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EDUCATOR

Winter 2025



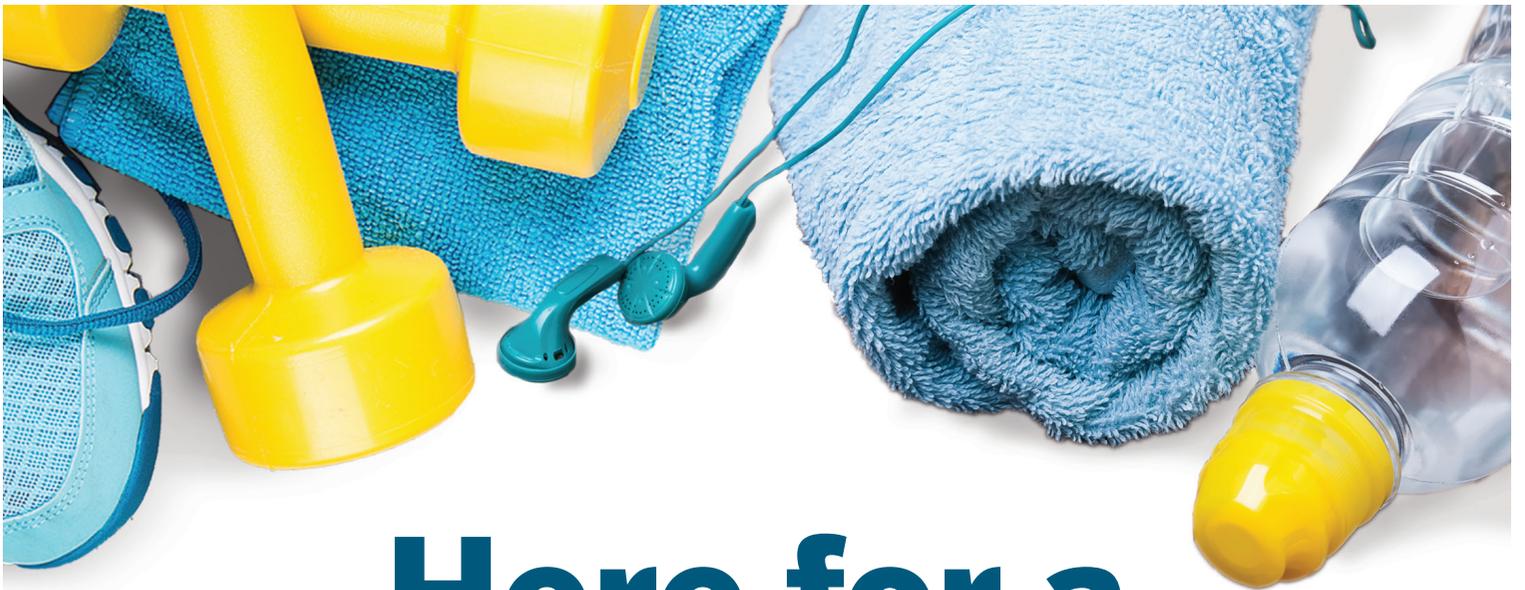
GRIDIRON GREAT

Jaxon Hicks Wins Simone Award



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SCHOOL DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Early Childhood/Elementary Schools

Early Childhood Center	9600 NE 79th St. KCMO 64158	736-5324	Bart Tittle, Principal Sabrina Dotson, Asst. Principal
Alexander Doniphan	1900 Clay Dr. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5400	Beth Cunningham, Principal Chavis Clawson, Asst. Principal
EPiC Elementary	650 Conistor Liberty, MO 64068	736-5730	Jamie Ackart, Principal
Franklin	201 W. Mill Street Liberty, MO 64068	736-5440	Amy Toebben, Principal Jaysa Hartman, Asst. Principal
Kellybrook	10701 N. Eastern Ave. KCMO 64157	736-5700	Kayli Burrell, Principal Megan Thompson, Asst. Principal
Lewis and Clark	1407 Nashua Liberty, MO 64068	736-5430	Mitch Hiser, Principal Dawn Shannon, Asst. Principal
Liberty Oaks	8150 N. Farley KCMO 64158	736-5600	Jeanne Hinnenkamp, Principal Ashlyn Garton, Asst. Principal
Lillian Schumacher	425 Claywoods Pkwy. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5490	Matthew Krohne, Principal Jaysa Hartman, Asst. Principal Emily Griffin, Asst. Principal
Manor Hill	1400 Skyline Dr. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5460	Jordan Williamson, Principal Julie Gosnell, Asst. Principal
Ridgeview	701 Thornton Liberty, MO 64068	736-5450	Tyler Shannon, Principal Heather Buckman, Asst. Principal
Shoal Creek	9000 N Flintlock Rd. KCMO 64157	736-7150	Christy Boman, Principal Ashley Assman, Asst. Principal Danielle Compton, Asst. Principal
Warren Hills	1251 Camille St. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5630	Michelle Swierski, Principal Heather Lee, Asst. Principal

