



LAKE AREA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

It's your world.

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Alumni AND Friends

SUMMER 2015
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PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA Delivers 2015 Commencement Address at Lake Area Tech

"To the Class of 2015, you have earned the chance to walk the road to freedom and to make of your lives what you will; to write that next great chapter in our American story." – PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

It will be a day no one at Lake Area Tech will ever forget. May 8, 2015 – the day the President of the United States, Barack Obama, delivered the 2015 commencement address.

It was only 25 days before when LATI President Mike Cartney called a mandatory staff meeting in the Campus Event Center for an important announcement. Among an assembly of local and regional media, President Cartney calmly told the staff about a phone call he received just a few days prior that left him "speechless and full of pride." The crowd was quiet as they intently listened in disbelief as Cartney concluded his story with these words, "...on behalf of the Watertown School Board, Dr. Jutting, and myself, we are truly humbled and honored to join the White House in informing Lake

Area Tech staff and students that your 2015 graduation commencement speaker will be President Barack Obama."

Those 25 days leading up to graduation day were unlike any other time in the history of Lake Area Tech. The reality of a sitting President delivering the commencement address was surreal – a word heard often in the hallways and classrooms. Under the guidance of the White House Advance Planners and Secret Service, May 8, 2015, arrived and the much-anticipated day went down in history as one of the greatest and memorable days for Lake Area Tech, Watertown, and South Dakota.

By 2:00 p.m. that afternoon, empty seats in the Watertown Civic Arena were quickly

Inaugural TEDxLATI Event Sets the Bar High!

Our first-ever TEDxLATI "It's Your World" was a huge success in April! The event featured nine dynamic speakers who inspired everyone in attendance with their personal and professional presentations.



Our hard-working TEDxLATI coordinators, Melissa Meidinger and Samantha Walder welcomed the staff, students, and the public.



Left: Shawna Conrad, an LATI Cosmetology student, was first up on the schedule with her upbeat presentation, "Thank God It's Monday." See Shawna's and the other TEDxLATI videos at www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2M8SwmSINU&list=TLboigkmGtLPo. Right: LATI instructor Jack Holmquest provided an inspirational presentation on "The Power of Positive."



LATI Aviation instructor Greg Klein (with some help with his students) wowed the crowd with his passionate presentation on "The Miracle of Flight."



LATI instructor Karen Amundson presented a thoughtful talk on "The Other Half of the Glass." We extend a heartfelt thank you to our other speakers Jennifer Thomas, Stephanie Spaan, Melissa Goodwin, Lawrence Diggs, and Dr. Jill Weimer. Your time and talent was very much appreciated!

President Obama

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filling. Graduation guests couldn't help but marvel at the transformed space. Adorned with red and white floral arrangements, the beautiful stage showcased three American flags, three South Dakota flags, and Lake Area Tech banners. Opposite the stage, local, state, and national media members took their places.

As the minutes ticked closer to 4:00, word was out that the President was delayed, but even that didn't suppress the energy in the Civic Arena. The crowd continued visiting and watching while the anticipation continued to build. Close to 4:30, the buzzing in the arena suddenly quieted down as a line of media members (who travel with the President) walked in single-file and took their places in front of the stage, a clue that the ceremony was about to begin!

And so it did. Pomp and Circumstance played as faculty members entered the arena, stood by their chairs, and turned away from the stage to watch the procession. As the graduates entered the arena, the crowd cheered. It was happening!

After the last row of graduates was seated, the crowd of 4200 turned its attention to the stage and witnessed President Obama walk onto the stage and take his seat along with Superintendent Dr. Lesli Jutting, LATI Vice President Diane Stiles, Governor Dennis Daugaard, LATI President Mike Cartney, and Master of Ceremonies Jack Holmquest. LATI President Cartney had the honor of introducing the President, who began his address with a hearty, "Well, hello, Watertown! It's good to be in South Dakota... I am thrilled to be here. I have now been to all 50 states as President – and I was saving the best for last!"

In addition to recognizing Lake Area Tech as one of the nation's top two-year colleges, the President personally recognized several staff, faculty, and students. He began by thanking Dolores Stemwedel for allowing him to "cut in" to deliver the commencement address. "She graciously agreed to wait until next year so that I could cut in," President Obama said. "And I had a chance to meet her.

She was completely charming. And I have to say, you guys missed out. She's really good."

