



JUNE 2026

BEDFORD COUNTY CAMPUS CELEBRATES SPRING 2026 COMMENCEMENT

Twelve graduates celebrated their academic accomplishments at the Allegany College of Maryland Bedford County Campus Spring 2026 Commencement Ceremony on May 19, 2026. These graduates, along with one graduating in absentia, earned degrees and certificates in the areas of Business Accounting, Business Administration, Business Management, Computer Technology – Cybersecurity, General Studies, Medical Administrative Assistant, and Nursing.



The Spring 2026 graduates bring the total number of Bedford County Campus graduates to 823. Thanks to the generosity of community members and businesses, the Bedford County Regional Education Foundation provided nearly \$50,000 to these graduates through scholarships, tuition assistance awards, early college support, and emergency book funding.

Graduates:

1st Row - Left to Right

Dedra Hillegass, Jacob Gallina, Madelyn Richards, Geena Kile, and Matthew Feight

2nd Row - Left to Right

Ester Palmer, Noah Kochara, Kristopher Diehl, Joshua Sheeder, Angela Miller-Barkman, John Hyde, and Halle Lingenfelter

Graduating in absentia:

Hailey Palmer

STUDENT SPEAKERS SHARE THEIR ACM EXPERIENCES

Three high-achieving students were chosen to serve as graduation speakers for the Bedford County Campus commencement ceremony held on May 19, 2026. Joshua Sheeder, Matthew Feight, and Angela Miller-Barkman reflected on their experiences and journeys at ACM's Bedford County Campus.

Joshua Sheeder

Joshua Sheeder, introduced by Dr. Derek Jones, earned an Associate Degree in Computer Technology with a concentration in Cybersecurity. Dr. Jones, Professor of Computer Technology, noted that over the past two years, "Josh has proven that it is never too late to pursue your passion." After careers in culinary arts and construction, Josh came to ACM as a post-traditional student with "a strong work ethic," earning Outstanding Student in Computer Technology honors and a Security Operations Center Analyst I certification through the Baltimore Cyber Range program.



Student Speakers:

Angela Miller-Barkman, Joshua Sheeder, and Matthew Feight

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Graduating summa cum laude, Joshua described his experience as “one of the biggest challenges” of his life and thanked Dr. Jones as “a great mentor whose guidance and knowledge allowed me to believe in myself whenever times felt as if I could not achieve this goal.”

He encouraged fellow graduates to carry forward a simple but powerful value.

“Kindness is the most powerful, most underrated force available to human beings.” He reflected on small but meaningful moments, like “the professor who noticed you were struggling” or “the stranger that held the door.” He reminded them, “The world needs people who listen, who show up, and who choose to treat the human being in front of them with dignity.” He concluded with encouragement: “You are brilliant, prepared, and ready. Now go be kind.”

Matthew Feight

Matthew Feight, introduced by Mrs. Leah Pepple, earned his Associate Degree in General Studies while still completing high school. Mrs. Pepple, Director of PA Advancement and Community Relations, described Matthew as “a remarkable young man whose sense of curiosity and eagerness to learn” set him apart. He was inspired by watching his sisters participate in ACM’s early college program. After enrolling in his first class as a freshman, Matthew set a bold goal. He aimed to graduate with both his diploma and associate degree. His achievement reflects “dedication, discipline, and vision for his future.”

Graduating summa cum laude, Matthew reflected on how unexpected journeys can unfold. He shared, “If you told me that I would be standing here four years ago, I would not have believed you. But sometimes thoughts and dreams that do not seem achievable become reality after time and determination.”



Joshua Sheeder



Matthew Feight

Sharing a quote from Leonardo da Vinci, “It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things,” Matthew addressed his fellow graduates. “This is exactly what all of you have done,” he said. “You went out and got your education and degree.” He encouraged them to continue their momentum. “Keep doing what you are doing and strive to be your best,” he added. Matthew will study Biochemistry and Bioinformatics at Juniata College and plans to attend medical school.

Angela Miller-Barkman

Angela Miller-Barkman, introduced by Dr. Kathy Thompson, earned her Associate Degree in Nursing and received an Outstanding Nursing Award. A post-traditional student, Angela balanced family, career, and years of responsibility before returning to pursue her dream. Dr. Thompson, Professor of Biological Sciences, shared that Angela “was a hardworking and very attentive student who served as a leader among her peers” and exemplifies the impact of ACM in the Bedford County community.

Angela opened her remarks by sharing, “Like many people, life happened. I spent years putting everyone else first. But the dream of education never really left me.” Her decision to return to school came from a simple realization that “a dream is still a dream, no matter your age.”

She described the Bedford County Campus as “more than classrooms, assignments, and exams,” but a place where she felt “supported, encouraged, and capable of succeeding.” Acknowledging the challenges of returning as an older student, she shared, “You look around and wonder if you are too late, but I learned that growth does not have an expiration date.”

Angela also recognized the role of her family. She shared, “They sacrifice with you and for you, stress with you, and celebrate with you every step of the way.”

She closed with a powerful reminder. “Dreams do not expire because of age. Sometimes the strongest people in the room simply are the ones brave enough to begin again.”



Angela Miller-Barkman