Secondary Schools

Discovery Middle School	800 Midjay Dr. Liberty, MO 64068	736-7300	Greg Mees, Principal Courtney Dickerson, Asst. Principal
Heritage Middle School	600 W. Kansas Liberty, MO 64068	736-5380	Reagan Allegri, Principal Ryan Dahm, Asst. Principal Jennifer Selock, Asst. Principal
Liberty Middle School	1500 S. Withers Rd. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5410	Jeremy Bradham, Principal Shirley Kantola, Asst. Principal
South Valley Middle School	1000 Midjay Dr. Liberty, MO 64068	736-7180	Jill Mullen, Principal Joe Lutes, Asst. Principal Whitney Weakley, Asst. Principal
Liberty High School	200 Blue Jay Dr. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5340	Mike Sharp, Principal Tara Bell, Asst. Principal Caleb Champ, Asst. Principal Bridget Herrman, Asst. Principal Ryan Nichols, Asst. Principal Jason Cahill, Activities Director
Liberty North High School	1000 NE104th St. Liberty, MO 64608	736-5500	Rosemary Camp, Principal Lee Allen, Asst. Principal Josh Baldwin, Asst. Principal Tammy Jackson, Asst. Principal RoseAngela Taney, Asst. Principal Stacy Syler, Asst. Principal David McDorman, Activities Director
Liberty Academy	1115 Blackberry Dr. Liberty, MO 64068	736-5470	Melissa Norris, Director of Alternative Education



2024-2025 Liberty Public Schools Board of Education -
Pictured (Front Row L-R): Karen Rogers, Jenn Bauer, and
Angie Reed; (Back Row L-R) Dan Currence, AJ Byrd, Nick Bartlow,
and Drew Marriott

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Drew Marriott
drew.marriott@lps53.org

Liberty Public Schools

District Offices
8 Victory Lane
Liberty, MO 64068
(816) 736-5300

Superintendent

Dr. M. Jeremy Tucker

Website

www.lps53.org

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ON THE COVER

Liberty High School Senior Jaxon Hicks poses with his classmates after being named the 2024 Simone Award winner on Tuesday, December 10, 2025. You can read more about this exciting news on page 6 of this edition.



LPS Community,

As we now move into the second half of our school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what we've accomplished so far and share some important updates about our continued efforts to ensure the success and well-being of our students.

Celebrating Our Successes

The first half of the school year was a time of tremendous growth and achievement. I am proud to share some of the highlights:

- **Academic Excellence:** Our students in LPS continue to demonstrate resilience and hard work. Whether it be in the classroom or through extracurricular activities, we continue to see strong academic performance and increased engagement across grade levels. Our teachers and staff have been instrumental in creating engaging and rigorous learning environments, and I thank them for their continued dedication. You will see firsthand in this publication many of the accomplishments achieved by our students and staff through the first half of this school year.

- **Community Engagement:** Through efforts from our strategic plan and District Leadership Team, partnerships between our schools and the community continue to grow. Parent involvement exists at high levels, and local businesses and organizations have stepped up to support our schools in meaningful ways. We appreciate the continued collaboration and support from our families and community members.

- **Facilities and Infrastructure:** If you follow us on some of our social media platforms, you have likely seen construction progress that has been taking place all across Liberty Public Schools. We were excited to introduce upgraded learning spaces at both Heritage Middle School and Liberty High School when students returned from winter break in January 2025. The new gymnasium/learning spaces at EPiC Elementary were set for completion in February, with several other additions expected to be completed later this spring, including activity spaces at Discovery Middle School and South Valley Middle School, and the new Distribution Center. I would encourage you to visit our LPS website (www.lps53.org) for all of the

details regarding our construction upgrades. None of this work would be possible without the support from our community, who approved our No-Tax-Increase Bond Issue in April 2023.

Looking Ahead to the Second Half of the Year

As I draft this update, approximately four months remain in this 2024-2025 school year. There is so much left to accomplish prior to turning the page on another school year. The positive relationships that have been formed between our teachers and students are now well-established, and will be invaluable as the teaching and learning provides tremendous learning experiences at all levels.

