



PHI THETA KAPPA EARNS TOP  
100 HONOR



LTC TAKES RECRUITING VIRTUAL



HOLMES PICKS WESTERN  
MICHIGAN

# LINCOLN TRAIL COLLEGE

# LT Network



## LTC PREPARES FOR SUMMER, FALL CLASSES

Lincoln Trail College will begin its Summer Semester classes as scheduled on June 2. “The majority of our summer courses will be held in a fully online format,” says LTC President Dr. Ryan Gower. “As summer progresses and the shelter-in-place order expires, it is our expectation that some of our courses will have the ability to meet face-to-face.”

Meanwhile, the College is planning to begin its Fall Semester August 20. Gower says he has every expectation that most classes in the Fall will be delivered in a face-to-face lecture format. “We will use common sense while also monitoring what is happening in our community and following the advice of public authorities. While the switch to online learning has allowed us to complete the Spring 2020 Semester, most of our students are eager to get back to face-to-face instruction. This is what Lincoln Trail College intends to deliver.”

Gower says it should come as no surprise that students prefer face-to-face instruction. He says there are decades of research that show students persist, retain and complete degree programs at higher rates when they are on campus in these more personal settings. “We may look to make adjustments like limiting our class sizes, spreading our classes and our class schedule across the day to allow for greater ease in social distancing, but Lincoln Trail College will be open, and we will be delivering our classes in a face-to-face format.”

Lincoln Trail College is currently offering students the chance to register for classes for the Summer and Fall Semesters.

Students can call the College at 618-544-8657 to set up a virtual appointment with an advisor. “Our advisors take great pride in the one-on-one attention they provide to students,” says LTC Coordinator of Marketing and Public Information Chris Forde. “While our advising has shifted to a virtual format, they are still spending a considerable amount of time with students to help them set up classes and prepare their educational path.”

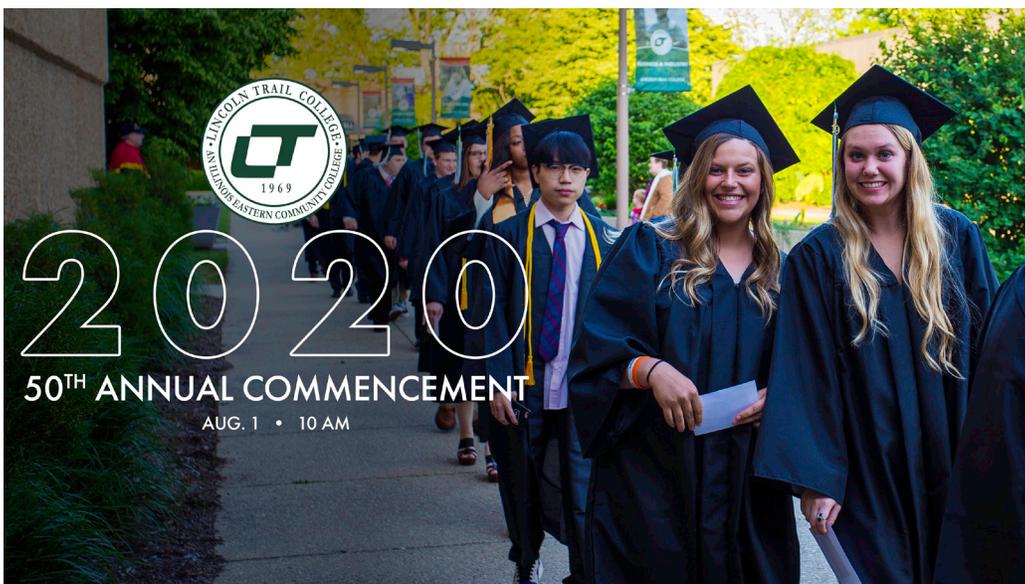
Gower says this is a perfect time to be thinking about Lincoln Trail College. “I’ve heard lots of talk about people taking a ‘gap year’ and that’s something I’d encourage students to avoid. Jobs will be hard to come by, and there is an opportunity cost you are paying, whether you realize it or not, in delaying your college education. In fact, because of our low cost of attendance and high levels of grants and scholarships, many of our students actually receive more financial support than we charge for tuition and fees. Imagine getting paid to go to school! That happens for some people at Lincoln Trail College.”

