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Meet the 2026 Houston County School District Valedictorians and Salutatorians



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – High school seniors from throughout the Houston County School District will graduate on May 21-22, 2026. Each ceremony will feature remarks from the school's valedictorian and salutatorian.

The top graduates from each high school are:

- Houston County High – Valedictorian Michael Do and Salutatorian Nishant Kunwar;
- Northside High – Valedictorian Jayden Duncan and Salutatorian Mihir Tailor;
- Perry High – Valedictorian Sarah Golden and Salutatorian Chad Christiansen;
- Veterans High – Valedictorian Annie White and Salutatorian Brooke VanDalinda; and
- Warner Robins High – Valedictorian Analea Harper and Salutatorian Ignacio Resendiz.

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Houston County High School

Valedictorian Michael Do is the son of Minh Do and Michelle Tan and the brother of Melissa Do. He is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of NextGen Coders, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that partners with over eight organizations across Middle Georgia to expand access to computer science education, reaching more than 1,200 students. Through weekly classes, summer camps, and coding competitions, he works to grow STEM opportunities for youth throughout the region. He serves as the Lead Artificial Intelligence Researcher at the Middle Georgia State University School of Computing, where he developed a code-generation AI chatbot for Robins Air Force Base and published a first-author research paper on enhancing human–robot interactions in a top-quartile peer-reviewed journal. Michael has also held numerous leadership roles, including State Parliamentarian and Local Chapter President of Future Business Leaders of America, where he served over 25,000 student leaders across Georgia. He is a two-time Lead Software Developer Intern at the Georgia Tech Research Institute, contributing to the development of an autonomous precision agriculture robot and conducting research on low-cost sensor integration. Additionally, Michael served as National East Coast Representative and International Rural Outreach Committee Member for Young Investors Society, representing over 19,000 high school students in initiatives promoting financial literacy. Within his school community, he was Founder and President of the Coding Club, President of the National Technical Honor Society, two-time Class President, and one-time Class Vice President. A dedicated athlete, Michael is the Varsity Tennis Team Captain, leading his team to four county championships and earning one-time All-Region First Team and two-time All-Region Second Team honors. In his free time, Michael enjoys cooking with his sister, playing pickleball with friends, and eating dishes from various cuisines. Michael plans to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he will pursue a dual major in Computer Science and Mathematics, with aspirations of becoming a quantitative analyst and eventually founding his own AI tech startup.

Salutatorian Nishant Kunwar was born in Butwal, Nepal, and moved to the United States at the age of one. He has primarily lived in Georgia, where he grew up with his family: his mother, Shanta, his father, Ishwari, and his older brother, Gaurav. During high school, Nishant was involved in both academic and extracurricular activities. He founded Future Medical Scholars of America, a club created to bring together students interested in healthcare. Through this club, students were able to explore medical fields, contribute to their local community and engage with peers who share similar interests. Nishant has also been a dedicated student-athlete. He played soccer for Houston County High School all four years of high school. His involvement in soccer extends beyond high school, as he has played the sport since kindergarten, being a part of local club teams and even the Georgia ODP state team. Outside of school, Nishant enjoys playing video games, building LEGO sets, and doomscrolling on his phone. These activities serve as a way for him to relax, alleviating any stress or pressures that may arise from school or sports. After graduation, Nishant plans to attend college and major in biology on a pre-med track. He intends to pursue medical school and a career as a medical professional. In addition, he hopes to one day earn a degree in mathematics, following in the footsteps of his father and uncles. As salutatorian, Nishant is extremely appreciative of the guidance he has received from his wonderful teachers, counselors, coaches, and advisors. He also thanks his family for their sacrifices, especially for moving so far from their home country and family to ensure he could receive a quality education. With the support of all these people, Nishant strives to give his best in everything he does and build a successful, meaningful future.