Closing Thoughts

As we move forward, I am confident that together, as a school community, we can continue to build on our successes and address the challenges that come our way. I encourage all of you to stay engaged, to continue communicating openly, and to remain committed to the shared goal of providing a high-quality education for every student in our district so that they can THRIVE. Please know that we are always here to assist with your individual needs and we have in place various communication platforms to not only keep you updated on LPS happenings, but always opportunities to engage directly with us. I would encourage you to visit our district website at www.lps53.org to view the many engagement platforms that we utilize.

Thank you once again for your hard work, dedication, and support. I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the second half of the year.

Wishing you all continued success and an enjoyable remainder of the school year!

Be Well!

*Dr. M. Jeremy Tucker,
Superintendent - Liberty Public Schools*

If you would like more information about Liberty School District, please contact the Communications Office at 736-5300, or visit our website at www.lps53.org.





Telling the LPS Story

In Liberty Public Schools, several social media platforms that we have in place provide us with the opportunity to tell our story. One of these platforms is X (formerly Twitter), where we share updates daily. Provided are some posts that were shared this semester to help tell the LPS story. In addition, you will find all of our school X handles and hashtags below, and we encourage you to give them a follow!

Name	Account	Hashtag
Elementary Schools		
Alexander Doniphan	@ADdolphins	#lpsad
EPiC	@EpicElementary	#lpsepic
Franklin	@LPSFranklinElem	#lpsfranklin
Kellybrook	@KBElementary	#kbcougars
Lewis and Clark	@lcbazers	#lcbazers
Liberty Oaks	@libertyoaks	#libertyoaks
Lillian Schumacher	@LillianSchuElem	#lssharks
Manor Hill	@MHPatriot	#mhpatriot
Ridgeview	@RVRoadrunner	#rvroadrunner
Shoal Creek	@ShoalCreekStars	#starsc
Warren Hills	@WHWildcats	#whcats
Middle Schools		
Discovery Middle School	@dmsbluejays	#dmsleads
Heritage Middle School	@heritagescoop	#heritagem
Liberty Middle School	@LibertyLMS	#LMSsoars
South Valley Middle School	@svmsEagles	#svmseagles
High Schools		
Liberty Academy	@LibAcademy	#LPSAcademy
Liberty High School	@LHSJAYS	#lhsjays
Liberty North High School	@LNEagleNews	#northnation

Marandi Diehl @MarandiDiehl **Follow**

Franklin Falcons collected 15 boxes of non-perishable items to donate to the Liberty Community Christmas Tree Program! We couldn't have done it without the help of our 5th graders who collected and boxed up items!

@LPSFranklinElem
@LIBERTYSCHOOLS
#sharethegood

LPS53 @LIBERTYSCHOOLS

The @LNEagleNews Ayrie yearbook has been awarded the top possible award in the nation. Only 35 yearbooks are given the award. Congratulations, Ayrie staff!

#LPSLeads Read more: bit.ly/4gCF6BA @lnhs_yearbook

LPS53 @LIBERTYSCHOOLS

All-American Alert
Congratulations to @LHSJAYS senior Abigail Mullen on being named an Under Armour All-American - AKA one of the top 26 high school players in the nation! Read more: bit.ly/3C2urRH #LPSLeads @15AbigailMullen @jaysvb

FOLLOW US ON

LPS53 @LIBERTYSCHOOLS

@LHSJAYS Sophomore Ava Beltran was recognized at tonight's Board meeting for recently winning a Missouri State Championship in girls tennis. Ava had a 31-1 overall record this season. Way to go!

@LHSCoachKoch
#ShareTheGoodLPS
#LPSLeads

LPS Fine Arts @LPSFineArts

Congratulations to Finley Frank @ShoalCreekStars & Cecilia Reames @KBElementary for being selected for the 2025 All State Children's Choir. The choir consists of 4th & 5th grade student representatives of districts across the entire state of MO. #lpsleads @LIBERTYSCHOOLS

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We are so thankful for the many volunteers from our community who support our students and staff. This is a retired teacher of ours, Ms. Grundy, working with students this morning at @LPSFranklinElem. #ShareTheGoodLPS #LPSLeads



Jaxon Hicks Wins Prestigious Simone Award

It was a historic morning inside the Liberty High School Fieldhouse on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, as Blue Jay Senior Jaxon Hicks was announced as the 2024 Thomas A. Simone Award winner at the surprise all-school assembly.