Gower says now more than ever attending a community college makes sense. “Our communities need good leaders who are prepared to tackle the economic and civic challenges we face. Nothing prepares people better for this than education. Community colleges have always been a good choice for graduating seniors, but everything that is happening in the world around us makes Lincoln Trail College an even better choice. We are close to home. We are affordable. We deliver an excellent educational experience. There is a lot of unease about moving into dorms and starting college, only to be required to move out and go back home should the coronavirus ‘bounce’ as experts suggest it might this fall. All of those uncertainties can be minimized by enrolling in your local community college.”

Lincoln Trail College was recognized as the 11th most affordable college or university in the nation by EDSmart, a Utah-based organization that provides information to prospective college students. LTC has also been recognized by the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program as a Top 150 U.S. Community College, an honor LTC has received five times. “Lincoln Trail College is truly a financially smart decision for students,” says Forde. “We have a history of excellent instruction combined with true affordability. Beginning your degree at LTC can help you save thousands of dollars compared to attending a four-year college for all four years. We also offer many opportunities for students interesting in beginning a career as soon as they graduate to get the skills they need in two years or less.”

---

## DATE SET FOR LTC’S 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT



A new date has been selected for Lincoln Trail College’s 50th Annual Commencement. The original date of May 8 had to be changed due to the Governor’s stay-at-home order for the Coronavirus pandemic. The new date is Saturday, August 1 at 10:00 a.m.

## LTC PHI THETA KAPPA NAMED TOP 100 CHAPTER



Fall 2019 LTC Phi Theta Kappa Officers (left to right): Mekena Meadows, Sarah Kennedy, Allyssa Adams, Kinley Ledermann, Esperanza Murillo

Lincoln Trail College's Alpha Iota Epsilon chapter of Phi Theta Kappa has been named as one of the Top 100 chapters in the international Phi Theta Kappa organization. The announcement was made during Phi Theta Kappa's annual convention, which was held virtually.

"I was extremely excited and cried a little," says chapter co-advisor Kim Schucker. "This was a first for our chapter. We have won awards before for individual projects, but this ranking shows that both our college project and honors topic project were well done and placed us in the category of the Top 100 chapters."

"Being a part of this award-winning chapter has been an eye-opening experience," says chapter president Allyssa Adams. "When we attend Catalyst, an international Phi Theta Kappa convention, we sit and wait for our

name to get announced. Most of the time, a chapter that is close to Alpha Iota Epsilon gets called and you can see us all sway in our seats a little with anticipation. This year the convention was virtual, and when I read our chapter name on the top 100 chapters, my heart began to race. In that moment, I wished that our chapter could've been together to celebrate, but I know we all were in our own homes. I couldn't wait for the broadcast to be over so I could message to the rest of our members with the good news! The final part of the broadcast seemed like a blur because I was so proud of our chapter. Our small-town chapter was in the top 100 out of 1289 chapters worldwide which was mind-boggling. On a more personal note, being president of Alpha Iota Epsilon has allowed me to grow my leadership skills exponentially. This group has allowed me to meet some amazing people throughout the Illinois region. I've also been able to work with some amazing officers behind me over the past year. This group allows everyone to tap into their full potential and leadership skills. Over the past year, there have been some humbling moments reminding us that we are all human! As a chapter, we adapted and overcame those challenges which made us all a stronger and better team!"

LTC's chapter worked on increasing the College's social media presence for their college project. The students developed contests that consisted of people liking LTC and LTC PTK social media channels and having people share content and tag other people. The students measured the increase in their social media presence thanks to the contests. They also awarded prizes that were provided by LTC's Recruitment Office and the Office of the President.

The overall theme of this year's Honors in Action Research Project was Transformations: Acknowledging, Assessing, and Achieving Change. LTC chose the sub-theme of "Powers of Connection and researched the cancel culture. Students researched the psychological aspect of why people cancel other people and why people are so quick to follow someone else's lead without thinking through the facts. They found examples of people and companies that were canceled and presented them to students and asked if they should be canceled. They then gave the back story of the canceled subjects and redid the survey to see if there was a difference in opinion. "The purpose was to illustrate the importance

of knowledge before consequential action and the importance of independent, critical thought,” says Schucker.