Northside High School

Throughout his academic career, **Valedictorian Jayden Duncan** has made it his impetus to give back to the community that has provided him with a support system to achieve his goals; through involvement in community outreach programs such as Warner Robins Youth leadership and school authorized organizations

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such as BETA Club and FBLA. These experiences have not only allowed him to contribute positively to the lives of others but have also enriched his own understanding of what it means to be part of a community. By engaging with young leaders and participating in educational initiatives, he has witnessed firsthand the transformative power of mentorship and collaboration. Throughout his high school career, he made sure not to sacrifice his academic pursuits while partaking in volunteer opportunities. His GPA of 4.0/101.286 and the rigor of his courseload on top of my extracurricular abilities point to the evidence of his ability to give attention and priority to the ventures that he partakes in without wavering in capacity. Since the inception of his high school career, he has been an AP student-athlete, balancing a rigorous workload in conjunction with a strenuous athletic schedule that allowed little loss of focus. Upon completion of his college career and after obtaining his bachelor's from Fort Valley State University as a CDEP scholar and a master's degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology, he sees himself working in the polymer science industry for a large specialized or consolidated industry. He has had a long-standing interest in chemistry and engineering alike. Ultimately, his goal is to contribute to advancements in polymer technologies that not only enhance industry capabilities but also improve quality of life and environmental sustainability. By leveraging his education, skills, and passion, he is confident in building a meaningful career that aligns with both his personal aspirations and broader societal needs.

Salutatorian Mihir Tailor has made an impact on Northside in many ways ever since he entered high school. He participates in many different organizations, such as the Northside High School Blue Wind Band, where Mihir has served as the Saxophone Section Leader for the past three years, and helps improve and motivate the players around him. He also participates in scholarly clubs such as DECA, where he serves as vice president, and in Math Club, in which he is president. Outside of school, Mihir tutors students in both math and reading curriculum, encouraging younger and older students to prioritize academics. He has also received many honors. For example, he placed in the district honor band for three consecutive years on two instruments and was recognized as the most outstanding band student during his junior year. Mihir placed third at the DECA regional competition during his junior year and placed in the top 10 at State in his senior year, qualifying him for nationals. Over the summer, he was recognized as a mentor in the making at the Navicent Atrium Health R.E.A.C.H internship. This year, he was the first recognized Optimist Student of the Month at Northside High School, and he placed fourth in the BETA Club Academic competitions in math. Mihir has been accepted early into the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of Georgia but is still undecided on where to attend. He plans on majoring in biomedical engineering or biology at either university, in preparation to pursue a career in the medical field and impact lives.

Perry High School

Valedictorian Sarah Golden is the daughter of Vince and Peggy Golden. Sarah is the STAR Student of her class. She is an AP Scholar with Distinction and has taken 12 AP classes throughout her high school career. She has been a frequent volunteer with the Perry Public Library and has received the Peter R. Marsh Foundation Silent Servant Award for her community service. As a four-year member of the Panther Regiment Marching Band, Sarah has served as both flute section leader and woodwind captain and took part in the Grand Champion-winning show The Red Hood. Each year, Sarah has been selected for district and region honor band and has been district first chair flute three times. She has been a member of the varsity cross country team since her freshman year and has qualified to run at state twice. Competing on the Perry High School Literary Team, she has won region and state champion in the Argumentative Essay category. Sarah will be attending the Georgia Institute of Technology in the fall, where she will study electrical engineering.

Salutatorian Chad Christiansen is the son of Beth and Peter Christiansen. Throughout high school, Chad has been a member of the Perry High School Panther Regiment for four years, including serving as section leader for one year. He has also been a member of Perry High School Theater for one year, Math Team for two years, and the competition Beta Club for one year, where he and the engineering team placed among the

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top five teams in the state. Chad has volunteered and served as a leader in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and he plans to serve a two-year mission following high school. He has maintained a 4.0 grade point average while taking AP Statistics, AP World History, AP Precalculus, AP U.S. History, AP Chemistry, AP English Language, AP Calculus, AP Literature, AP Computer Science, AP Macroeconomics, and AP Physics 1 and 2. Following high school and his two-year mission, Chad plans to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he will major in Aerospace Engineering.

Veterans High School

Valedictorian Annie White is an AP scholar with Distinction as well as a UGA Certificate of Merit recipient and a National Merit Commended Student. The founder and leader of the “Girls Will Be” Empowerment Group for local elementary school girls, she has participated in Perry Youth Leadership and has held leadership positions in Science National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. She is the Vice President of Operations for the VHS Engage Club, through which she attended a mock appellate court program and authored a bill for the Georgia Youth Assembly. Annie is currently the President of the VHS Concert Chorale and is a five-year Georgia All-State Choral Vocalist. Additionally, she was chosen as the Georgia Association for Gifted Children’s 2026 Teen Award and the 2026 VHS STAR student. The daughter of Lori and Nick White, she has been accepted as a Foundation Fellow at the University of Georgia, and she intends to study political science so that she can pursue a career as a constitutional or civil rights attorney.

