



GOLDEN HORSESHOE DAY 2024

JUNE 11, 2024

WEST VIRGINIA CULTURE CENTER
CAPITOL COMPLEX | CHARLESTON, WV



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2023-2024**

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State Superintendent of Schools
West Virginia Department of Education

GREETINGS

Dear Knights of the Golden Horseshoe,

I am pleased to join members of the West Virginia Board of Education, State Legislators and educators to celebrate your induction into the 93rd class of the Order of the Golden Horseshoe. You represent the top 1% of the approximately 19,000 8th grade students who took the qualifying test and earned this esteemed honor.

As a Knight of the Golden Horseshoe, you should embrace the heritage of our state and represent its legacy proudly wherever you journey in life. May your passion for learning continue to feed your curiosity, and may you always be led to explore the world around you.

Today, you join the more than 15,000 students who have earned this distinction. We hope you will always remember this celebration and we all wish you success throughout your educational career and beyond.



Michele L. Blatt
West Virginia Superintendent of Schools

GOLDEN HORSESHOE HISTORY

One of the highlights of the eighth-grade year is the opportunity for a student to become a Knight of the Golden Horseshoe Society. This prestigious program takes its name from the golden horseshoes given to the early explorers of West Virginia. In 1716, the Governor of the Virginia colony, Alexander Spotswood, saw the need for exploration of the land west of the Allegheny Mountains, most of which is now West Virginia. The governor organized a party of about 50 men, all of whom adopted the pledge, “Sic jurat transcendere monte,” which means “Thus he swears to cross the mountains.” Governor Spotswood presented each member of his party with a small golden horseshoe to commemorate the bravery of those who crossed the mountains into Western Virginia, beginning the Golden Horseshoe tradition.

This historical tradition was revitalized in the late 1920s. To promote the study of state history, the idea of forming West Virginia clubs was proposed by Phil M. Conley, an editor of *The West Virginia Review*. In late 1929, Mr. Conley took his idea to state Superintendent of Free Schools William C. Cook. Superintendent Cook believed the West Virginia Department of Education should take the lead in promoting a comprehensive study of the state. He proposed expanding Conley’s idea by honoring the highest-achieving students with a state award. In 1930, some 2,736 clubs were organized with more than 48,000 students as members. In the first Golden Horseshoe ceremony, held in 1931, 87 students from 46 counties were honored as Knights of the Golden Horseshoe Society. The Golden Horseshoe became known as a symbol of scholastic achievement to honor students who excel in the study of West Virginia. Since that time, approximately 15,000 eighth grade students have received a golden pin in the shape of a horseshoe, much like those given by Governor Spotswood 300 years ago. The pin symbolizes the student’s knowledge and understanding of his or her state’s proud heritage.

The program of studies in combination with state awards is unique in its statewide recognition of scholastic achievement. Each year approximately 20,000 eighth-grade students spend the school year studying a comprehensive West Virginia curriculum. The curriculum engages students in the intense study of the history, geography, economy, and government of the Mountain State. The primary goal of the program is to promote pride in our state, develop intellectual and participatory skills as well as foster attitudes necessary for students to participate as effective, involved, and responsible citizens. The West Virginia Department of Education, in effect, uses the Golden Horseshoe award to honor "all-state" West Virginia Studies students.



Each year, eighth-grade students are honored for their knowledge of the state in a one-day ceremony held in Charleston. Golden Horseshoe winners have outscored their classmates in county-wide testing competitions that measure their knowledge of West Virginia. A minimum of two students from each county and one student from the West Virginia School for the Deaf and one student from the West Virginia School for the Blind at Romney are selected for the award. All charter schools receive one winner. The other honorees are selected from the 55 counties based on each county's eighth-grade population.

While in Charleston to celebrate the Golden Horseshoe Day, the honorees are encouraged to tour the State Capitol, Capitol Grounds, and the West Virginia State Museum. The high point of the Golden Horseshoe Ceremony is the induction of the students into the Golden Horseshoe Society. The State Superintendent of Schools presides over the induction ceremony. Each student kneels and, with a tap of a sword on the shoulder, is dubbed a Knight of the Golden Horseshoe Society. Each winner is presented a Golden Horseshoe as a time-honored keepsake of the tradition.