“I was ecstatic when I saw our chapter was a Top 100 chapter out of approximately 1300 chapters internationally,” says co-advisor Carrie Brown. “I know how hard these students worked on both the college project and the Honors in Action project.”

The Top 100 Chapter honor was not the only accolade for Lincoln Trail College at the convention. LTC President Dr. Ryan Gower was formally presented with his Paragon Award, which recognizes college presidents who show strong support for student success by recognizing academic achievement, leadership, and service among high-achieving students.



*Spring 2020 LTC Phi Theta Kappa Officers (left to right): Sarah Kennedy, Makenna Meadows, Allyssa Adams, Cydnee Weber, Esperanza Murillo*

Lincoln Trail College’s Phi Theta Kappa chapter is no stranger to success. The chapter has repeatedly been named a Five Star Chapter, which is the highest level of recognition a chapter can earn. LTC has also been recognized because the number of students that accept joining the chapter is higher than both the Illinois regional and national averages.

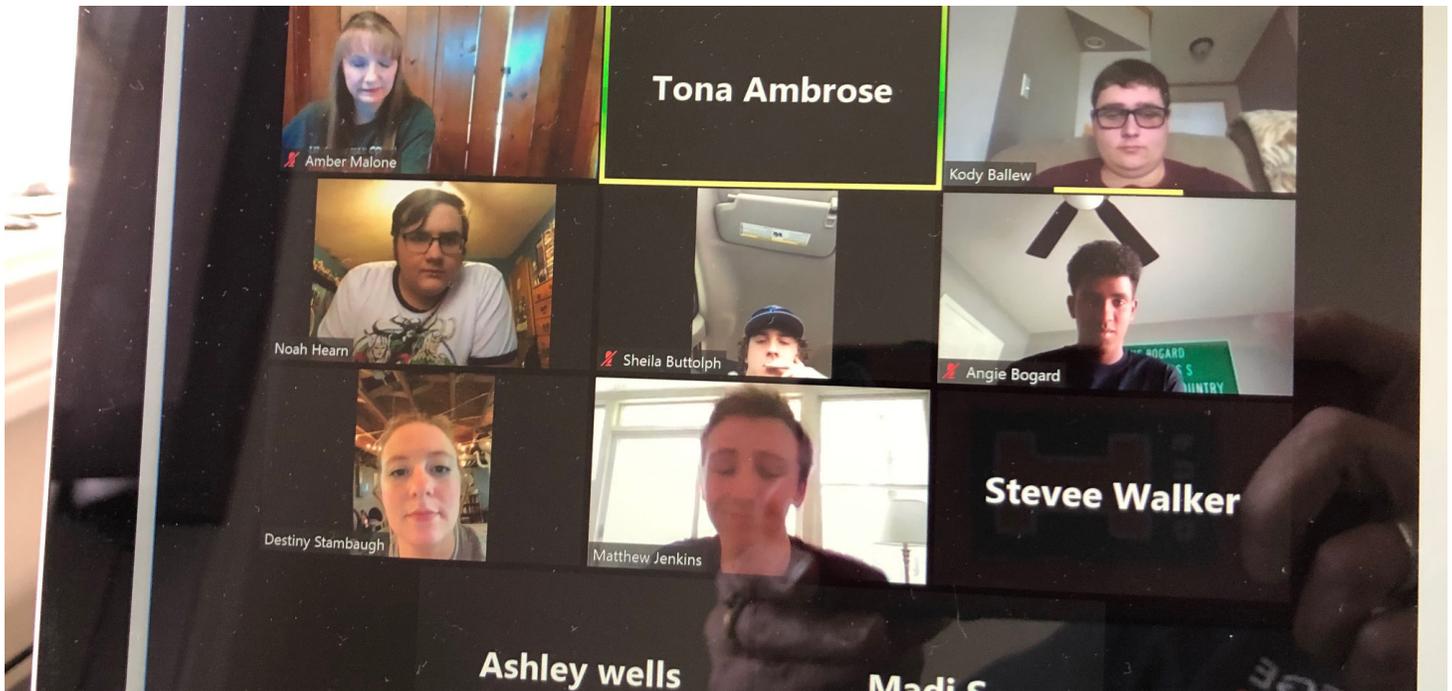
“Phi Theta Kappa at Lincoln Trail College has a standard that we require to be met,” says Schucker. “It cannot be an idle organization and still benefit the students that are members. Everything we offer is to advance our member’s personal development in leadership, scholarship, fellowship, and service. This includes giving them opportunities to broaden their horizons by attending PTK events, competing for awards and scholarships, and broadening their network of friends and colleagues. We always have a group of members that want to and are able to, gain all they can from Phi Theta Kappa. It’s the members that make us such a good chapter and I really appreciate all they do.”

