



High Country Home Educators

Presents

GRADUATION

May 19, 2018

*~Answers to the Most
Frequently Asked Questions~*

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General Information

Our vision and goal of the High Country Home Educators (HCHE) Graduation Ceremony is to create a memorable celebration that recognizes the accomplishments of each family and their graduate, inspires a long-term vision for other homeschool families, and ultimately brings glory and honor to the Lord.

What can graduates and parents expect from HCHE?

- Ceremony logistics – speakers, music, decorations, etc.
- Facility arrangements – rooms, technical services, memory table, etc.
- Custom diploma & cover – We will print the graduate’s diploma. It will identify your homeschool name and be signed by the graduate’s parent(s). Please see the section on “Requirements and Diploma” for additional details and limitations on the school name we can print on the diploma.
- Graduation ceremony podcast including the memory video will be available for viewing and downloading from the HCHE graduation website
- Graduation ceremony pictures – professionally photographed and free from copyright restrictions
- Reserved seating for each graduation family

What are the requirements to participate in the HCHE Graduation Ceremony?

Each family must be a member of the High Country Support Group (HCSG), High Country Christian Academy (HCCA), or High Country Enrichment Classes (HCEC). If you are not already a member, please complete the online HCSG membership application from the HCHE website (www.hche.org), and submit it with your membership fee; \$35 for new Support Group members and \$40 for renewals.

What does HCHE expect from graduates and parents?

HCHE requires *mandatory* attendance at the following meetings:

- Graduation coordination meeting (Tuesday, January 9, 2018)
Graduate and at least one parent *must* attend.
- Graduation rehearsal (Tuesday, May 15, 2018)
Graduate and *both* parents (if both parents are participating in ceremony) *must* attend.

*Note: Graduates and parents not attending rehearsal **will be dropped** from the graduation ceremony unless the absence is pre-approved by the HCSG Board. Please make early arrangements to attend this very important meeting. Extenuating emergency circumstances will be addressed by the HCSG Board.*

Registration

How do I register for graduation?

Due to the high demand and limited space in our ceremony, registration is prioritized.

HCHE Members-Only early graduation registration will be extended to people who became members of HCSG, HCCA or HCHE by Aug 30th. On October 1st, these families will receive an email containing a link to the on-line registration form. On November 1st, open registration will begin and a link to the o

online form will be posted to the graduation webpage at www.hche.org. Open registration will be done on a space-available basis through the final deadline on January 2nd. At anytime between November 1st and January 2nd, we may close registration if we exceed our space limitation.

Once you click the registration link in your email or on the graduation website, you will see a page listing the specific information needed to complete the application. Make sure you have all the necessary information before you begin to register. One of the required items on the application is the graduate's biography. *We highly recommend* the biography be composed in a word processor before starting the registration form. This will allow you to cut and paste it into the form's the biography field. *Once you start the registration form there is no way to save it and return later to finish. If you can't finish the form, you'll have to start over and reenter your information again.*

If you have all the required information, then click the "Continue" button at the bottom of the information page and you will be connected to the on-line registration form. After completing and submitting the form, you will receive a confirmation email at the primary email address you entered on the registration form.

Please note that online payment is required at the time the registration form submitted.

Ceremony Costs

What is the cost for the ceremony?

If registered by the open registration deadline, November 30, 2017, the cost is \$130 per graduate. If registered by the late registration deadline, January 2, 2018, the cost is \$175 per graduate. After the late deadline, space permitting, the cost is \$200.

The cost for the ceremony is separate from any membership fees, tuition, or class costs paid to HCSG, HCCA, or HCEC.

What is included in the price?

- The graduation ceremony
- Custom diploma & cover
- Six formal ceremony programs
- Podcast of the ceremony which can be viewed online or downloaded and burned to DVD
- Photographs taken during the ceremony by a professional photographer. Photos are available online and are provided free from copyright restrictions so you download as many as you want.
- Guest reception following the ceremony
- Optional memory table

When is payment due?

Payment in full is due at the completion of the online registration form, and may be made with a credit card, or debit card.

How do I cancel?

Please send an email to the graduation coordinators (sggraduation@hche.org) as soon as you know you need to cancel.

If I have to cancel, is my payment refundable?

Written requests for refunds are accepted up until the final registration deadline on January 2, 2018; however, \$50 of your payment is a *non-refundable* deposit. After the final registration deadline, no refunds will be given.