GOLDEN HORSESHOE PROGRAM

JUNE 11, 2024

- Opening: Joey Wiseman
Director
Office of Student Enrichment
- Welcome: Michele L. Blatt
State Superintendent of Schools
West Virginia Department of Education
Additional Greetings from Governor Jim Justice
- Introductions: Tanya Baldwin
Coordinator
Office of PK-12 Academic Support
- Presiding: Dustin Lambert
Coordinator
Office of Student Enrichment
- Trumpet Fanfare: Mark Hardman, Director
George Washington High School
- Knighting: Michele L. Blatt
- Readers: Gloria Burdette
Coordinator
Office of Student Enrichment
- Susie Garrison
Coordinator
Office of PK-12 Academic Support

GOLDEN HORSESHOE PROGRAM

AGENDA

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Please reference the schedule on the next page for your designated knighting. Shuttle service begins at 7:45 a.m. at Laidley Field.

KNIGHTING ONE

8:15 AM	Registration Culture Center, Building 9 Students and parents will be seated in the theatre.
9:00 AM	Knighting and Induction into the Golden Horseshoe Society
10:30 AM	Optional Capitol Tour — meet behind the Rotunda within the State Capitol (ground floor)

KNIGHTING TWO

10:15 AM	Registration Culture Center, Building 9 Students and parents will be seated in the theatre.
11:00 AM	Knighting and Induction into the Golden Horseshoe Society
12:30 PM	Optional Capitol Tour — meet behind the Rotunda within the State Capitol (ground floor)

KNIGHTING THREE

12:45 PM	Registration Culture Center, Building 9 Students and parents will be seated in the theatre.
1:30 PM	Knighting and Induction into the Golden Horseshoe Society
3:00 PM	Optional Capitol Tour — meet behind the Rotunda within the State Capitol (ground floor)

The last shuttle leaves the Culture Center at 4:15 p.m.

GOLDEN HORSESHOE PROGRAM

CEREMONY ONE 9:00 AM	CEREMONY TWO 11:00 AM	CEREMONY THREE 1:30 PM
Boone	Gilmer	Barbour
Braxton	Greenbrier	Berkeley
Cabell	Mason	Brooke
Calhoun	McDowell	Doddridge
Clay	Mercer	Grant
Fayette	Mingo	Hampshire
Harrison	Monroe	Hancock
Jackson	Nicholas	Hardy
Kanawha	Pleasants	Jefferson
Lewis	Raleigh	Marshall
Lincoln	Randolph	Mineral
Logan	Ritchie	Monongalia
Marion	Summers	Morgan
Putnam	Tyler	Ohio
Roane	Upshur	Pendleton
Wayne	Webster	Pocahontas
Wirt	Wetzel	Preston
	Wood	Taylor
	Wyoming	Tucker
	WV Public Charter Schools	WV Schools for the Deaf & the Blind

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Barbour County

Ava Pumphrey, *Kasson Elementary/Middle School*
Julie Phillips, *Philippi Middle School*
Brianna Tenney, *Philippi Middle School*

Berkeley County

Mark Hunter, *Hedgesville Middle School*
Max Lowe, *Hedgesville Middle School*
Makayla Grove, *Mountain Ridge Middle School*
Dylan King, *Mountain Ridge Middle School*
Jacob Vincent, *Mountain Ridge Middle School*
Conner Reynolds, *Musselman Middle School*
Gabriel Campos, *Saint Joseph School*
Carolina Lupatini, *Spring Mills Middle School*
KonnorMartin, *Spring Mills Middle School*
Kellen Short, *Spring Mills Middle School*
Sterling Vongtip, *Spring Mills Middle School*

Boone County

Ava Cottrell, *Madison Middle School*
Daniel Jenkins, *Madison Middle School*
Jonah Mays, *Madison Middle School*

Braxton County

Natalie Garrett, *Braxton County Middle School*
Blaine Hines, *Braxton County Middle School*
Avah Mollohan, *Braxton County Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Brooke County

