



THE PENNINGTON SCHOOL

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PENNINGTON, N.J., May 30, 2026—The Pennington School held its 185th Commencement Exercises on Saturday, May 30. Head of School William S. Hawkey, PhD, conferred diplomas and certificates on the 115 members of the Class of 2026, including students from six states and five countries outside the United States. The Commencement speaker was Dr. Lisa C. Espinoza, MD, a member of Pennington's board of trustees and founder of LaChele Medical Aesthetics. Senior prizes were awarded on May 29. Yanxin Wu and Zara Meehan-Ritter, both of Princeton, NJ, were valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively.

Yanxin Wu won the Dr. E. F. Hann Memorial Award for Excellence in World Languages in Latin and was also a recipient of the Gateway Prize, which is given to the students who best exemplify Pennington's core values of honor, virtue, and humility. Additionally, Wu earned a Global Studies Certificate. Zara Meehan-Ritter was awarded The Dr. Ralph Appleton Memorial Award for Excellence in History and Social Studies, and The Pennington School Award for Distinguished Achievement in Applied Science, as well as a certificate in Pennington's Applied Science program. Both young women were inducted into Pennington's chapter of the Cum Laude Society this past October. In the fall, Wu will attend Princeton University, and Meehan-Ritter will attend the University of Virginia.

On Friday evening, preceding graduation, a separate award ceremony was held for seniors presided over by Head of Upper School Scott Peeler. The following prizes were awarded:

Special Presentation for Appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point to Katherine Dwyer

The Edgar B. Roesch Award for Excellence in English to Kerri Moran

The Terry Burns Award for Citizenship and Commitment to the Pursuit of English to Emily Birkenstock

The Dr. E. F. Hann Memorial Award for Excellence in World Languages to Yanxin Wu (Latin), Henry Armstrong (German), and Ami Ly (Spanish)

The Pennington School Award for Citizenship and Commitment to the Pursuit of World Languages to Brett Sirolly (Spanish) and Kerri Moran (Latin)

The Howard Cressman Memorial Award for Excellence in Mathematics to Samik Mookherjee

The Pennington School Award for Citizenship and Commitment to the Pursuit of Mathematics to Rishabh Ramaswamy

The George Parnos Award for Excellence in Science to Angelyn Li

The Pennington School Award for Citizenship and Commitment to the Pursuit of Science to Caiden O'Connell

The Dr. Ralph Appleton Memorial Award for Excellence in History and Social Studies to Zara Meehan-Ritter

The Pennington School Award for Citizenship and Commitment to the Pursuit of History to Henry Armstrong

The Pennington School Award for Excellence in Computer Science to Alexander Giller

The Pennington School Award for Excellence in Religion to Anna-Kaisa Hokkanen and Kendall Sands

The William Alford Award for Distinctive Service in Music to Zoya Mehra (vocalist) and Rishabh Ramaswamy (instrumentalist)

The Kersey Award for the Student Showing Most Promise in Art to Yitong Zhang (visual artist) and Sean Chandrasaputra (lens-based artist)

The G. Arthur Campbell Award for Distinctive Service in Drama to Catherine Vincent

The Pennington School Award for Excellence in Performance to Leonardo Momo

The Pennington School Award for Excellence in Technical Theatre to Brett Sirolly

The William Mastrosimone '66 Award for Excellence in Writing and Directing an Original Play to Saskia Cooper, Kerri Moran, and Ciaran Walsh

The Pennington School Award for Distinguished Achievement in Applied Science to Shubh Gangrade and Zara Meehan-Ritter

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The Pennington School Award for Distinguished Achievement in Global Studies to Emily Birkenstock

The Charles G. Bennett '59 Memorial Award for School Spirit to Katherine Dwyer

The Pennington School Award for International Citizenship to Chenyu Chou

The Pennington School Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service to Amelia Buck

The Pennington School Award to the Senior who best exemplifies the Development of Individual Excellence to Alexander Loh and Arthur Gray

The Pennington School Award for Outstanding Citizenship to Sofia Kulp

The Brigid Kilfoyle '91 Memorial Award to the Senior Female Making the Greatest Contribution to Pennington School Athletics to Sara Chnelich and Geneviève Vallières

The William E. Long Award to the Senior Male Making the Greatest Contribution to Pennington School Athletics to Finn Garner and Dylan Napoleon

The Monique Visser '88 Memorial Award to Esther Aboagye

The Community Life Award to Ishaan Khetarpal, James Lay, and Norah Youngblood

Gateway Prizes, which are given to the students who best exemplify Pennington's core values of honor, virtue, and humility, were awarded to six seniors: Anthony Cartusciello, Lina Cortés, Karys Elmore, Caiden O'Connell, George Ward Jr., and Yanxin Wu