Brown says LTC is blessed because of its amazingly academically strong student body. “We have students that are willing to work above and beyond here to keep our PTK chapter active in our region and internationally.”

She says there are a lot of good reasons for students to work to join the academic honor society because 91 percent of members complete their associate degrees and transfer to four-year colleges. “This tells me that being a PTK member not only increases the student’s scholarship skills but also increases a student’s readiness for future career endeavors.”

Phi Theta Kappa is the premier honor society recognizing the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges and helping them to grow as scholars and leaders. The Society is made up of more than 3.5 million members and nearly 1,300 chapters in 11 nations, with approximately 240,000 active members in the nation’s colleges. Learn more at [ptk.org](http://ptk.org).

## LTC TAKES RECRUITING VIRTUAL



Normally, Lincoln Trail College is a bustling campus in the spring between current students finishing out the academic year and the College working to bring new students in for the Fall Semester. Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus, LTC had to take a very different approach to show prospective students the campus.

“We had to quickly adapt,” says Coordinator of Marketing and Public Information Chris Forde. “While our faculty was coming up with ways to teach our students virtually, our enrollment management group was trying to figure out how we could continue to engage prospective students in a radically different way.”



Prospective students interact with current LTC students and staff during the virtual Senior Blitz Day

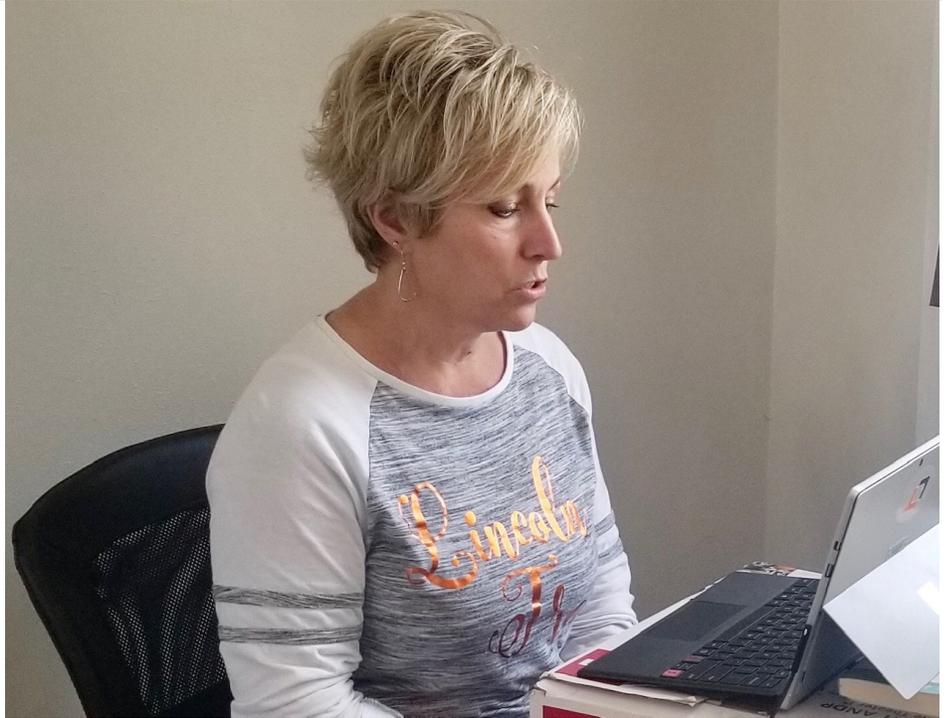
One of the College’s biggest events of the Spring is Senior Blitz Day, which was scheduled for April 14. The event brings high school seniors from the area to Lincoln Trail College. While on campus, the seniors learn about the things they need to do to prepare for college and they get the chance to learn about Lincoln Trail College.