The Simone Award is presented annually to the most outstanding high school football player in the greater Kansas City area, now in its 42nd year since the introduction of the award. Making the morning even more special was the fact that Hicks became the first player in the history of Liberty Public Schools to claim this prestigious award.

“I’m glad to be able to bring this award to Liberty,” said Hicks. “It means the world to receive it and I want to thank my teammates for this.”

It was a history-making season for Hicks, as he broke numerous school records including the single season rushing record of over 2,700 yards, and scoring an unprecedented 31 touchdowns during the 2024 campaign. He helped lead the Blue Jays to the Missouri Class 6 semifinals, which was the deepest run by LHS since 1997.

Players and coaches from across the Kansas City metro were in attendance for the Simone ceremony, as awards were presented to athletes from both Missouri and Kansas. Also on hand were countless Kansas City Chiefs Alumni, including Pro Football Hall of Famer Bobby Bell, who shared remarks with the audience.

We congratulate Liberty High School Senior Jaxon Hicks on this amazing recognition!



Frigon is Kansas City Chiefs/ Eric Driskell Coach of the Year

Also in attendance and surprised with an award at the ceremony was long-time Liberty High School Teacher/Coach Chad Frigon, who was presented with the 2024 Kansas City Chiefs/Eric Driskell Coach of the Year Award.

As shared above, Coach Frigon helped guide the Blue Jays to the Missouri Class 6 state semifinals, the deepest run LHS has had since 1997. Frigon has been a member of the Liberty Public Schools team for 30 years, and has a deep passion for both Liberty High School and the Blue Jays.

“The amazing relationships I have been able to have during my time in Liberty have been special,” said Frigon. “This is a great place to work and live, and I’m just so fortunate to have been a part of it.”

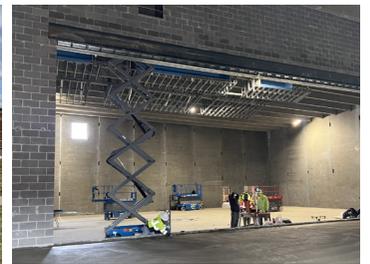
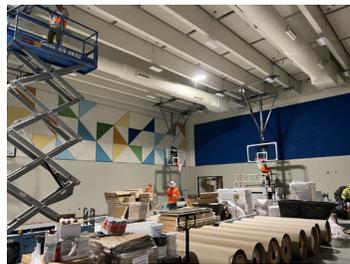
The Kansas City Chiefs/Eric Driskell Coach of the Year award was first presented as part of the Thomas A. Simone Awards in 2018, and is in honor of the late Blue Valley coach who twice won the award and passed away tragically in 2017. Similar to Hicks, Coach Frigon became the first LPS coach to win this award.



Making Room for Opportunities

LPS Unveils Construction Upgrades to Enhance Student Learning

Thanks to the incredible support from our LPS community with the passage of the April 2023 No Tax Increase Bond Issue, construction projects continue to take place all across Liberty Public Schools. Several projects were completed as early as the spring of 2024, with others in the midst of construction and several more to begin over the next several months. We wanted to take a moment and share with you some of the work that is taking place, and the benefits that this will provide the students, staff, families, and community members of Liberty Public Schools.



EPiC Elementary

EPiC is excited to introduce the community to the new 6,000 square feet addition located on the north side of the building, which will provide much-needed space for physical education classes, along with performances and large gatherings. Choir and art classes will also benefit from this addition, as classes will be held in this new space.



Heritage Middle School

One of the more significant building projects that occurred as part of this work involves the renovations made recently to Heritage Middle School. Nearly 21,000 square feet of classroom space located on the south side of the existing building were fully renovated to bring the areas up to a higher design and functionality, and accessibility, standard. This newly renovated space was completed and greeted students upon their return from the winter vacation in January 2025. The next phase of renovations to HMS will begin this summer and involve significant renovations to the original building, including interior upgrades and exterior repairs.

South Valley and Discover Middle Schools

Both of these neighboring middle schools will receive respective 8,000 square feet additions located on the west side of the schools, and will provide space for physical education, performances, and large gatherings. These additions also address space constraints within the existing buildings. Both LPS Fine Arts and Physical Education/Athletics will benefit from these spaces and Liberty Parks and Recreation programming will benefit with after school hour use of these facilities. It is expected that these projects will be completed in late spring 2025.