We'll all look forward to hearing Dolores' commencement address at the 2016 ceremony!

It was a tremendous honor to have the President deliver the commencement address, but a handful of students will never forget the feeling of listening to the President of the United States personally call out their names. He recognized Ag graduate Colin Blume for his innovative and entrepreneurial skills in the agriculture and welding industries; Business Associate graduate Maysa Hackens for pursuing her passion for photography despite vision issues (he even mentioned her business, "How Eye See It Photography"); Financial Services graduate Leanna Waldner, a single mom, for enrolling at LATI after several years of working in low-paying jobs; and Sergeant Joe Wiskurs, a member of the SD Air National Guard, for enrolling in LATI's Aviation Maintenance program to ensure his chances of moving up the chain of command in the service. After relating their stories, he told the class of 2015: "I didn't come here to inspire you. I came here because you, the graduates, inspire me." To that he received an enthusiast round of applause!

The President ended his speech with this piece of advice for the graduates:

"To the Class of 2015, you have earned the chance to walk the road to freedom and to make of your lives what you will; to write that next great chapter in our American story. And your path will not always be easy, and your way forward will not always be clear. But you have worked hard for this moment. And if you hold fast to that faith in yourself and in your country and in our God, then the greatest moments of your journey are the ones that still lie ahead. It's your world. Thank you, graduates. God bless you. Congratulations to the Class of 2015. And good job, Lake Area Tech! We're proud of you."

We wholeheartedly thank President Obama for speaking at this once-in-a-lifetime event at Lake Area Tech!

President Obama Recognizes LATI President Cartney's Military Service with a Challenge Coin

While 720 graduates received diplomas in May, Lake Area Tech President Mike Cartney also received recognition on graduation day. During a pre-event gathering, President Barack Obama passed a coin to Cartney during a handshake, saying it was acknowledgement for his long and outstanding service to our Nation. A highly decorated retired Air Force Colonel, Cartney did not know he was receiving a challenge coin, a significant gesture of recognition from the United States Commander in Chief.

During his nearly 30-year military career, Mike Cartney received many challenge coins, but none that topped this one. Prior to graduation day, Mike's trophy challenge coin was given to him by General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Supreme Allied Commander from 1993 to 1997.

Challenge coins are a long-standing military tradition that began as a symbol of a military member's unit identity. Early on, their significance helped save the lives of military members whose only identification was the coin. As they have evolved, challenge coins are now presented to military personnel as an award for a worthy event. Military leaders also present coins to foreign dignitaries or civilian VIPs.

Mike related that the tradition of the challenge coin stems from World War II when American soldiers in Germany were challenged at a bar with a 'pfenning check' (a pfenning was the smallest unit of German currency). A soldier who wasn't in possession of a pfenning bought drinks for his fellow unit members.

Unlike challenge coins, presidential challenge coins are a relatively new tradition, Cartney said. President Bill Clinton was the first to mint a presidential challenge coin followed by President George W. Bush and President Obama. Cartney's understanding is that President Obama has presented only 250 challenge coins during his presidency.

Coincidentally, Cartney is a coin collector. "Over the years I've collected coins and have given each grandchild coins when they were born," he said. The presidential challenge coin President Obama presented Cartney on graduation day is his entire collection's crown jewel. He said he'll showcase it in a special display frame along with a photo commemorating the day.

We congratulate President Cartney on his distinguished gift and thank him for his many years of military service!



Presidential Visit Will Be Remembered



John & Avis DeBerg of Watertown, SD wanted to do something special to commemorate the time the President of the United States of America gave the commencement address for Lake Area Technical Institute graduates.

So they established an endowed scholarship account with a gift of \$10,000 to do just that. John said, "We just want to have everyone remember the day...but, we don't want to take any of the attention away from the students".

The DeBergs are no strangers to endowing scholarship accounts. This is the third one they have created at Lake Area Tech. This one will be called the Scholarship of Excellence and the graduating class of 2015 liked the idea so much, they decided to match the DeBerg's gift with their "Class Gift". The account will produce a \$1,000 scholarship in perpetuity from the annual interest earned on the fund for talented and deserving students.

Four years ago John and Avis created the John and Avis Schaeffer DeBerg Scholarship. Two years later John's son, Gary, passed away. Gary was a graduate of the first graduating class of Electronics at Lake Area Tech. (1969). John created another endowed scholarship in memory of Gary.