The Head of School Prize for the Best All-Around Student to Brett Sirolly

Cum Laude Society students were acknowledged in two groups: Fall 2025 inductees: Katherine Dwyer, Ishaan Khetarpal, Sofia Kulp, Angelyn Li, Ami Ly, Kerri Moran, Kian Phillips, Sanjana Ramalingam, Zara Meehan-Ritter, Brett Sirolly, Nishka Vyas, and Yanxin Wu; and Spring 2026 inductees: Emily Birkenstock, Cecelia Embleton, Allison Howe, Leonardo Momo, Samik Mookherjee, Lolita Nechay, Rishabh Ramaswamy, Julia Sperry-Fernandez, Connor Tirendi, Catherine Vincent, and Ciaran Walsh.

Applied Science Certificate Students were recognized at the award ceremony: Esther Aboagye, James Bradley, Ava Brochon, Tait Brown, Sebastian Calderon Chubb, Sara Chnelich, Grace Craig, Olivia Craig, Aiyan Doshi, Cecelia Embleton, Dimitri Espinoza, Shubh Gangrade, Alexander Giller, Monte Huffman, Ishaan Khetarpal, Olivia Lee, Braeden Leeds, Angelyn Li, Alexander Loh, Natalie Maschler, Zara Meehan-Ritter, Zoya Mehra, Samik Mookherjee, Lolita Nechay, Caiden O'Connell, Logan Oster, Kian Phillips, Sanjana Ramalingam, Rishabh Ramaswamy, Malea Reilly, Connor Tirendi, Alexandra Van Arsdale, George Ward Jr., Xinglin Yi, and Yitong Zhang.

Global Studies Certificate Students were also acknowledged: Esther Aboagye, Henry Armstrong, Emily Birkenstock, James Bradley, Amanda Cordone, Aiyan Doshi, Karys Elmore, Raquel Frankel, Finn Garner, Emma Goodrich, Cynthia Graham, Kyle Harvey, Andrew Hofacker, Allison Howe, Sofia Kulp, Eliana Lewis, Ami Ly, Madeline Mandzij, Seamus Manning, Leonardo Momo, Kerri Moran, Jordan Murray, Emma Normand, Logan Oster, Janelle Owusu, Jonathan Partridge, Beyla Shah, Ella Sichel, Brett Sirolly, Julia Sperry-Fernandez, Thomas Surtz, Nicholas Tuzza, Geneviève Vallières, Nishka Vyas, Ciaran Walsh, Yanxin Wu, and Norah Youngblood.

Several teaching prizes were presented to faculty members. *The Henry and Selma Otte Distinguished Teacher Award*, presented annually to a full-time teacher with at least five years of teaching experience at The Pennington School, was presented to Karen Balerna. Shawn Nicosia won the *Robert E. Martini Award for Distinguished Teaching*, given to one whose teaching takes students' individuality into account and who makes a significant impact on students' lives. In addition, Suzanne Houston was given the *Kie and Hija Ahn Award for Peace and Global Understanding* for exemplifying excellence in teaching, civility, and concern for students and colleagues, and for demonstrating commitment to value-centered education and service to students, to Pennington, and to the community. Lastly, David Hallgren was awarded the *United Methodist Church Exemplary Teacher Award* for a demonstrated commitment to value-centered education and service to students, the institution, and the community.

The members of the Pennington School Class of 2026 (alphabetical order):

Esther Gyamah Aboagye, Evangelina Anna Argiropoulos, Henry Francis Mitchell Armstrong, Saniya Bhanote, Emily Jane Birkenstock, Louise Eva Bourgoin, James Carlos Bradley, Ava Marie Brochon, Tait Shanti Brown, Amelia Jane Buck, Lola Rey Burd, Sebastian James Calderon Chubb, Anthony Joseph Cartusciello, Sean Pierre Chandrasaputra,

