



**PITTSBURGH
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For Immediate Release

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1,705 Members of the Class of 2009 to Graduate this Weekend During District-wide Commencement Ceremonies

Approximately 1,000 Students Eligible for Pittsburgh Promise Scholarships

PITTSBURGH, June 19, 2009 –Across the city 1,705 members of the Pittsburgh Public Schools’ Class of 2009 will graduate this weekend. Of this class, close to 1,000 students are eligible for scholarships through The Pittsburgh Promise. Ten commencement exercises will be held Saturday, June 20th and Sunday, June 21st at either Mellon Arena, downtown or Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall in Oakland. Each of the city school commencement exercises will feature a student graduate speaker who will be among the recipients of a Pittsburgh Promise scholarship. Additional guest speakers at various commencements include, Dr. Gerald L. Zahorchak, Pennsylvania Secretary of Education, Pittsburgh Promise Executive Director Saleem Ghubril, President and CEO, Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild and Bidwell Training Center, Inc., William Strickland and more. Please see below for complete schedule.

Students from the Class of 2009 will graduate with their colleagues from 10 city high schools (listed in order of the largest graduating classes by school):

Pittsburgh Allderdice High School	352
Pittsburgh Brashear High School	256
Pittsburgh Schenley High School	219
Pittsburgh Perry High School	180
Pittsburgh Carrick High School	161
Pittsburgh CAPA High School	137
Pittsburgh Peabody High School	130
Pittsburgh Oliver High School	105
Pittsburgh Langley High School	88
Pittsburgh Westinghouse High School	77

Graduates of the Pittsburgh Public Schools can earn up to \$20,000 in Promise scholarships for post secondary education. The Promise will provide students with up to \$5,000 each year for up to four years of school. In order to qualify for a Promise scholarship 2009 graduates must have a GPA of 2.25, up from last year’s 2.0. Graduates must also have attended a city school since at least ninth grade. Beginning with the Class of 2012, graduates will be eligible to earn up to \$40,000 over 4 years. Even students who already have scholarships to cover the full cost of tuition may be eligible for a minimum award of up to \$1,000 through The Promise.

In March 2009, The Pittsburgh Promise Board voted to expand the list of Promise-eligible schools to all schools in Pennsylvania that offer 2 or 4 year degrees. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of students planning to use Promise scholarships to attend private schools this fall. Newly Promise-eligible schools listed as a first choice on student applications include: Drexel University, Franklin & Marshall College, Gannon University, Geneva College, Lehigh University, Mercyhurst College, Muhlenberg College, Philadelphia University, Saint Joseph’s University, Saint Vincent College, Seton Hill University, Swarthmore College, Thiel College, Villanova University, Washington and Jefferson College, and Westminster College.

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Initial Data on The Pittsburgh Promise Students in the Class of 2009

- Of the approximate 850 eligible students so far 820 students plan to enroll in Promise-eligible schools this fall.
- 600 students plan to attend 4-year schools.
 - 80 of these students plan to attend Penn State University.
 - 100 of these students plan to attend the University of Pittsburgh.
 - 220 of these students plan to attend 4-year private schools.
 - 200 of these students plan to attend a 4-year state university.
- 220 students plan to attend two-year schools.
 - 150 students plan to attend the Community College of Allegheny County.

2009 Commencement Activities

Saturday, June 20

- 10:00 a.m. **Pittsburgh Brashear “*Dreams Come True; Without that Possibility, Nature Would Not Incite Us to Have Them.*” – John Updike**
Mellon Arena
66 Mario Lemieux Place
Guest Speaker: Sherry Hazuda, Board Member
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Superintendent Mark Roosevelt and Sherry Hazuda
- 10:00 a.m. **Pittsburgh Peabody “*Looking to the Future, but Remembering the Past*”**
Soldiers & Sailors Military Museum and Memorial
4141 Fifth Avenue
Guest Speaker: Mr. Keith Key, KBK Enterprises, Inc.
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Deputy Superintendent Linda Lane, Thomas Sumpter and Randall Taylor
- 1:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Carrick “*Changing the Future*”**
Mellon Arena
66 Mario Lemieux Place
Guest Speaker: Derrick Lopez, JD, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Superintendent Mark Roosevelt and Jean Fink
- 1:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Langley “*Excellence for All*”**
Soldiers & Sailors Military Museum and Memorial
4141 Fifth Avenue
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Deputy Superintendent Linda Lane and Floyd McCrea
- 4:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Westinghouse “*The Audacity of Hope*”**
Soldiers & Sailors Military Museum and Memorial
4141 Fifth Avenue
Guest Speaker: Dr. Jeannette South-Paul, UPMC Medical Chair of Family Medicine
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Deputy Superintendent Linda Lane and Randall Taylor

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- 4:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Perry “Knowledge for Service”
Mellon Arena**
66 Mario Lemieux Place
Guest Speaker: Saleem Ghubril, Executive Director, Pittsburgh Promise
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Superintendent Mark Roosevelt, Floyd McCrea and Mark Brentley
- 7:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Oliver “The Future is Not a Gift – It is an Achievement”
Mellon Arena**
66 Mario Lemieux Place
Guest Speaker: Mr. William Strickland, President and CEO, Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild and Bidwell Training Center, Inc.
Diploma Presenter and Board Member: Deputy Superintendent Linda Lane and Floyd McCrea

Sunday, June 21

- 1:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Allderdice “Know Something, Do Something, Be Something”
Mellon Arena**
66 Mario Lemieux Place
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Superintendent Mark Roosevelt, Theresa Colaizzi and William Isler
- 1:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh CAPA “We Lived It...”
Soldiers & Sailors Military Museum and Memorial**
4141 Fifth Avenue
Guest Speaker: Mr. William Strickland, President and CEO, Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild and Bidwell Training Center, Inc.
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Deputy Superintendent Linda Lane, Randall Taylor and Mark Brentley
- 4:00 p.m. **Pittsburgh Schenley “Change Has Come...”
Mellon Arena**
66 Mario Lemieux Place
Guest Speaker: Dr. Gerald L. Zahorchak, Pennsylvania Secretary of Education
Diploma Presenter and Board Members: Superintendent Mark Roosevelt, William Isler and Thomas Sumpter

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