John was impactful in helping get Lake Area Tech started. After visiting relatives in Iowa and learning about technical institutes there, John had many conversations with Dr. Robert Bartron, SD Senate Majority Leader, about the concept and encouraged Bartron to look in to the idea for Watertown, SD.

The commencement address was delivered by President Barack Obama and John was sitting in the front row when he did. A day he will never forget. John will celebrate his 96th birthday in July!

LAKE AREA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE REVISED MISSION STATEMENT

Lake Area Technical Institute: superior, comprehensive technical education that changes lives and launches careers.

Did you miss the President's Commencement Speech?

Buy it on DVD!
\$19⁹⁵

South Dakota Public Broadcasting has produced a DVD of the graduation ceremony!

Order online at shop.sdpb.org or call 800-456-0766

With each DVD sale, SDPBS will donate \$5 to the LATI Foundation/Alumni Association.



MAY 8, 2015

AN HISTORIC DAY



CELEBRATE OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY



WIN THIS 1965 Chevy Bel Air

Ticket Prices: 1 for \$20 or 6 for \$100

Restored by the students and instructors of LATI's Custom Paint & Fabrication and Automotive Technology programs



Purchase Tickets at 50@LakeAreaTech.edu



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ALUMNI CAN EASILY
RAISE
\$500,000

IF EVERY ALUMNI BUYS

1 TICKET \$270,000	2 TICKETS \$540,000
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Only **\$20 EACH**
OR **6 FOR \$100**

DRAWING HELD:
September 5th, 3pm
VINTIQUES CAR SHOW
Watertown, SD

Custom Paint and Fabrication & Automotive Technology



Paulson Retires as LATI Foundation/Alumni Association Executive Director

A lot has occurred over the past 15 years at Lake Area Tech!

During my first year at LATI, the Foundation awarded \$35,000 in scholarships and had \$245,000 in its trust fund. This year, LATI awarded \$325,000 in scholarships and closed the fiscal year with over \$2 million in the trust.

There was the successful celebration of the Institute's first major gift campaign, Excellence By Design, raising \$10 million to help support a \$28 million, four-phase building project! The building projects truly transformed the student experience.

These things were accomplished despite the severe 2000 and 2008 economic downturns.

There have been countless fundraising events, the Feuerstein Speaking Series, Memorial and Endowed Scholarships were established, the Impact Business Partners were established, Scholarship Recognition Events, Governor's Luncheons, Student for a Day classes, the Boss Hoss Motorcycle give away, a Scholarship House was built and currently the 65 Chevy raffle is underway celebrating LATI's 50th Anniversary.

The two most gratifying things during those 15 years are having the chance to be a part of over \$2.6 million in scholarships awarded to 3,000 students and the chance to work with the tremendously generous people that made all of this possible. Thank you.

A very special, heartfelt acknowledgement to those who served as a board of director, a volunteer that made a special event happen or as someone who financially supported the students at Lake Area Tech – because each of you played a part in "Changing Lives and Launching Careers"!

– Sincerely, Tom Paulson

13th Annual LATI Governor's Luncheon Raises \$50,000!

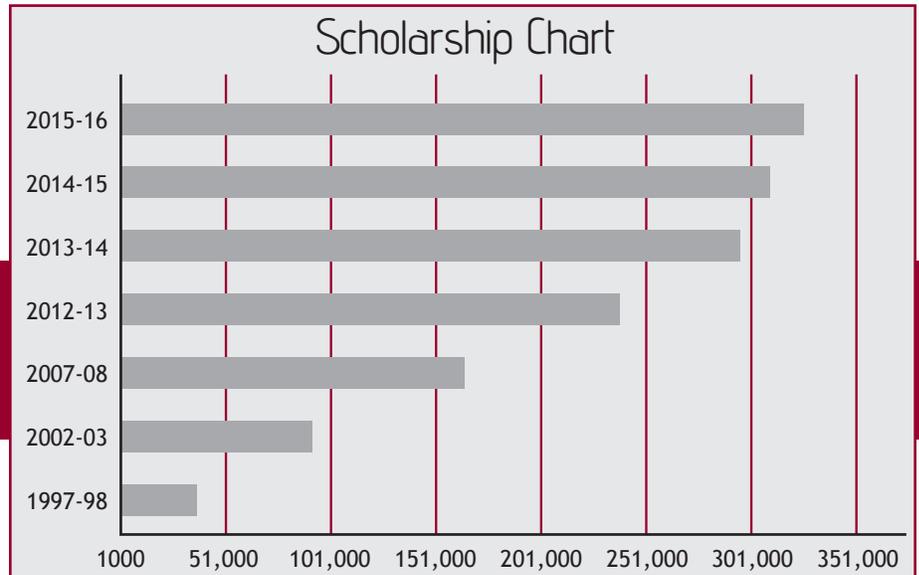
In celebration of LATI's 50th Anniversary the LATI Foundation hosted this year's Governor's Luncheon on April 29th in the Campus Event Center! LATI Foundation President, Lee Schull said "The event was outstanding, the Governor's message... exceptional, and to be able to hold the event on campus this year, just perfect!"