Carter Neilson, *Brooke Middle School*
Andrew Pintus, *Brooke Middle School*
Sophia Tacozza, *Brooke Middle School*

Cabell County

Elizabeth Allman, *Barboursville Middle School*
Cooper Johnson, *Barboursville Middle School*
Penelope Day, *Covenant School*
Owen Kays, *Covenant School*
Tyrell Earle, *Huntington East Middle School*
Vivian Yoost, *Huntington Middle School*
Rylan Bird, *Milton Middle School*

Calhoun County

Ryleigh Crislip-Garrett, *Calhoun Middle/High School*
Jasmyne Tingler, *Calhoun Middle/High School*

Clay County

Abigail Grandon, *Clay Middle School*
James Gunter, *Clay Middle School*
Gabriel Shamblin, *Clay Middle School*

Doddridge County

Camden Jamison, *Doddridge County Middle School*
Braden Lipscomb, *Doddridge County Middle School*
Tessa Mayle, *Doddridge County Middle School*

EPPA

Elias Standifer, *Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Fayette County

William Boles, *Fayetteville PK-8 School*

Clara Swank, *Fayetteville PK-8 School*

Dean Ryan, *Meadow Bridge High School*

Dixie Ward, *Meadow Bridge High School*

Gilmer County

Adlai Chapman, *Gilmer County High School*

Charles Greenlief, *Gilmer County High School*

Grant County

Lucy Groves, *Petersburg High School*

Kason Ketterman, *Petersburg High School*

Samuel Yeager, *Petersburg High School*

Greenbrier County

Josie Bostic, *Eastern Greenbrier Middle School*

Aaron Tremann, *Eastern Greenbrier Middle School*

Nani Saunders, *Western Greenbrier Middle School*

Ryan Vanmeter, *Western Greenbrier Middle School*

Hampshire County

Grace Weatherholtz, *Capon Bridge Middle School*

Wyatt Hooker, *Hampshire Senior High School*

Brianna Turner, *Romney Middle School*

Hancock County

Emily Allen, *Oak Glen Middle School*

Robert Arnett, *Weir Middle School*

Evan Kovarik, *Weirton Madonna High School*

Thomas Welch, *Weirton Madonna High School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Hardy County

Kaden Berg, *Moorefield Middle School*

Mason Liggett, *Moorefield Middle School*

William Titus, *Moorefield Middle School*

Harrison County

Isaac Boyce, *Bridgeport Middle School*

Juliet Drost, *Bridgeport Middle School*

Joel Fields, *Heritage Christian School*

Ethan Floyd, *Lincoln Middle School*

Aubriana Kacinec, *Washington Irving Middle School*

Serenity Owens, *Washington Irving Middle School*

Jackson County

Raghad Mohammed, *Ravenswood Middle School*

Richard Hackney, *Ripley Middle School*

Michael McCune, *Ripley Middle School*

Caleb Staats, *Ripley Middle School*

Jefferson County

Brice Alawuru, *Charles Town Middle School*

Yahaira Rojas, *Charles Town Middle School*

Clayton Stolipher, *Charles Town Middle School*

Lennon Schiffer, *Harpers Ferry Middle School*

Carys Schiffer, *Harpers Ferry Middle School*

Andre Turner, Jr., *Wildwood Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Kanawha County

William Haynes, *Andrew Jackson Middle School*

Chase Abraham, *Bible Center School*

Jason Holcomb, *Bible Center School*

Lia Duffield, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Samuel Ellison, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Bailee King, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Daniel Linton, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Audrey Lowe, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Edward Passmore, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Lucas Passmore, *Charleston Catholic High School*

Elayna Meadows, *John Adams Middle School*

Titus Wolfingbarger, *John Adams Middle School*

Lewis County

Ashley Brand, *Robert L. Bland Middle School*

Brodi Fisher, *Robert L. Bland Middle School*

Isaac Minigh, *Robert L. Bland Middle School*

Lincoln County

Sydney Kyer, *Duval PK-8 School*

Reed Roberts, *Hamlin PK-8 School*

Addison Saul, *Hamlin PK-8 School*

Logan County

Kadence Green, *Chapmanville Middle School*

Chase Butcher, *Logan Middle School*

Danielle Mahone, *Logan Middle School*

Kaylee Julious, *Man Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Marion County

