



Polaris Tech

CHARTER SCHOOL

News Release

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Polaris Tech celebrates first graduates June 5 with US Space Force General as commencement speaker

Nineteen men and women will be Polaris Tech's first-ever high school graduates June 5 and Air Force Maj. Gen. Kimberly Crider of the U.S. Space Force serving as commencement speaker.

"I am so proud of these young people as the first-ever graduates from Polaris Tech Charter School. They took a leap of faith when they came to this new school and new approach to learning, and they have soared to heights that I am pretty sure surprise each of them," said Gen. Lloyd "Fig" Newton, chair of the Polaris Tech board of directors and a founder of the no-tuition school.

"Each of these young women and men have bright futures, because they have proven to themselves and others that they can adjust to change, they can thrive with challenges, and they can solve problems," Newton said. "The world needs graduates like ours."

While some Polaris Tech graduates will attend two- and four-year colleges, others will enter the U.S. military and the workforce.

"I salute these graduates for stepping up to the challenge of a new school and a new way of learning when they joined us at Polaris Tech. It took a lot of strength to come to a newly-created school, to make new friends and to accept new challenges," said Brandi Boseman, director of teaching and learning at the school since it opened three years ago and interim executive director since December 2020.

Polaris Tech is a state-approved public charter school serving fifth grade through high school students from Jasper County and the Lowcountry. It is a free school (no tuition), that focuses on preparing young people for successful work and college.

The Polaris Tech academic emphasis is on six career areas, starting with: Aerospace, Health Sciences and Business Management. Polaris Tech continues to accept student applications for the upcoming school year for students in grades 5-12 at www.polaristech.org.

Joining the Polaris Tech Board of Directors, founders, graduates and their families will be Maj. Gen. Kimberly Crider, the Mobilization Assistant to the nation's newest service, the U.S. Space Force, established in 2019 and located at the Pentagon in Washington, DC.

One of her jobs is to assist the Chief of Space Operations to organize, train, equip and maintain space forces by contributing to the development of strategy, long-range plans, and concept of operations.

She also serves as the U.S. Space Force Chief Technology and Innovation Officer. In this role, she is charged with unlocking and harnessing innovation to leverage increased speed and advantage.

She is responsible for developing strategy and policy to advance Science and Technology and Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation; employing cutting edge technologies to digitally transform the Space Force; assuring USSF information technology needs are met; effectively managing data; and conducting analysis supporting all Space Force staff elements.

Maj. Gen. Crider earned her bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Duke University and was commissioned into the Air Force through ROTC.

"It's pretty amazing to have a Major General in the Space Force as the first commencement speaker for the first graduates at Polaris Tech," said incoming Executive Director Dr. Fred Hunter. "I am sure the graduates will remember this day for a very long time, just like I'm confident their preparation from Polaris Tech will help boost them to great achievements in college, the workforce and the military."

Polaris Tech's 2021 graduates are:

Tristan Aaron, Ridgeland
Shakera Alexander, Pineland
Christopher Chavez, Ridgeland
Darius Chisolm, Hardeeville
Bryan Cordova, Ridgeland
Trista Daring, Ridgeland
Dillon Duncan, Ridgeland
Bryant Edwards, Ridgeland
Landon Gapen, Ridgeland
Logan Gaymon, Tillman

Carmela Hernandez, Early Branch
Julie Horry, Ridgeland
Gauge Humbert, Ridgeland
Sophia Mock, Ridgeland
Jaleah Vason, Ridgeland
William Ward, Ridgeland
Abbee Webster, Walterboro
Robbie Williams, Ridgeland
Nasir Willis, Ridgeland

"Honestly, to think that five years ago a group of people sat around a table and brainstormed ideas to change the educational outcomes for young people in Jasper County and the Lowcountry, and here we are today with a gorgeous facility, outstanding teachers and our first diploma graduates," said Sandra Chavez, a school founder and former chair of the Polaris Tech Board of Directors.

Polaris Tech is located in a new facility on Grays Highway across from the Ridgeland Airport. Young people from Jasper, Colleton, Hampton and Beaufort counties attend.

To keep updated about Polaris Tech Charter School, follow them on Facebook and at www.polaristech.org. For specific questions, email info@polaristech.org or call 843-645-0605.

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