



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers | Secretary Jared Hoy

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DOC students recognized for academic achievement

34 individuals studying while incarcerated join Phi Theta Kappa

MADISON, Wis. – Madison College and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) celebrated the academic achievements of 34 persons in our care from six institutions during a virtual ceremony today inducting the students into Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) International Honor Society.

“Rehabilitation requires learning,” DOC Secretary Jared Hoy said. “One of the goals of incarceration is to provide individuals with the tools they need to thrive in the community. Education plays a huge role and achievements like this show persons in our care that they can succeed. This is a proud moment for each and every one of these students.”

PTK is the official honor society of two-year colleges and was founded to offer opportunities for students to grow as scholars and leaders.

“Becoming a member of Phi Theta Kappa — coming from where I started — not only an honor, but an accomplishment that proves my capabilities to myself and everyone else in my life,” said Jeremiah Janke, a student at Oakhill Correctional Institution.

Janke and the other 33 students honored needed to have completed at least 12 degree credits and earned a minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA to join.

“Acknowledgement for my efforts is another reminder that hard work pays off, and that everything I am striving toward is achievable with persistence,” Janke added.

The new PTK members are among a cohort of Small Business Entrepreneurship Program students participating in the federal Second Chance Pell pilot program, which provides funding that allows a small number of colleges and universities nationwide to offer post-secondary education and training to incarcerated individuals.



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This is the second group of Wisconsin DOC students to earn this prestigious national recognition.

The 34 new members honored fulfilled all requirements for membership while completing their studies online at six separate DOC institutions:

- Felmers O. Cheney Correctional Center – 1 member
- Jackson Correctional Institution – 10 members
- Oakhill Correctional Institution – 7 members
- Redgranite Correctional Institution – 3 members
- Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility – 1 member
- Stanley Correctional Institution – 12 members

Madison College President Jack Daniels, a PTK member himself, also delivered remarks as the keynote speaker for the ceremony.

“My challenge invites you to give through service, offers opportunities, experience scholarship and learning outside the classroom, promotes fellowship through your interactions with other PTK members and above all, asks you to step up and be a leader,” he told the new inductees. “My challenge is extensive but achievable, and I know the experience you gain along this journey will have a lasting significance on your academic development.”

Students took the Phi Theta Kappa induction oath before being admitted, in which members pledged to uphold the standards and ideals of the organization. Each new member’s name will be added to the Chapter Record Book and will receive a Medal of Honor recognizing each inductee’s achievements and designating formal induction into the society.

Established by Missouri two-year college presidents in 1918, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society serves to recognize and encourage the academic achievement of two-year college students and provide opportunities for individual growth and development through honors, leadership and service programming. Today, Phi Theta Kappa is the largest honor society in American higher education with more than 3 million members and 1,285 chapters.