“At first, we thought this event might be lost altogether,” says Forde. “During a virtual Enrollment Management meeting, a plan was born to make the event virtual. Instead of a daylong event where everybody was on campus, we decided to run a series of Zoom meetings that offered some of the same information in a more condensed version.”

LTC’s Director of College Access Tona Ambrose ran the meetings, which included high school seniors and their counselors. “We congratulated the Class of 2020, let them share what their plans are after high school, chatted about the crazy world we are currently living in, and just enjoyed SEEING each other’s faces!”

Ambrose says the Zoom meetings also touched on the importance of staying connected. The students were encouraged to schedule advising appointments to schedule classes and they got updated financial aid information. The students watched a short video made by President Dr. Ryan Gower. LTC students Ahmad Price, Ashley Wells, and Noah Hearn joined each session to give the high school students advice. Ambrose says they also had some fun by playing games like “How Well Do You Know Your School Counselors.”

A second event came from the virtual version of Senior Blitz Day. Students were invited back for another Zoom event called “Life Jam – Adulting 101.” High school juniors and seniors were able to submit questions for the virtual life skills session on April 28.

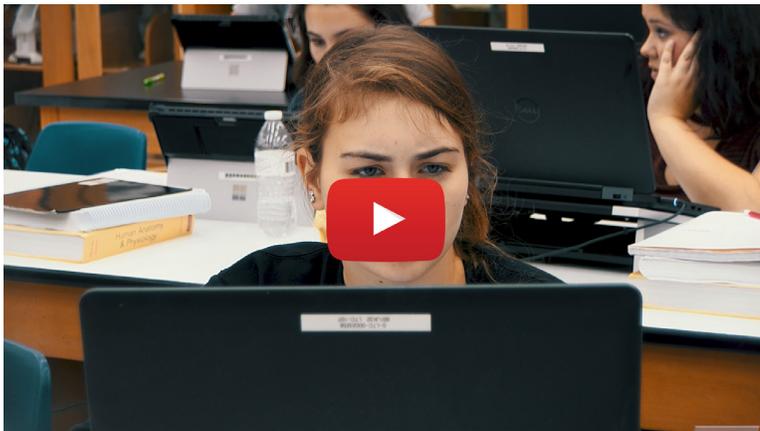


*Tona Ambrose interacts with students during Life Jam - Adulting 101*

“It was a fast-paced discussion,” says Ambrose. “It included tips and information on topics such as budgeting, taxes, social media integrity, professionalism, time management, and career cruising. It was an awesome class!”

Ambrose says both virtual events have been successful and she’s planning to continue offering other virtual events on a variety of different topics so prospective students can see what life will be like at Lincoln Trail College.

Another problem to tackle was how to show prospective students what Lincoln Trail College looks like. The Governor’s



*A thumbnail of LTC’s Virtual Tour video available on YouTube*

stay-at-home order and the NJCAA’s recruiting rules for COVID-19 meant there was no way to bring students to campus for tours. “We quickly revamped our virtual tour on YouTube,” says Forde. “The video is especially important to our coaches since many of their recruits live outside of the immediate area and have not seen LTC before. This is a chance for the coaches to show their recruits what our campus and what our facilities look like.”

LTC has increased its social media presence while the college is temporarily closed. “We know that there are students out there right now that are reconsidering their college choices and we want to show them that Lincoln Trail College is a great option,” says Forde.