Additional Fees

Are there additional fees?

If you are not already a member of one of the HC branches, you must join one of them before you can register for graduation. The High Country Support Group (HCSG) branch can be joined at any time of year. The cost is \$35 for new members; \$40 for renewals. The registration form can be completed online at the HCHE website (www.hche.org).

Each graduate is also required to purchase a cap and gown from Jostens. The cost is approximately \$30.

Other purchases are optional:

- Honor cord
- Graduation announcements (printed with High Country information)
- Additional items such as class rings, clothing, personalized items, etc.

How do I order my cap and gown?

To get the group discount, you must order your cap and gown, announcements, and other optional items at the graduation coordination meeting on January 9, 2018. Josten's will attend the meeting to answer your questions as well as have a display table so you can see the products you are ordering. You will need to pay approximately \$20 deposit on your order at the meeting. The balance is due when your order arrives in April.

If you miss the group discount order deadline (January 9, 2018) you may also place your order online (www.jostens.com) or by contacting Josten's directly.

- Joe Adducci – Jostens
Pikes Peak Recognition, LLC
Phone (719) 633-8228
Fax (719) 633-8338
joe.adducci@jostens.com

Does Josten's offer a group discount?

A group discount is applied to your cap and gown and announcements ordered at the graduation meeting on January 9, 2018. So please plan ahead and determine the number of announcements you will need so you can participate in the group order and receive the discount that evening.

HCSG Scholarship

Does HCSG offer scholarships?

Yes. High Country Support Group funds an annual scholarship that is awarded to one or more outstanding students during the graduation ceremony. The scholarship application, along with eligibility criteria and necessary documentation, can be found on the graduation page at www.hche.org. The application needs to be submitted no later than Saturday, March 17, 2018.

Requirements & Diplomas

Does HCHE set any academic requirements for graduation?

No. High Country Home Educators, as a corporate ministry, is a support organization for homeschool families and does not verify or endorse graduation credits or requirements.

According to Colorado state homeschool law, each parent is responsible to determine graduation requirements and eligibility for his or her student.

According to the Colorado state private school law, students who graduate with the High Country Christian Academy choose to complete the high school graduation requirements set by the board of HCCA.

What school name goes on the diploma?

You will need to select a name for your homeschool. The use of High Country Home Educators, Support Group, or Enrichment Class *may not be used*. If you are a member of HCCA, that name will appear on your diploma.

Also, you *may not* use a school name which implies affiliation with a public, charter, or private school, such as The Classical Academy College Pathways, Colorado Springs Early Colleges, etc.

Meetings

What meetings are required?

There are two mandatory meetings prior to the graduation ceremony. You *must* attend:

- The graduation coordination meeting (Tuesday, January 9, 2018)
- The graduation rehearsal (Tuesday, May 15, 2018)

If you miss a required meeting, your place in the ceremony will be forfeited unless the HCSG board approves your absence ahead of time.

Do you send reminders before the meetings?

A courtesy email will be sent prior to each meeting; however, we cannot guarantee you receive the notice. Therefore, each family is solely responsible for attending all mandatory meetings. We provide a Calendar of Events (and deadlines) at the end of this booklet. **Please mark your calendar *now* to avoid conflicts with mandatory graduation meetings.**

Who is required to attend the meeting and rehearsal?

The graduate and at least one parent *must* attend the graduation coordination meeting. The graduate and both parents (if both are participating in the ceremony) *must* attend the rehearsal.

Why is attendance at these meetings mandatory?

Important instructions are given only at these meetings. At these meetings we run-through parts of the graduation ceremony itself because, as we all know as homeschooling parents, we may think we will know how to perform some task until we actually try it and then learn what aspects challenge us! Unfortunately, we do not have the staff available for individual instruction so your attendance at the meeting is essential.

Preparation for Graduation Day

Do I need a senior picture?

Yes, but nothing fancy or expensive is required. Some students in the past have provided flattering photos taken by a family member with a digital camera or high-resolution cell phone. Each family is responsible for getting their senior's photo taken. We suggest having the pictures taken as soon as possible in the Fall.

What is a memory video and how many photos are required?