The Governor's Luncheon tradition began during Governor Michael Round's first year in leadership and has continued each year thereafter.

During his keynote address, Governor Dennis Daugaard highlighted that of LATI's 2014 graduating class; 98% were employed or continued their education, 85% of them needed financial assistance and 75% of those worked 30+ hours while going to LATI. The Governor stated, "Lake Area Technical Institute offers excellent curriculum and great programs that truly meet the needs of industry and give graduates realistic job opportunities."

Student speakers for the event included; roommates – Cortney Petersen of Lake Preston, SD and Kasey Schreiber of Slayton, MN both Physical Therapist Assistant students and Jacob Sechser of Montrose, SD from the Diesel Technology program.

The event will augment the total scholarship package provided to students during the 2015-16 year of over \$325,000.



2015 Retirees

Lake Area Tech faculty and staff celebrated the 2015 retirees with a going away party in May. We said farewell to Pam Hohn-Brandriet, General Education Instructor, 27 years of service; Tom Paulson, LATI Foundation Executive Director, 15 years of service; and Debbie Rudebusch, Educare Pre-School Teacher, 15 years of service. Thank you Pam, Tom, and Debbie for your years of dedication to Lake Area Tech. We wish you all the best in your retirements!

Lake Area Tech Hosts State SkillsUSA Competition



Students from across the state competed in the state SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference held on the campus of Lake Area Tech in April.

Campus was buzzing in April as SkillsUSA student members from across the state competed in the two-day South Dakota SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference held at Lake Area Tech. Contests were held in 27 different skills categories during which contestants competed against each other and the clock. The two-day event also included state SkillsUSA officer meetings, written knowledge tests, general assemblies, delegate assemblies, a business meeting, and the awards ceremony.

LATI Admissions Representative Chris Schanzenbach coordinated the SkillsUSA conference at Lake Area Tech. "The level of skill and leadership the SkillsUSA contestants displayed during the event was outstanding. Not only do I commend the students, but their advisors, the judges, LATI staff and everyone involved in making the conference a success. I look forward to hosting the event again next year."

Lake Area Tech students displayed outstanding proficiency, earning 17 first-place awards, 10 second-place awards, and seven third-place awards. For a complete list of LATI award winners, visit <http://news.lakeareatech.edu/lati-students-place-at-skillsusa-competition-3/>.

All first place recipients were eligible to advance to the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference June 22-26 in Louisville, KY, where more than 6,000 students competed. SkillsUSA is a national organization that serves trade, industrial, technical, and health occupations students in high schools and postsecondary technical institutes.

Lake Area Tech Among Top 10 Schools That "Ace" Digital Community Colleges Survey

Textbook-free courses, wireless networks, online transfer fairs and proctoring are among services provided to students.

