Port Charlotte girl named outstanding graduate

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Provided by Jessica Klipa
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota

A Port Charlotte resident was presented with the Outstanding Graduate Award during State College of Florida’s recent winter commencement ceremony.

The award, sponsored by the SCF Foundation, was presented to Kortny Hayden, a student who has shown superior leadership, academic achievement and community service while attending SCF. Hayden, of Port Charlotte, served as the president of the Alpha Mu Upsilon chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She organized food and toiletry drives for a Charlotte County homeless shelter, a supplies drive for the Animal Welfare League and beach cleanups. Hayden is also the 2013 coordinator for the annual Give Kids a Smile Program and has volunteered for Relay for Life and at a therapeutic horse ranch for disabled children. She was the recipient of the Mazie E. Ulmer Endowed Scholarship through The SCF Foundation Inc. in the fall.

She has been accepted into the University of South Florida Tampa Honors College, where she will pursue a bachelor’s degree in microbiology. She later plans to earn a doctor of dental medicine degree from the University of Florida and hopes to work with the National Health Service Corps to provide dental care to underserved communities.

Other finalists were Kelsey Carper of Venice, Caleb Jordan of Sarasota, Andrew Sink of Sarasota, and Fernando Valbuena of Bradenton.

SCF’s winter 2012 commencement exercises were held Dec. 14 in the Neel Performing Arts Center at SCF Bradenton. Two ceremonies were held to accommodate the 201 graduates who participated in the ceremonies out of 890 students eligible for graduation. In addition to associate degree graduates, this number included 25 bachelor of science in nursing graduates and the first class of seven bachelor of applied science in health services administration graduates.

The guest speaker was Sarah Pappas, president and CEO of the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation and president emeritus of State College of Florida. Pappas was president of SCF, then called Manatee Community College, from 1997 until her retirement in 2008 from a 40-year career in higher education.
SCF also has campuses in South Venice and Lakewood Ranch.