Salutatorian Brooke VanDalinda is an AP scholar with Distinction as well as a UGA Certificate of Merit recipient. She has been a member of student government, the Warhawk Welcome Team, Chick-Fil-A Leader Academy, Rho Kappa Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. Additionally, she has held leadership positions in the Spanish Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society, and National English Honor Society. She has been on the yearbook staff for three years and currently serves as an editor. She is also the secretary for the VHS Engage Club, through which she served as a page at the Georgia House of Representatives. Brooke also placed 3rd place in argumentative essay writing for 5A State Literary. In her spare time, she volunteers as a 3rd grade religious education teacher at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church and volunteers with Keep Warner Robins Beautiful. The daughter of Christy and Ryan VanDalinda, she has been accepted at the University of Georgia, and she plans to become an environmental engineer, minoring in environmental policy and management to make sustainability affordable for all.

Warner Robins High School

Valedictorian Analea Harper, the daughter of Jennifer and Travis Harper, has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and dedication throughout her four years at Warner Robins High School. She has completed an impressive 13 AP courses, earning qualifying scores on every exam. Analea’s excellence extends well beyond the classroom. She has been deeply involved in a wide range of extracurricular activities, most notably serving as president of DECA for two years after previously holding an officer position. Through DECA, she competed and qualified at every level of competition. In addition, she served as president of Rho Kappa during her senior year and was an active member for two years. Her involvement also includes quiz bowl, ethics bowl, Sources of Strength, and Beta Club. She further distinguished herself by competing in the Miss WRHS pageant all four years, earning the academic award each year. In recognition of her academic strength and determination, Analea was nominated for the Governor’s Honors Program in both communicative arts and mathematics. She was also selected to represent her school at both the Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership Program and the Robins Regional Youth Leadership Program. Among her honors, she was named an Optimist Student of the Month in September and received the University of Georgia Certificate of Merit. Analea’s passion for writing has been a defining part of her high school experience. She competed in the Young Georgia Authors competition, advancing further than any student from her school in several years. She also competed at both the regional and state levels in

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literary competitions, earning recognition at each stage. Her accomplishments extend to athletics as well. As a dedicated member of the softball team for all four years, Analea consistently demonstrated excellence, earning the academic award each year. In her senior year, she was honored with the Jane Gore Award in recognition of her grit, integrity, and commitment to the sport. Following graduation, Analea plans to attend a four-year university, where she intends to major in neuroscience.

Salutatorian Ignacio Resendiz, the son of Ginger and Javier Resendiz, has distinguished himself through exceptional academic achievement, leadership, and service. Throughout his high school career, he has completed ten AP courses, earning proficient scores on every exam. His academic excellence, dedication, and exemplary character led to his nomination to the Governor's Honors Program twice in social studies, where he advanced to semifinalist status during his sophomore year. In recognition of his accomplishments, Ignacio has received the University of Georgia Certificate of Merit, the AP Scholar with Distinction honor, and was named an Optimist Student of the Month in October. Beyond academics, he has demonstrated a strong commitment to leadership and service through his involvement in Youth Leadership Robins Region, as a three-year member of Sources of Strength, and through volunteer work with Heart of Georgia Hospice and his church community. At Warner Robins High School, Ignacio has been actively involved in Beta Club, Chick-fil-A Leader Academy, and serves as secretary of Rho Kappa. He has also remained dedicated to extracurricular activities, participating in tennis, cross country, and the WRHS Demon Marching Band for all four years. As mellophone section leader during his junior and senior years, he has mentored fellow musicians and demonstrated strong leadership. Music has played a defining role in Ignacio's high school journey. His commitment to the French horn since sixth grade has earned him placement in district, region, and all-state honor bands. He also performs with the Mercer Brass ensemble on tenor horn, consistently earning superior ratings in brass quintet performances alongside his peers. Following graduation, Ignacio plans to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he plans to major in biochemistry.

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