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Community College Scholars Honored at State House Ceremony

BOSTON – April 18, 2018 – Today, the Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office (MCCEO) hosted a ceremony at the Massachusetts State House to honor 34 of the highest academic achievers of the community college system. Student awardees, surrounded by family, college presidents, elected officials, and mentors, were presented with medallions and certificates for being named to Phi Theta Kappa’s All-Massachusetts Academic Team. Every year, MCCEO hosts this event at the State House in Boston to showcase the best and brightest of the 15-college system. The event is co-sponsored by the Phi Theta Kappa international honor society and the Coca-Cola Foundation. Wednesday’s event took place in the afternoon and featured remarks from State Senator Michael Moore and Dr. Pat Marshall, Deputy Commissioner at the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. Dr. Valerie Roberson, president of Roxbury Community College, served as the mistress of ceremonies.

“This event highlights the commitment of community colleges to access, opportunity, and excellence,” said Gretchen Manning, Deputy Executive Officer of MCCEO. “These students have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement in programs ranging from healthcare, to public service, to business administration and entrepreneurship, to education and much, much more. Many have already transferred to continue their education and they will all continue to be outstanding leaders in their communities and chosen professions. We’re so proud of them for what they have achieved and what they will continue to accomplish.”

In addition to membership on the All-Massachusetts Academic Team, two students earned additional recognition through scholarships from the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation and the All-USA Academic Team. Andrea Merrill from Middlesex Community College was this year’s New Century Workforce Scholar. She will receive a \$1,250 scholarship for this honor. Quinsigamond Community College student Kyle Mondino was this year’s New Century Scholar. As the top-scoring community college student in the Commonwealth, he was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship from the Coca-Cola Foundation. Finally, Mr. Mondino was also recognized for his academic achievement and service to the campus community as an All-USA Top 20 Scholar. He is one of just twenty students from across the country that is a member of this select group; he will also receive a \$5,000 scholarship for this accomplishment.

The 2018 Phi Theta Kappa All-Massachusetts Academic Team members are:

- Berkshire Community College students Iolani DeRis and Bridget Wnukowski;
- Bristol Community College students Shiv Thakur and Paul Vermette II;
- Bunker Hill Community College students Susan Benitez and Mussie Demisse;

- Cape Cod Community College students Ethan Anderson and Emma Comp;
- Greenfield Community College students Alan Fish and Alejo Zacarias;
- Holyoke Community College students Nicolette Cimino and Dorian Kos;
- MassBay Community College students Dante Small, Nicoletta Agostino, and Marina Offenstine;
- Massasoit Community College students Allison Sherman, Veshal Venkat, Michael Courtright, and Cynthia Muthoni;
- Middlesex Community College students Andrea Merrill, Anthony Wathuo, Andrea Miles, and Amy Miller;
- Mt. Wachusett Community College students Lisa Ferrara-Caron and Jacob VanHillo;
- North Shore Community College students Robert Cook and Egbert Sayers;
- Northern Essex Community College students James Kerr and William Rollins;
- Quinsigamond Community College students Kyle Mondino and Maia Shalev;
- Roxbury Community College students Gabriel Gbidye and Natalie Grillo-Noyes; and
- Springfield Technical Community College student Katelyn Holmes.

Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is the international honor society of two-year colleges. PTK has recognized and encouraged scholarship among community college students for 99 years while promoting the academic integrity of the associate degree program. Students with grade point averages of 3.5 or higher are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa.

The Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office (MCCEO) works on behalf of presidents and trustees of the fifteen community colleges in Massachusetts, currently representing more than 176,000 students in every region of the Commonwealth.

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