoln Southeast High School  
Thomas McMullen, Millard West High School  
Lucas Menard, Creighton Preparatory School  
Advika Namasyvayam, Millard North High School  
Kashif Nazmul, Elkhorn High School  
Elias Parsonage, Westside High School  
Lucy Rawlinson, Central High School  
Katherin Richards, McCook Senior High School  
Jeremy Robson, Millard West High School  
Andrew Rogers, Creighton Preparatory School  
Ethan Roth, Bennington High School  
Gunnar Santelman, Elkhorn South High School  
Nayan Vel, Millard North High School  
Caeden Vetro, Millard North High School  
Rachel Wu, Elkhorn South High School  
Rohan Yalamanchili, Millard North High School  
Rocco Zimmerman, Mount Michael Benedictine High School

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