Mason Bowers, *Barrackville Elementary/Middle School*
Serea Fulayter, *Barrackville Elementary/Middle School*
Bridgette Schoo, *East Fairmont Middle School*
Miles Tichner, *East Fairmont Middle School*
Tristan King, *Monongah Middle School*

Marshall County

Jacob Utt, *Moundsville Middle School*
Takoda Barton, *Sherrard Middle School*
Emily Gatts, *Sherrard Middle School*
Chloe Pickett, *Sherrard Middle School*

Mason County

Jeweliana Marshall, *Hannan Junior/Senior High School*
Hunter Thorp, *Point Pleasant Junior/Senior High School*
Richard Johnson, *Wahama Junior/Senior High School*
Moses Mankin, *Wahama Junior/Senior High School*

McDowell County

Kneimiyah Hunt, *Mount View High School*
Dylan Rose, *Mount View High School*
Jadyn Wade, *Mount View High School*

Mercer County

Jahnashia Williams, *Bluefield Middle School*
Owen Hackney, *Princeton Middle School*
Addison Hylton, *Princeton Middle School*
Caleb Stauffer, *Pikeview Middle School*
Joanna Williams, *Pikeview Middle School*
Taylor Wright, *Pikeview Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Mineral County

Braylen Blowe, *Keyser Middle School*
Natalie Lynch, *Keyser Middle School*
Joel Simpson, *Keyser Middle School*
Uriah Swick, *Keyser Middle School*

Mingo County

Owen Lester, *Gilbert PK-8*
Braden Blevins, *Kermit PK-8 School*
Arionna Brewer, *Kermit PK-8 School*
Mackenzie Wolford, *Matewan PK-8 School*

Monongalia County

Ethan Landis, *Mountaineer Middle School*
Parker Smith, *Mountaineer Middle School*
Tessa Abildso, *South Middle School*
Ryan Bellisario, *South Middle School*
Avery Garvin, *South Middle School*
Jaxon Howell, *South Middle School*
Henry Palfrey, *South Middle School*

Monroe County

John Fullen, *Mountain View Elementary & Middle School*
Gabiella Houck, *Mountain View Elementary & Middle School*
Marshal White, *Peterstown Middle School*

Morgan County

Chase Shambaugh, *Paw Paw High School*
Oliver Jurick, *Warm Springs Middle School*
Jade Kidwell, *Warm Springs Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Nicholas County

Noah Roberts, *Richwood Middle School*
Michael Caufield, *Richwood Middle School*
Jayda Perrine, *Summersville Middle School*

Ohio County

Dawson Huggins, *Corpus Christi School*
Braydon Bartsch, *Triadelphia Middle School*
Romeo Blake-Livingston, *Triadelphia Middle School*
Jordan Mick, *Triadelphia Middle School*
Anneliese Tennant, *Triadelphia Middle School*

Pendleton County

Jax Bennett, *Pendleton County Middle/High School*
Samuel Eason, *Pendleton County Middle/High School*

Pleasants County

Garrett Gorrell, *Pleasants County Middle School*
Kailea Hall, *Pleasants County Middle School*

Pocahontas County

Nadiya Kerr, *Green Bank Elementary-Middle School*
Nicholas Beverage, *Marlinton Middle School*

Preston County

Brianna Watkinson, *Central Preston Middle School*
Kaiden Rankin, *South Preston School*
Sarah Dew, *South Preston School*
Jacob Smith-Tatham, *West Preston School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Putnam County