Liberty High School

Another newly-renovated space that welcomed staff and students when the second semester began in January 2025 was the nearly 11,000 square foot Family and Consumer Sciences and Special Education spaces at Liberty High School. This space is used to support current and future program needs, and includes updated equipment and kitchens for FACS, enhancing the learning opportunities for students. LHS will also be undergoing a second phase of work in the kitchen, cafeteria/scramble area that will begin this summer and result in significant enhancements within this important area of the building.

We encourage our LPS community to remain engaged on our various communication platforms as we continue to share facility/construction updates in the coming weeks. There are several additional projects that we are excited to see get started later this spring and summer. Our LPS website is a great resource to view a timeline of the work, along with regular updates to the projects. Again, thank you for your support of our students and staff as we provide amazing learning experiences for our students.

2025 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Early Childhood Center



**MISTY
STAERKEL**

Preschool Teacher

Alexander Doniphan Elementary



**OLIVIA
SCHUMAN**

Library Media Specialist

EPIC Elementary



**KATIE
ELLIS**

Kindergarten Teacher

Franklin Elementary



**BRANDI
MOORE**

3rd Grade Teacher

Kellybrook Elementary



**WHITNEY
BENSON**

4th Grade Teacher

Lewis and Clark Elementary



**SARAH
HIGHLEY**

5th Grade Teacher

Liberty Oaks Elementary



**CARLY
BOGAARDS**

Library Media Specialist

Lillian Schumacher Elementary



**JUDY
KATZER**

2nd Grade Teacher

Manor Hill Elementary



**CATHY
DOLSKY**

ESL Teacher

Ridgeview Elementary



**TRACI
PIERSON**

Art Teacher

Shoal Creek Elementary



**MELISSA
PATTON**

2nd Grade Teacher

Warren Hills Elementary



**LIZ
YETMAR**

Special Education Teacher

Discovery Middle School



**JAMIE
MILLER**

Gifted Math Teacher

Heritage Middle School



**KELLY
SHOMIN**

Social Studies Teacher

Liberty Middle School



**TYLER
RUSBOLDT**

Math Teacher

South Valley Middle School



**PARKER
STANLEY**

Orchestra Teacher

Liberty High School



**JESSICA
LUMETTA**

French Teacher

Liberty North High School



**KURT
GATES**

Social Studies Teacher

Liberty Academy



**KATIE
GOULDING**

Alternative Education Teacher

2025 SUPPORT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Early Childhood Center



MELODY JOHNSON
Severe Needs Paraprofessional

Alexander Doniphan Elementary



SHAWN PERSELL
Administrative Assistant

EPIC Elementary



EMILY CLEARY
Recovery Room Instructor

Franklin Elementary



KELLY ELMER
Care Room Interventionist

Kellybrook Elementary



VERONICA BRACKMAN
Psychologist

Lewis and Clark Elementary



LORI CAREY
Administrative Assistant

Liberty Oaks Elementary



SIMONE BALDEH
Severe Needs Paraprofessional

Lillian Schumacher Elementary



JIMMY CROCKER
Custodian

Manor Hill Elementary



SOLIMAR RIVERA
Severe Needs Paraprofessional

Ridgeview Elementary



ERIN STEVENS
Nutrition Services Manager

Shoal Creek Elementary



RONA MURPHY
Administrative Assistant

Warren Hills Elementary



CARRIE WHITWORTH
Administrative Assistant

Discovery Middle School



KELLIE JACKSON
Library Paraprofessional

Heritage Middle School



TAYLOR HOUSEWORTH
Building Dispatcher

Liberty Middle School



BECCA QUARLES
Social Worker

South Valley Middle School



AMANDA PRIMM
Innovation and Learning Coach

Liberty High School



JULIE ADAMS
Library Paraprofessional

Liberty North High School



GAIL STARK
Registrar

Liberty Academy



STEPHANIE SPEARMAN
Nutrition Services Associate

Building 53



CURT LAVEN
Database Administrator

District Administration Center



SARAH GUSTAFSON
Human Resources Specialist

Facilities Center



CRAIG STEVENS
Maintenance Supervisor

Support Services Building



VERA HOLIMAN
Nutrition Services Quality Assurance Support Manager



OCTOBER, 2024

- Front row (L-R): Ivy Catherell (Liberty Oaks), Greyson Shanks (Liberty Oaks), Quinn Grayson (Kellybrook), Hannah Stiens (Kellybrook), Juliana Bland (Shoal Creek), Hudson Gardner (Shoal Creek)
- Back row (L-R): Colleen Pelletier (Liberty Chamber), Ed Hugues (Northland Rolladium), Jenn Bauer (LPS Board of Education), Daniel Doering (FastKick Martial Arts)