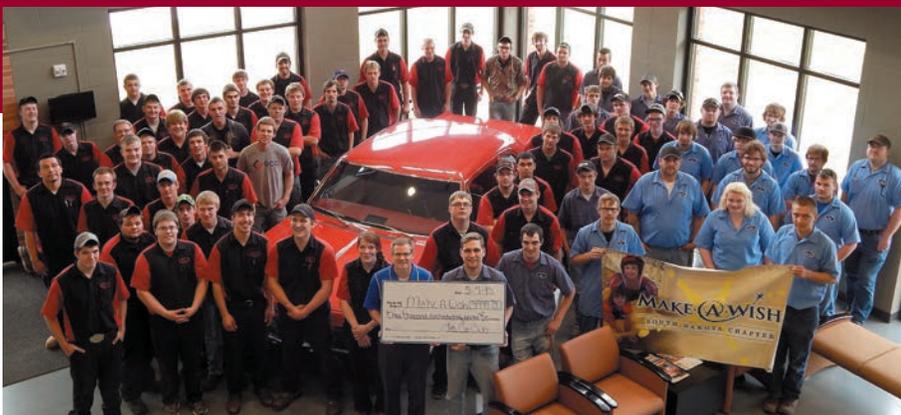
Lake Area Tech is leading the way with our digital technology! We were notified this spring by e.Republic's Center for Digital Education (CDE) that we earned a Digital Community Colleges Survey Top 10 spot in the Small Colleges category (under 5,000)!

In its tenth year, the survey analyzes how community colleges use digital technologies to improve services to students, faculty, staff and the community at large. Findings include: 58% support student job placement through online resume-building tools, 43% have strategies in place for the use of mobile devices, and 81% of colleges surveyed use cloud computing services resulting in cost savings.

"Technology is being used on campuses and in lecture halls to lower costs and improve student outcomes," said Alan Cox, Senior Vice President for the Center for Digital Education. "This year's survey indicates that community colleges are making great strides in using data to improve decisions, providing professional development to assist faculty in the use of technology, and creating robust online and mobile environments for their students. Congratulations to this year's survey winners."

All accredited U.S. community colleges were eligible to participate in the survey within three classifications based on size of enrollment.

CAR CLUB PRESENTS CHECK TO MAKE-A-WISH



The Lake Area Tech Car Club ended the year on a high note with a check presentation in May for nearly \$4,000 to Make-A-Wish of South Dakota! Proceeds from the club's Car Care 40-point inspection event in October and the Car Show for a Cause in April were included in the donation. Club members included students in the Automotive Technology, High Performance Engine Machining, and Custom Paint & Fab programs.

Areas OF Study

AGRICULTURE

Agri-Aviation Option
Agri-Business Option
Agri-Production Option
Commodity Merchandising Option*
Dairy Option*
Environmental Option*
Equine Management Option*
Large Animal Technician Option*
Precision Technology Option
Ranch Management Option*
Swine Management Option* **NEW FALL 2015**

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY*

Flight Training Option*

BUILDING TRADES TECHNOLOGY

BUSINESS ASSOCIATE

Entrepreneurship*
Human Resource Associate Option*
Marketing & Management Option
Photography/Media Option*

COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

CISCO Specialist Option*
Network Specialist Option
Programming Specialist Option
Security Specialist Option
Visual Communications Specialist Option

COSMETOLOGY*

CUSTOM PAINT & FABRICATION

Auto Body Technician Option
Diploma Option

DENTAL ASSISTING*

DIESEL TECHNOLOGY

CAT ThinkBIG*
CNH Forging the Future*
Tractor Option
Truck Option

ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY

ENERGY OPERATIONS*

ENERGY TECHNOLOGY*

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY*

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Agri-Financial Services Option
Business Accounting Option
Consumer Financial Services Option

HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR*

HIGH PERFORMANCE ENGINE MACHINING*

HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICIAN

Child Development Option
Developmental Disabilities Option
Mental Health/Activity Technician Option
Youth Offender Option

LAW ENFORCEMENT

MED/FIRE RESCUE

Emergency Medical Specialist Option
Paramedic Diploma

MEDICAL ASSISTING

MEDICAL LAB TECHNICIAN

NURSING

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT*

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT*

PRECISION MACHINING*

ROBOTICS

WELDING TECHNOLOGY

* Indicates these programs are unique to Lake Area Tech in SD.

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AGRICULTURE

Agri-Business Option
Commodity Merchandising Option
Ranch Management Option

BUSINESS ASSOCIATE

Marketing & Management Option

COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

DENTAL ASSISTING

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FINANCIAL SERVICES

MED/FIRE RESCUE

Emergency Medical Technician Certification

MEDICAL LAB TECHNICIAN

NURSING

PRECISION MACHINING

ROBOTICS

See www.lakeareatech.edu for detailed program by program E-Degree information.



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IS ON FACEBOOK

"Like" the Lake Area Technical Institute Alumni Association page to receive updates from the Alumni Association and Foundation Office.