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Chenyu Chou, Sara Ann Chernelich, Eleanora Tiernan Close, Robert Lekh Austin Connor, Saskia Cooper, Amanda Jennifer Cordone, Lina Carys Cortés, Grace Lola Craig, Olivia Gabriella Craig, Aiyan Dipal Doshi, Katherine Elizabeth Dwyer, Sarah Meier Dzwonkowski, Karys Elizabeth Elmore, Cecelia Jane Embleton, Sydney Rion Epstein, Dimitri Andrey Espinoza, Raquel Bejosa Lee Frankel, Shubh Gangrade, Finn Andrew Thomas Garner, Elle Gerstman, Alexander Giller, Emma Grace Goodrich, Cynthia J. Graham, Arthur Jordan Gray, Colin Harkleroad, Kyle James Harvey, Samuel Michael Heaton, Caroline Joyce Hendrickson, Logan Henry, Andrew Patrick Hofacker, Anna-Kaisa Maria Hokkanen, Elizabeth A. Holstein, Allison Marie Howe, Seth Vincent Hoyer, Monte Lewis Huffman, Kai Itakura-Prepscius, Ishaan Sameer Khetarpal, Jiwoo Kim, Sofia G. Kulp, James M. Lay II, Olivia Seoyun Lee, Braeden Elliott Leeds, Eliana Michele Lewis, Angelyn Li, Qiyuan Li, Alexander Wilson Loh, Ami Ly, Mariah Antoinette Lynch, Nisaiah Manuel Maldonado, Hayden J. Malmros, Madeline Stafford Mandzij, Gianni M. Manning, Seamus Peters Manning, Natalie Grace Maschler, Logan Matthews, Zara Meehan-Ritter, Zoya Chatha Mehra, Norah Rose Mehta, Brooke Avery Miller, Emery Jade Miller, Michael J. Miller, Leonardo R. Momo, Samik Mookherjee, Kerri Michelina Moran, Jordan Anthony Murray, Dylan Ronald Napoleon, Lolita Tatiana Nechay, Emma Renée Normand, Caiden James O'Connell, Logan Caleb Oster, Janelle M. Owusu, Jonathan Partridge, Kian Phillips, Sanjana Ramalingam, Rishabh K. Ramaswamy, Malea Reilly, Kendall Aisha Sands, Beyla Shah, Ella Joyce Sichel, Brett William Sirolly, Julia Sperry-Fernandez, Thomas James Surtz, Shuhe Tie, Connor Bryce Tirendi, Brianna Turner, Nicholas Daniel Tuzza, Geneviève Solange Vallières, Alexandra Lauren Van Arsdale, Catherine Nora Roy Vincent, Nishka Nehal Vyas, Ciaran Andrew Walsh, George Frederick Hackl Ward Jr., Becket Mount Washburn, Zoey Evelyn Webster, Bryce T. Werner, Bryce D. Williams, Yanxin Wu, Cheng Xu, Xinglin Yi, Norah Celeste Youngblood, and Yitong Zhang.

The members of the Class of 2025 (by state or country of residence and hometown):

(*indicates an additional award or honor conferred upon the graduate; awards are listed above)

FLORIDA

Golden Beach: Elle Gerstman

Venice: Bryce D. Williams

MASSACHUSETTS

Southborough: Cheng Xu

NEW JERSEY

Belle Mead: Jordan Anthony Murray*

Bordentown: Emma Grace Goodrich

Burlington: Janelle M. Owusu*

Columbus: Colin Harkleroad, Ami Ly*, Kerri Michelina Moran*

Cranbury: Cynthia J. Graham*, Beyla Shah*

Crosswicks: Mariah Antoinette Lynch

East Brunswick: Ishaan Sameer Khetarpal*

Ewing: Robert Lekh Austin Connor

Flemington: Caiden James O'Connell*

Haddonfield: Norah Rose Mehta

Hillsborough: Louise Eva Bourgoin

Hopewell: Lola Rey Burd

Jersey City: Lina Carys Cortés*

Lambertville: Seth Vincent Hoyer

Lawrenceville: Emily Jane Birkenstock*, Kyle James Harvey*

Maplewood: Sebastian James Calderon Chubb*

North Brunswick: Esther Gyamah Aboagye*

Pennington: Evangelina Anna Argiropoulos, Sara Ann Chernelich*, Eleanora Tiernan Close, Katherine Elizabeth Dwyer*, Shubh Gangrade*, Finn Andrew Thomas Garner*, Alexander Giller*, Arthur Jordan Gray*, Andrew Patrick Hofacker*, Allison Marie Howe*, Seamus Peters Manning*, Logan Matthews, Leonardo R. Momo*, Samik Mookherjee*, Rishabh K. Ramaswamy*, Brett William Sirolly*, Julia Sperry-Fernandez*, Ciaran Andrew Walsh*, George Frederick Hackl Ward Jr.*

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Princeton: Henry Francis Mitchell Armstrong*, Saniya Bhanote, Saskia Cooper*, Grace Lola Craig*, Olivia Gabriella Craig*, Aiyana Dipal Doshi*, Raquel Bejosa Lee Frankel*, Natalie Grace Maschler*, Zara Meehan-Ritter*, Sanjana Ramalingam*, Kendall Aisha Sands*, Geneviève Solange Vallières*, Becket Mount Washburn, Yanxin Wu*