The memory video is a montage of graduate photos that is played during the ceremony. Each graduate will need to submit three photos for the video. An optional fourth photo may be submitted for use in the ceremony program adjacent to the graduate's biography. If we only receive three pictures, then we will use your third picture as the Program picture. We recommend the following:

- Picture #1 - baby or toddler picture for the video (Required)
- Picture #2 - school age picture for the video (Required)
- Picture #3 - senior picture for the video (Required)
- Picture #4 - head and shoulders picture for the program (Optional)

Photos must be submitted as part of the registration online form. There are four fields for uploading your photos. The maximum size of all four image files may not exceed 20MB. We recommend you resize the photos if they are too large. Trying to upload files that exceed the size limitation will result in an error message on the form.

If after submitting your registration form, you need to update your photos, please email the updates to the sggraduation@hche.org. Send them as individual image files. One of the standard image formats (jpeg or bmp) is preferred. Also, please name the picture files in sequence from first (youngest) to last and include the graduate's last name, i.e. Smith01, Smith02, Smith03, and Smith04. Updated photos will be accepted if provided no later than April 1st.

HCSG reserves the right to review each photo for modesty and family friendliness. We will request replacements for photos which we determine are not appropriate within the context of this formal ceremony.

Do I need a photo for the ceremony program?

Each family must submit a senior picture that can be used in the ceremony program. The photo should be a close up head and shoulders image of the graduate's face. If you have a flattering photo that is not just of the graduate's head and shoulders, then we can crop it to make it work. If the third memory video photo is a frontal head and shoulders picture, you may use it for both the memory video and the program photo. If we do not receive a fourth picture, then we will assume you want to use picture number three in the memory video and the program.

What goes in the graduate's short biography?

Each graduate should describe accomplishments, goals, ambitions, or future plans in a short biography. This information is printed in the ceremony program adjacent to the graduate's head and shoulders photo. Please use first person when writing the biography.

In addition to the bio, each graduate may include a scripture verse (include Bible version) which will be added at the end of the bio.

The combined length of the biography and scripture verse cannot exceed 850 characters, which is approximately 150 words. The word limit is necessary because of the program's page size limitation.

We will not be editing content, unless it does not seem appropriate to place in the graduation program. If that decision is made, the graduate will be contacted and given an opportunity to revise the information.

We will have sample biographies from past ceremony programs available on the Graduation 2018 website. This will give you an idea of how a biography should be written.

The biography will need to be submitted as part of the online registration. We highly recommend that you compose the biography before starting the online registration form. Prepare the biography using a word processor (i.e. MS Word or Notepad) then cut and paste the text into the registration form's biography field.

May I give a speech or perform a song during the ceremony?

We welcome graduates to audition for a speech or musical performance for the ceremony. Graduates are generally allowed five minutes or less during the ceremony to share the musical presentation or speech. We are unable to accommodate all types of talents and performances, other than instrumental or vocal music and speeches. There may be an opportunity at the Junior & Senior Formal for other types of performances.

One way we remain within the two hour ceremony time frame is choosing to limit the number of speeches and musical presentations. We will not know how many graduates we will be able to accommodate until the final registration deadline and all of the auditions are complete.

If you are interested in auditioning, the following are required:

- Submit an audition application by the final registration deadline, January 2, 2018. Audition applications may be downloaded from the graduation website www.hche.org.
- Attend the auditions on Tuesday, February 20, 2018. Because we can only have one audition day, we apologize that anyone who cannot attend the audition that day will be disqualified.

What is a memory table?

The purpose of the memory table is to visually share the life of the graduate through pictures, awards, and memorabilia. HCHE provides half of an 8-foot table and a white tablecloth. Graduates and parents are responsible for arranging their items on the table before the ceremony and for cleaning up after the ceremony. The online graduation registration form contains a field for reserving a memory table.

Note: To honor the hospitality staff of New Life Church, no confetti, glitter, shiny stars or any other small decorative type items may be used.

The Ceremony

How long is the ceremony?

The ceremony is two hours long, and in respect for all attending, we carefully plan to stay within that time frame.

How many seats may I reserve?

Each *family* is allowed *up to* 12 reserved seats. The number of reserved seats should include the parents, siblings, and grandparents. Do not include the graduate in this number. General seating is available for any other guests that exceed the 12 seats in the reserved area.

Those families that require less than 12 reserved seats will be seated closer to the stage, due to the row configuration in the church sanctuary.