NOVEMBER, 2024

- Front row (L-R): Paxton Rice (Schumacher), Nima Soleymani-Alizadeh (Schumacher), Beckham Moehlman (Manor Hill), Ellie Kirk (Manor Hill), Jaclyn Sherry (Ridgeview), Nick Tate (Ridgeview)
- Back row (L-R): Colleen Pelletier (Liberty Chamber), Jeff Klein (ServPro), Daniel Doering (FastKick Martial Arts), Reyann Hay (Nothing Bundt Cakes), Ed Hugues (Northland Rolladium), Karen Rogers (LPS Board of Education)



DECEMBER, 2024

- Front row (L-R): Oliver Wiest (EPiC), Aaron Roth (Warren Hills), Yuhao Chen (Warren Hills), Amelia Roberts (Lewis and Clark), Missouri Springer (Lewis and Clark), Ellyanna Doering (EPiC)
- Back row (L-R): Jeff Klein (ServPro), Reyann Hay (Nothing Bundt Cakes), Ed Hughes (Northland Rolladium), Colleen Pelletier (Liberty Chamber), Dan Currence (LPS Board of Education), Daniel Doering (FastKick Martial Arts)



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EVENT WEBSITE

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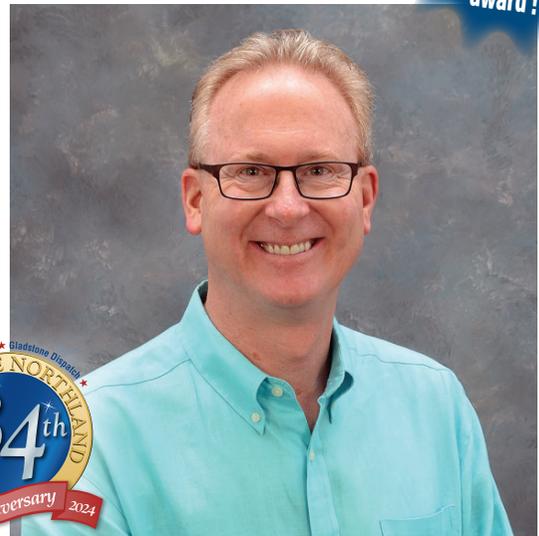
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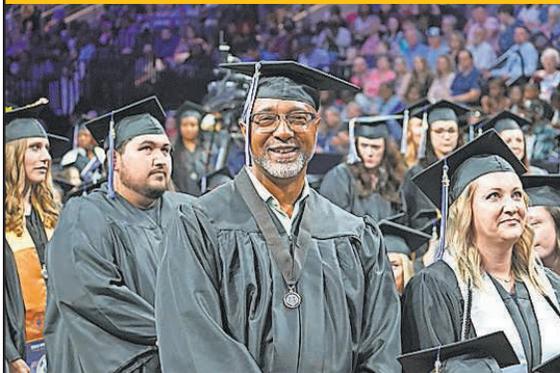
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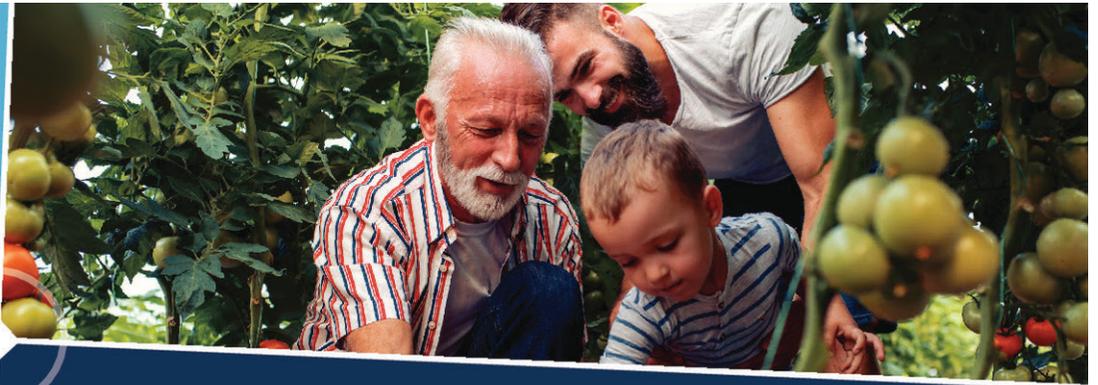
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