

May 10, 2018

CONTACT: Jess Ruppert
ruppertj@alpenacc.edu
(989) 358-7276

PLEASE NOTE: THIS INFORMATION IS ONLY TO BE RELEASED AFTER 8:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY, MAY 10.

For immediate release:

2018 ACC COMMENCEMENT RESULTS

Alpena Community College's 65th Commencement was held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 10, in Park Arena. Highlights include:

This year ACC had 369 candidates (up from 334 last year) for graduation. Approximately 150 marched in the Commencement ceremony.

History was made with the **first graduates from the Electrical Systems Technology bachelor's degree program**. In December 2012, the Michigan Legislature and Governor Snyder approved Public Act 495 authorizing Michigan community colleges to offer bachelor's degree in concrete technology, culinary arts, maritime technology, and energy production technology. Alpena Community College staff members investigated bachelor's degree programs relevant to the College mission, and a Bachelor of Science Degree program in Electrical Systems Technology was selected.

This program was designed to leverage ACC's extensive knowledge and impressive credentials in Utility Technology and to utilize the new, state-of-the-art Ferris H. Werth Electrical Power Technology Center. The goals of the program are to train individuals to install, modify, maintain, troubleshoot, and perform functional tests on electrical grid systems equipment for employment in the fields of electrical distribution, transmission, and generation. On September 15, 2015, ACC received formal approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer the 4-year baccalaureate degree. Instructor Steve Lewis took the reins of the program and continued to develop the curriculum and to recruit new students.

The EST program debuted during Fall Semester 2016. The first two bachelor degree candidates were **Jason Bradley** and **Mary Myer**.

Jesse & Anna Besser Awards — The Besser Awards are the highest recognition of academic achievement given at Alpena Community College, and this is the 46th year they have been presented. The Besser Awards are awarded to two students, usually one male and one female, who have made outstanding contributions to the life of the College through scholarship, leadership, and expression of responsibility in solving social problems. The Besser Company includes a \$500 stipend along with a

framed certificate. These students also have their names engraved on the Besser Award plaque. This year's Besser Award winners were Courtney Krentz and Kolin Ghidoni.

Fellow of the College — Each year the College recognizes someone who, through a sense of purpose, community concern and leadership, has enriched the educational, cultural and/or economic lives of the citizens of Northeast Michigan. This year's recipient is Northeast Michigan businessman and ACC graduate Ronald Winter.

Distinguished Alumni — Another yearly Commencement activity is the presentation of the Distinguished Alumni Award, which is bestowed upon an ACC alumnus/ae who has impacted the world in their realm of expertise. This year's recipient is Dr. James E. Stoddard.

Dr. Stoddard was born and raised in Alpena and graduated from Catholic Central High School in 1958. He enrolled in ACC and earned an Associate in Science degree in 1960, and transferred to the University of Michigan where he received a Bachelor in Science degree in 1962. Dr. Stoddard continued at U of M, receiving a Doctor of Medicine degree in 1966. After completing an internship at Wayne County General Hospital he spent a year training in general surgery at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore. In 1968 Dr. Stoddard was drafted into the United States Navy and served until 1970.

Upon his discharge he spent three years specializing in medical and surgical diseases of the ears, nose and throat. In 1973 he returned to Michigan and opened his ENT practice in Bay City, where he practiced for 32-years until his retirement in 2005.

Overflow Room — ACC again provided an overflow room for viewing Commencement via streaming video. This was introduced to provide late arrivers a comfortable place to sit and experience the event. ACC also provided a link from its home page to a live stream of the event for those who were not in attendance but wished to watch the ceremony.

— END —