Note: Reserved seating may have to be limited further by the number of graduates, facility restrictions, or other unforeseen circumstances. Thank you for your understanding.

Can we take pictures during the ceremony?

We request no flash photography during the ceremony; the flashes affect the video. We have a professional photographer who will take photos of the graduate and parents during the diploma presentation, and throughout the ceremony.

How are diplomas presented?

Parents confer diplomas to their graduate during the ceremony. Parents are allowed only a maximum of 90 seconds per family to confer their student's diploma.

To honor other graduates, their families, and all of our guests, we ask that the parents ***plan and practice*** what they will say during this special moment.

At the coordination meeting you will be able to view past ceremonies and see parents conferring the diploma. This will give you an idea of what is said and how to stay within the time limit.

Because this special time will be captured on video, at rehearsal you will be instructed on how to use the microphone, where to stand, and how to face the camera, etc.

What is the honor cord?

The honor cord gives the parents an opportunity to explain to the guests and other graduates the area in which their graduate excelled. Some examples would be high academic achievement, excellence in character, honorable service, etc. This is optional and may be ordered through Jostens.

Parents will present the honor cord to their graduate during the presentation of the diploma; however, the graduate may not wear it before the ceremony.

Will the ceremony be broadcast over Internet?

Yes. This year we will make available, streaming video of the ceremony. For family and friends unable to attend the ceremony, they will be able to navigate to the New Life Church website and view the ceremony in real-time. The entire ceremony will be saved as a podcast and posted to the HCHE graduation website for convenient viewing at a later time. You may also share the ceremony with others by emailing them a link to the podcast or downloading and burning the podcast to DVD.

Contact Information

Website - www.hche.org - Support Group, Events, Graduation 2018

Email - sggraduation@hche.org – Greg and Renee Carlson

Calendar of Events

Preparation for Online Registration

➤ **Check List:**

- Visit Jostens website to get an idea of what you will be ordering
- Select family school name, if not already chosen
- Have senior pictures taken
- Select three photos for the memory video
- Select one senior close up photo for the ceremony program
- Compose graduate biography for the program
- Estimate the number of graduation announcements you will need
- Optional - Decide if graduate will be auditioning for a speech or musical performance. Download audition application from the graduation web page.
- Optional - Download scholarship application from the graduation web page if desired.

➤ **You are now ready to register online**

**October 1st thru
January 2nd**

Submit Graduation Registration

www.hche.org

➤ **The following items *must* be provided during the online registration process:**

- Completed graduation registration form
- Payment in full: \$130 if student registers by November 30, 2017 and \$175 if the student registers by January 2, 2018. After January 2, space permitting, the cost is \$200.
 - ◆ Payment must be made online with a credit card or debit card
 - ◆ Payment includes a \$50 *non-refundable* deposit
- Graduate biography and optional scripture verse
- Photos for the memory video and the ceremony program.
 - ◆ Photos must be uploaded into the registration form
- Audition application - music and speeches - Optional
- Scholarship application - Optional

Tuesday, January 9th

Graduation coordination Meeting

6:30PM – 8:30PM

New Life Church, Tent Auditorium

- **Attendance by graduate and at least one parent is required**
- **Jostens order must be placed at the coordination meeting to receive the group order discount pricing on your cap and gown and announcements.**

- Please determine before the meeting, the number of announcements you will need so that you can participate in the group order.
- Approximately \$20 deposit is required at the time you place your order. The balance is due when your order arrives in April.

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| Tuesday, February 20th | Performance Auditions |
| 4PM – 6PM | New Life Church, Student Chapel |

- **In order to participate in audition:**
 - Graduate must submit an audition application by the final registration deadline January 2, 2018
 - Contact the graduation coordinators if special arrangements are required to support your audition

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| Tuesday, May 15th | Rehearsal |
| 6:30PM – 8:30PM | New Life Church, Main Sanctuary |

- **Attendance by graduate and both parents (if both are participating in the ceremony) is required**

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| Saturday, May 19th | Graduation Ceremony |
| 10AM – 12PM | New Life Church, Main Sanctuary |

- **All graduates and parents must arrive by 8:30 AM for final walk-through and pictures**

Acronyms

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| | |
| HCCA | High Country Christian Academy |
| HCEC | High Country Enrichment Classes |
| HCHE | High Country Home Educators |
| HCSG | High Country Support Group |
| NLC | New Life Church |