Isabella Sull, *Calvary Baptist Academy*

Tessa Amick, *Hurricane Middle School*

Addyson Shafer, *Hurricane Middle School*

Delaney Brumfield, *Poca Middle School*

Leland Gandee, *Poca Middle School*

Cameron Burton, *Winfield Middle School*

Raleigh County

Tamarion Clay, *Beckley-Stratton Middle School*

Owen James, *Independence Middle School*

Iannah Trump, *Independence Middle School*

Ayni Demede, *Park Middle School*

Brinlee Stone, *Park Middle School*

Liam Hiener, *Shady Spring Middle School*

Bella Turman, *Shady Spring Middle School*

Randolph County

Ximena Diaz, *Elkins Middle School*

Kayla Harris, *Elkins Middle School*

Ilaria Jackson-Caligi, *Elkins Middle School*

Elin Morris, *Elkins Middle School*

Ritchie County

Tegan Backus, *Ritchie County Middle School*

Talan McBrayer, *Ritchie County Middle School*

Zechariah Colvin, *Ritchie County Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

Roane County

Chloe Gainer, *Spencer Middle School*

Logan Beebe, *Walton Elementary/Middle School*

Jazmin Delcher, *Walton Elementary/Middle School*

Summers County

Annalyn Lilly, *6-12 Summers County Comprehensive High School*

Bailey Richmond, *6-12 Summers County Comprehensive High School*

Josiah Kim, *Homeschool*

Taylor County

Ashlen Lambert, *Taylor County Middle School*

Sophia Polinski, *Taylor County Middle School*

Stella Sinclair, *Taylor County Middle School*

Tucker County

Rachel Hile, *Tucker Valley Elementary Middle School*

Alaina Owens, *Tucker Valley Elementary Middle School*

Tyler County

Marcus Brannon, *Tyler Consolidated Middle School*

Matthew Daugherty, *Tyler Consolidated Middle School*

Brandon Glover, *Tyler Consolidated Middle School*

Upshur County

Odin McCourt, *Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School*

Olivia Davis, *Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School*

Sawyer Phillips, *Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School*

Rease Zirkle, *Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

VPAWV

Josef Green, *Virtual Preparatory Academy of West Virginia*

Wayne County

Madison Muncy, *Crum Pre K-8 School*

Drake Anderson, *Vinson Middle School*

Bobby Hensley, *Vinson Middle School*

Cheyenne Johnson, *Vinson Middle School*

Zackary Meadows, *Vinson Middle School*

Webster County

Spencer Baird, *Webster County High School*

Baylea Rose, *Webster County High School*

Alexa Snyder, *Webster County High School*

Wetzel County

Penelope Bowser, *Homeschool*

Olivia Hohman, *New Martinsville School*

Jacob Norton, *New Martinsville School*

Wirt County

Adryon Hartford, *Wirt County Middle School*

Holden VanCamp, *Wirt County Middle School*

Wood County

Emma Barker, *Blennerhassett Middle School*

Kynlee Parsons, *Blennerhassett Middle School*

Morgan Wicker, *Blennerhassett Middle School*

Wyatt Bartley, *Edison Middle School*

Natalie Parsons, *Edison Middle School*

Aubree McDonald, *Jackson Middle School*

Jenessa Lewellyn, *Williamstown Middle/High School*

GOLDEN HORSESHOE WINNERS

WVA

James Treu, *West Virginia Academy*

WVSDB

Wyatt Kuncl, *West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind*

WVVA

Leah Mello, *West Virginia Virtual Academy*

Wyoming County

Reagen Bower, *Glen Fork Elementary & Middle School*

Lilly McCoy, *Oceana Middle School*

Sydney Laxton, *Pineville Middle School*

Victoria Smith, *Pineville Middle School*

Honorary Golden Horseshoe Recipients

Delegate Lori Cowger Dittman, *Braxton County*

Alexis Fisher, *Lewis County*

Jason Gump, *Jackson County*

SPECIAL THANKS

West Virginia Governor Jim Justice

West Virginia First Lady Cathy Justice

West Virginia Board of Education

***Secretary Randall Reid-Smith,
West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture & History***

West Virginia Department of Education

Office of the State Superintendent
Communications

Division of PK-12 Adult Instruction & Career Engagement

Office of Student Enrichment
Office of PK-12 Academic Support
Office of Career Technical Education

West Virginia Public Broadcasting

AUTOGRAPHS

#WVGOLDENHORSESHOE



Michele L. Blatt
West Virginia Superintendent of Schools

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