Members of the Class of 2019 at Early College High School face the stage after their processional to begin the Commencement Exercises. Ethan Roberson, right, was valedictorian.

**Early College graduates 33 seniors**

There were 33 graduates from the Vance County Early College High School who received their high school diplomas during Commencement Exercises on May 23, in the Civic Center at Vance-Granville Community College.

Among the graduates, 27 also earned at least one associate degree from the community college. More impressively, eight of the graduates earned both associate of arts and associate of science degrees upon graduation.
Class Nights celebrate lots of achievements

Class Night celebrations held during the evening of May 16, for graduating seniors at Early College High School and Vance County High School recognized the students for their achievements throughout their high school careers.

The Early College event was held in the Civic Center on the campus of Vance-Granville Community College. The auditorium was filled with parents, family members, educators, school officials and community leaders who paid tribute to the 33 members of the Class of 2019. Principal Travis Taylor led the efforts to present seniors with awards and college scholarship funds to mark their achievements and plans to continue their education.

The Vance County High Class of 2019 also was celebrated as a very accomplished group of students. Principal Rey Horner presided at the event attended by an audience of hundreds of well-wishers, from family members to local community leaders. A large number of the 251-member class earned college scholarships and prestigious accolades.

The events are depicted in the photos, from top right to bottom left: the opening at Vance County High, scholarship presentations at Early College and student awards at Vance County High.
Leading graduates honored at annual VCS banquet

The top academic achievers in the Class of 2019 were the honored guests at the school system’s annual “Evening of Academic Excellence” held on May 20, in the Civic Center at Vance-Granville Community College.

About 40 seniors were recognized for their outstanding academics and achievements as they were presented handsome medallions by Superintendent Anthony Jackson, Dorothy Gooche, chairwoman of the Vance County Board of Education, and Vanessa Jones, a member of the Vance County Public School Foundation Board of Directors.

The honored seniors make up the top 10 percent academically of their respective classes at Early College High School, Advance Academy and Vance County High School.

Kwaji Bullock, a 2018 graduate of Northern Vance High School and now a sophomore at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, had inspiring words for the seniors in his remarks as the evening’s featured speaker. He told them all to work hard to reach their goals, whether they go on to college, the workforce or join the military. He encouraged them to always believe in their own abilities and to never let negative thoughts or comments from others keep them from striving to obtain their dreams.
Sixteen outstanding students in Vance County Schools, who exemplify great character each day at school and in their communities, received deserved recognition at the annual Student Spotlight banquet held during the evening of May 22, at the Henderson Country Club.

The students, shown in the photo above, were honored at the banquet in comments made by local officials and in videos made at the time they were each surprised with their award in their school.

The students also are being honored at meetings of the Vance County Board of Education and they and their parents will participate in a free trip to Washington, D.C., on June 19.

They each received their award after being nominated for the honor by fellow students, teachers, school staff and school administrators.

The students honored as Student Spotlight winners included: Kori Barlow-Robinson, of E.O. Young, Jr. Elementary; Anderson Boyd of Aycock Elementary; Roland Chavez Galindo, of Carver Elementary; Andrew Chiem of Dabney Elementary; Kimberly Flores Maus of Pinkston Street Elementary; Toussaint Grant of L.B. Yancey Elementary; Jordan Hargrove of Youth Empowerment Academy; Marisol Hernandez of E.M. Rollins Elementary; Chloe Hightower of Clarke Elementary; Randy Palacios of AdVance Academy; Courtney Peoples of Zeb Vance Elementary; Nashanti Richardson of Early College High; Harold Timberlake, IV of Vance County Middle; Xavier Wilson of Vance County High; Kayce Yancey of New Hope Elementary; and Ruby Zuniga Trejo of STEM Earl Yolly High.
Teachers from four elementary schools met in a Modern Teacher work session at one of five sites across the district to review the proposed Theory of Action, at left and above.

**Theory of Action will drive teaching and learning**

Since the beginning of this school year, local educators and school system administrators have been developing the district’s new five-year strategic plan based on the Modern Teacher model.

The centerpiece of the model is the district’s Theory of Action, a plan that spells out what our schools will do to provide the educational instruction and opportunities our students need to prepare them for the future. Currently, the strategic plan is in draft form. Workshops, committee meetings, reviews by school administrators and more work sessions will continue with local principals, assistant principals, directors and classroom teachers before the plan goes to the Vance County Board of Education for its review and approval of the five-year strategic plan. Once approved by the board, the plan and its Theory of Action will be implemented at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year.

As part of the plan development process, school system leaders met with principals on May 6, to go over the Modern Teacher model to this point. The meeting also was a planning session to prepare principals to lead sessions attended by teachers from various schools during the late afternoon of the next day, May 7. Those sessions were held at Aycock Elementary, Dabney Elementary, Zeb Vance Elementary, Vance County Middle and Vance County High.

Teachers from different schools came together in discussion groups to assess the Theory of Action draft and to apply its contents to strategies in classrooms across the school district.
Students visited with college and business representatives and asked lots of questions during the school’s Career and College Fair on May 7.

Jaguars get good career, college guidance

Students who attend Vance County Middle School received extremely valuable information at the school’s Career and College Fair held in the media center on May 7.

Business and college representatives were stationed at tables and supplied a wealth of information to students as they visited each table and asked lots of questions. Several colleges in North Carolina were represented at the fair, as was Vance-Granville Community College. Students also had opportunities to meet with representatives of a variety of businesses from law enforcement officers to staff members from a local children’s daycare center.

Teachers and administrators from the school also were on hand to help students with questions.
Robotics 4291

Three members of the Vance County Robotics Team, accompanied by their “4291” robot, made a presentation to the Vance County Board of Education at its May 13, meeting.

Erin Williams, a teacher at Vance County High School who leads the robotics team, stands at the podium at right with the team members.

Board members recognized the outstanding achievements of the team for this school year, including their first-place finish in a recent competition in Wake County with other high schools. The students are shown in the above photo wearing their medallions and carrying the banner they won in the competition.

Important discussions

Superintendent Anthony Jackson, standing at right, speaks to members of the Teacher Advisory Council at their final meeting of the school year on May 14. Jackson has met throughout the school year with the group to get their valuable input on important issues in our schools.
Special observances during May honor schools’ principals, assistant principals, teachers, school staff and nurses

The month of May was filled with special observances for principals, assistant principals, teachers and school support staff members. Everyone contributes and has a major role in educating our students!

Assistant Superintendent Cindy Bennett, at podium, recognizes the contributions of our school nurses during National School Nurse Week at the May 13, Board of Education meeting.

VCS Photos

The Lamplighter is published monthly by the Public Information Office of Vance County Schools. School news and story ideas are welcome and may be sent to: Terri Hedrick, Public Information Officer, 492-2127, thedrick@vcs.k12.nc.us.