



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 18, 2016

NEWS RELEASE

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Ivy Tech to Celebrate Commencement

MICHIGAN CITY — Ivy Tech Community College will confer more than 2,000 degrees and certificates at the 2016 commencement for its Northwest region on Saturday, May 7.

The ceremony begins at 11 a.m. in the auditorium of Michigan City High School, 8466 W. Pahs Road, and will honor the achievements of students at Ivy Tech's East Chicago, Gary, Michigan City and Valparaiso campuses.

Chancellor Thomas Coley will be the featured speaker. Calvin Thomas, vice president for health at Ivy Tech statewide, also will deliver remarks. Members of the LaPorte Symphony Orchestra will provide music during the ceremony.

Stephen Garner will receive the Distinguished Graduate award. Garner is earning an associate degree in business administration with a 4.0 GPA, having completed five semesters in less than two years, while also being involved in youth sports and community groups. He is working to help found a non-profit group that uses a cutting-edge speed, agility and strength-training regimen to help prep athletes prepare for college sports.

Candice Silvas will be honored as Distinguished Alumna. Silvas earned an associate degree in elementary education from Ivy Tech in 2007 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree. She is currently pursuing a master's degree and works as the community resource coordinator and director of development for the Salvation Army of Michigan City. She also recently was elected to the Michigan City Common Council.

Stewart McMillan, CEO of Task Force Tips, will receive an honorary degree. McMillan began as a volunteer on the advisory board for the Valparaiso campus 16 years ago. He is a member of Ivy Tech's Society of Innovators and serves on the college's statewide Board of Trustees. He was named Ivy Tech's Benefactor of the Year in 2010 and works as a LifeLine Pilot, volunteering time and flight expenses to transport people with medical needs.

Dr. David Merrill will be awarded a posthumous honorary degree. Merrill, a chiropractor, was affiliated with Ivy Tech for more than 20 years, including as instructor and program chair. He passed away from cancer on April 4 at the age of 58.

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Ivy Tech Community College is the state's largest public postsecondary institution and the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system. Ivy Tech has campuses throughout Indiana. It serves as the state's engine of workforce development, offering affordable degree programs and training that are aligned with the needs of its community along with courses and programs that transfer to other colleges and universities in Indiana. It is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association.