Princeton Junction: Jonathan Partridge*

Red Bank: Sarah Meier Dzwonkowski

Ringoes: Angelyn Li*

Robbinsville: Amanda Jennifer Cordone*, Thomas James Surtz*

Skillman: Cecelia Jane Embleton*, Eliana Michele Lewis*, Madeline Stafford Mandzlj*

South Orange: Caroline Joyce Hendrickson

Stockton: Connor Bryce Tirendi*

Titusville: Lolita Tatiana Nechay*, Norah Celeste Youngblood*

Trenton: Gianni M. Manning, Dylan Ronald Napoleon*

West Windsor: Emma Renée Normand*

NEW YORK

New Paltz: Monte Lewis Huffman*

New York City: Alexander Wilson Loh*

Queensbury: Nisaiah Manuel Maldonado

PENNSYLVANIA

Bensalem: Ava Marie Brochon*

Doylestown: Amelia Jane Buck*

Huntingdon Valley: Sofia G. Kulp*

Langhorne: Samuel Michael Heaton, Logan Henry, Brianna Turner

Long Pond: Michael J. Miller

Morrisville: Anthony Joseph Cartusciello*

New Hope: Tait Shanti Brown*, Dimitri Andrey Espinoza*, Hayden J. Malmros, Emery Jade Miller, Kian Phillips*, Malea Reilly*, Ella Joyce Sichel*, Zoey Evelyn Webster

Newtown: James Carlos Bradley*, Sydney Rion Epstein, Elizabeth A. Holstein, Braeden Elliott Leeds*, Zoya Chatha Mehra*, Brooke Avery Miller, Nicholas Daniel Tuzza*

Philadelphia: Bryce T. Werner

Washington Crossing: Alexandra Lauren Van Arsdale*

Yardley: Karys Elizabeth Elmore*, Olivia Seoyun Lee*, Logan Caleb Oster*, Catherine Nora Roy Vincent*, Nishka Nehal Vyas*

TEXAS

West Lake Hills: James M. Lay II*

CHINA

Beijing: Qiyuan Li, Shuhe Tie

Chengdu Sichuan: Chenyu Chou*

Shanghai: Xinglin Yi*, Yitong Zhang*

FINLAND

Espoo: Anna-Kaisa Hokkanen*

HONG KONG

Hong Kong: Kai Itakura-Prepscius

INDONESIA

Jakarta Selatan: Sean Chandrasaputra*

SOUTH KOREA

Busan: Jiwoo Kim

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The members of Pennington's Class of 2026 will be attending the following colleges and universities:

Auburn University, Babson College, Bentley University, Binghamton University, Bocconi University, Boston College, Boston University (4), Bryant University, Bryn Mawr College, Carnegie Mellon University, Case Western Reserve University, Clemson University, Dickinson College, Drew University (2), Durham University, Elon University, Fairfield University (3), Flagler College, George Washington University (2), Georgetown University, Hampton University, Hungarian University of Sports Science (Magyar Testnevelési és Sporttudományi Egyetem), Indiana University (Bloomington) (3), Lafayette College, Lehigh University (2), Lincoln University (Pennsylvania), Louisiana State University, Loyola Marymount University (2), Loyola University Maryland, Miami University, Middlebury College, Morehouse College, New York University (5), Northeastern University (3), Oberlin College, Pace University (NYC) (2) • Penn State University (University Park) (6) • Princeton University (2) • Providence College • Purdue University (Main Campus) (3), Raritan Valley Community College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, SUNY Buffalo, Saint Joseph's University, Saint Mary's College of California, Skidmore College, Spelman College, Stevens Institute of Technology (2), Stony Brook University, Syracuse University (3), Thomas Jefferson University, Tulane University, Union College, United States Military Academy, University of California (Los Angeles), University of California (San Diego), University of California (Santa Barbara), University of Denver, University of Florida, University of Louisville, University of Maryland, University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), University of Pittsburgh, University of South Carolina, University of Southern California (2), University of Tampa (4), University of Texas (Dallas), University of Virginia, Villanova University, Virginia Tech (3), Wagner College, Wake Forest University (3), Washington and Lee University, Wellesley College, and William & Mary.

The Pennington School is an independent coeducational school for students in grades 6 through 12, in both day and boarding programs. The curriculum is college preparatory, with an emphasis on individual excellence, fostering the development of the whole student through academics, athletics, community service, and the creative and performing arts.