The College has launched several social media series to highlight the people and programs at LTC. One series features brief videos that look like someone running a web search and then displays information related to LTC. The Sophomore Spotlight series showcases some of LTC’s sophomores due to graduate in 2020. They talk about their experiences at LTC in their own words and also give their post-LTC plans. A third series welcomes new students to LTC and includes their college or career goals.

## LTC FOUNDATION LAUNCHES GIVING WEEK



The Lincoln Trail College Foundation will conduct a giving week the week of May 11 to help raise money for a special scholarship fund. The new fund is designed to help people affected by the Coronavirus pandemic get an education at Lincoln Trail College.

“As you know we’re in the midst of something unprecedented,” says LTC Foundation Executive Director Rod Harmon. “We are in need of money and special help because of this unique situation and we’re trying to raise money for scholarships for students. We know that there are students

whose parents have been laid off or maybe they’ve been laid off too and we want to help them.”

Lincoln Trail College will offer Summer Semester classes beginning June 2 and the Fall Semester begins August 20. Classes in the summer are expected to begin online, but as the summer progresses, some may be allowed to meet face-to-face. The College expects that classes in the Fall Semester will be offered face-to-face. President Dr. Ryan Gower says the College will monitor information from local officials and may make some adjustments to classes like limiting the number of people allowed in a class and staggering class times to better allow social distancing.

Gower says Lincoln Trail College has always been a great choice for students, and based on what’s happening in the world, it is an even better choice. “We deliver an excellent educational experience. There is a lot of unease about moving into dorms and starting college, only to be required to move out and go back home should the coronavirus ‘bounce’ as experts suggest it might this fall. All of those uncertainties can be minimized by enrolling in your local community college.”

Lincoln Trail College was recognized as the 11th most affordable college or university in the nation by EDSmart, a Utah-based organization that provides information to prospective college students. LTC has also been recognized by the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program as a Top 150 U.S. Community College, an honor LTC has received five times.

Harmon says this giving week is about making sure more people have the opportunity to attend Lincoln Trail College. “We would hope you would consider assisting us in whatever way you can. We appreciate it and the students at Lincoln Trail College appreciate it. Remember, Foundation’s sole purpose is to enhance educational services and benefit the students at Lincoln Trail College. Any help you can give us would be greatly appreciated.”

People that want to donate to the LTC Foundation for Giving Week can go to the Foundation’s website at [lincolntrailcollegefoundation.com](http://lincolntrailcollegefoundation.com).

## HOLMES COMMITS TO WESTERN MICHIGAN



Lincoln Trail College guard Jaylon Holmes will continue his college career at Western Michigan University.

LTC coach Luke Stuckey says Holmes spent a lot of time looking at his options before deciding on the Broncos. “He really did his research and his homework on all of the programs that were recruiting him. I think a big goal of his was to find a place where he knew he was going to be able to fit in and where his style of play was going to suit the style of the program. He dug in, he did his research, he watched game film, and he talked to the coaching staffs. That was all a big part of his recruiting. He made sure he was going to fit and I think this is a great fit. He’s going to a place where I think he’s going to be successful and be able to utilize all of his unique skills.”

Holmes started 27 games as a freshman, averaging 9.3 points per game. He started eight games in his sophomore year, averaging 17.5 points per game. Holmes’ sophomore season was cut short by injury and Stuckey says that will allow Holmes to have three years of eligibility at Western Michigan.

Stuckey believes that Holmes’ best basketball is ahead of him and that he has a very high ceiling for the Broncos. “He’s very unique and his versatility is probably the best thing about his game. Anytime you can get a combination of his size, because he’s legitimately six-foot-six, and his athleticism, which is just off the charts, and then you mix that with his skillset, he’s a very skilled player. That’s a great combination and guys like him are very hard to come by.”

Stuckey says that Holmes has progressed tremendously as a basketball player since he was in high school and he says it’s “scary” to think where he’ll be as long as he continues to spend time working in weight room and working on his shot and other skills. “He has unbelievable potential. He can be anything he wants to be.”



Golfer Dylan Buenker committed to Missouri Baptist University



Volleyball OH Jordan Christy committed to Graceland University



Catcher Evan Hale committed to Greenville University



LHP Adam Kopff committed to McKendree University