

## 2026 GRADUATION PREPARATION

Congratulations on your accomplishment! VHCC is honoring the Class of 2026 with three commencement ceremonies on Friday, May 8, 2026 in the Joseph P. Johnson Grand Hall of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. The ceremonies will be at 2:30 PM, 5:00 PM and 7:30 PM. Guest seating will begin one hour before each ceremony, with a limit of seven guests per graduate. Please go to [www.vhcc.edu](http://www.vhcc.edu) for detailed information.



Doors to the Grand Hall will open one hour before each ceremony. Those who would like to be seated together should wait until all members of their party have arrived. Limit of seven guests per graduate, please.

*Graduates report to the 2nd floor of the Higher Education Center for lineup.*

- Graduates participating in the 2:30 PM ceremony should arrive by 1:30 PM. Guest seating will begin at 1:30 PM.
- Graduates and guests attending the 5:00 PM ceremony are encouraged to delay their arrival until 4:00 PM. This will allow adequate time for those attending the first ceremony to exit campus.
- Graduates and guests attending the 7:30 PM ceremony are encouraged to delay their arrival until 6:30 PM. This will allow adequate time for those attending the second ceremony to exit campus.

Tassels are worn on the RIGHT side of the cap until the degrees have been conferred.

The STUDENT MARSHAL will lead the processional.

EVERYONE SHOULD REMAIN STANDING until the greeting begins.

The ceremony begins with a Welcome and Opening Remarks by President Dr. Adam Hutchison. Following other greetings, there will be introductions and an address from the Commencement Speaker and a soloist will sing “Virginia Highlands Pride.” The words and music are printed in the program so that YOU MAY SING ALONG.

The Academic Dean will alert the graduates to PREPARE TO STAND with this announcement:

“Will the candidates for graduation please rise and come forward for the presentation and conferring ceremonies?”

EACH ROW WILL RISE IN UNISON, move forward, and LINE UP at the right side of the stage. Graduates should PROCEED ACROSS THE STAGE as their names are called, STOPPING to receive their diploma and SHAKE HANDS with the President. Please PAUSE as you shake the President’s hand and LOOK TOWARD THE CAMERA at the corner of the stage for a quick photo. Graduates will EXIT THE STAGE on the left, PAUSING once again at the TOP OF THE RAMP for a photo, then RETURN TO THEIR SEAT and BE SEATED.

When all graduates – including the student marshal – have received their diplomas and been seated, the President will cue the graduates to RISE IN UNISON with the following statement: “Will the candidates for graduation please rise?”

The President will confer degrees, diplomas, and certificates.

Students will CHANGE THEIR TASSELS from the right side of their caps TO THE LEFT SIDE, signifying graduation. The student marshal then comes forward to lead the graduates in the recessional, who will ROW BY ROW exit the auditorium. Please proceed out of the auditorium and down the hallway past the stairway to allow other members of the audience to safely exit.

PLEASE ASK YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS AND GUESTS TO REMAIN IN THE AUDITORIUM UNTIL THE RECEPTIONAL HAS ENDED.

*Each ceremony will be live streamed and uploaded to YouTube at a later date.*

For live streaming during the event, please visit us on Facebook and search Virginia Highlands Community College

*Graduate photographs taken during the ceremony will be available at a later date.*

For photo information, please visit <https://photos.swvaphotography.com/vhcc2026/>



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