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## NEWS RELEASE

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### Okaloosa County School District Celebrates Okaloosa UP Graduates

The Okaloosa County School District, along with families and friends, proudly celebrated five outstanding Okaloosa Unique Professionals (Okaloosa UP) program graduates on Thursday, May 22. William Shoebrook, Ken Edwards, Paul Wade, Lindsey Trippe, and Miranda Rouissin completed the program, gaining invaluable career training and earning occupational completion points, career certificates, and industry certifications. Each student completed the Specialized Career Instruction course, earning a Unique Professional Certificate. They also pursued additional certifications through Career and Technical Education (CTE) coursework. The program provided hands-on experience in Carpentry and Culinary labs, helping students build employability skills.

Graduates have gained essential life and career skills—including teamwork, budgeting, time management, and initiative—thanks to the dedicated support of industry partners such as Hilton Garden Inn and Holiday Inn Resort on Okaloosa Island, Salvation Army, Dewey Destin's Navarre, Pink Coyote Dessert Company, Perfect Blend Coffee Company, Career Source, Vocational Rehabilitation, Odom Hotels, Emerald Coast Development Center, and JRS Coffee. These organizations have played a pivotal role in helping students develop the tools needed for success. Many graduates have already secured employment or plan to continue their education, demonstrating the program's lasting impact in preparing students for the future.

Superintendent Marcus Chambers shared, "This program empowers students with the skills and confidence to thrive beyond graduation. Their dedication and perseverance set a shining example, and we are incredibly proud of their accomplishments." A special thanks to the families who played a pivotal role in supporting these students throughout their journey. Their guidance and encouragement have been instrumental in helping them achieve success.



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