



News release

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**Commencement should be viewed as a beginning,
not an end, speakers say**

Tuesday's commencement keynote speaker Michael Schoenbeck told Gateway Technical College graduates their learning shouldn't end with the degree they've just earned.

Schoenbeck, a 1992 Gateway Automotive Technology program graduate, said changing technology and different positions in his career have meant he's had to continue to learn to remain in his chosen industry. Time and time again, he's had to advance his technical learning and encouraged students to prepare to do the same.

"As you enter the workforce within your chosen profession, opportunities and challenges will come your way," Schoenbeck said. "Work through the challenges, seek out advice, build your professional network.

"Be mindful of ever-changing technologies – and never stop learning."

Schoenbeck serves as a national sales account manager with Associated Equipment. He previously served as a professional tool and diagnostic equipment manager, and he serves on Gateway's Automotive Technology advisory board too.

Tuesday's ceremony was one of two held by the college this week to recognize an estimated 1,382 graduates from the Summer 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024 and Summer 2024 semesters who will complete their program. About 550 graduates will participate in the two ceremonies.

The college will follow up with a second ceremony on Wednesday, May 15, for the School of Health, School of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the School of Protective and Human Services.

Student Responder and Racine Campus Ambassador Angela Pocklington told the audience that while the past few years have been chaotic, there were also some memorable moments students will cherish for the rest of their lives. She encouraged graduates to pay it forward by encouraging and tutoring others as they were helped by Gateway staff, friends and family.

"For many of us, Gateway Technical College has been the best educational experience to date," said Pocklington. "I know this because I heard those very words spoken by many fellow students this last semester."

Pocklington earned a Gateway Associate of Applied Science IT-Software Developer associate degree. She also said Tuesday marks the first time – and not the last – of a lifetime of learning.

"Today is only the beginning of a lifelong journey where learning something new will guide us in future employment and personal experiences," she said.

The college honored 2024 Gateway Technical College Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Tony Gonzalez at the ceremony. Gonzalez graduated from

Gateway's Law Enforcement Academy in 2008. He currently is a captain with the Kenosha County Police Department. He earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, as well as a master's degree in organizational leadership and administration from Concordia University-Wisconsin.

Archived videos of the ceremonies will be available in the next few days on Gateway's website at www.gtc.edu/commencement-ceremonies.

Gateway Technical College's mission is to deliver industry-focused education that is flexible, accessible and affordable for our diverse community. The college collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

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