



Class of 2025 GRADUATES

Hill Country Christian School of Austin



JACOB LINDSEY

High School Principal

Seniors,

“Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.’”
— Matthew 16:24-27 (ESV)

Although the Oxford University Press’s “Word of the Year” announcements are by no means definitive or comprehensive assessments of the current cultural moment, I find them intriguing to consider as one way of making sense of where we are as a society. Looking at their selections over the past decade, for example, we find some interesting trends in the words chosen for this esteemed distinction:

- 2013: selfie
- 2014: vape
- 2015: 🤪
- 2016: post-truth
- 2017: youthquake
- 2018: toxic
- 2019: climate emergency
- 2020: (no single word chosen; COVID-19 and pandemic selected, among others)
- 2021: vax
- 2022: goblin mode
- 2023: rizz
- 2024: brain rot

Sure, the years 2019-2021 encapsulate a particular focus on world events and phenomena, whether related to the environment or public health, but I am especially struck by the self-focused nature of the other selections. Selfies provide us with the opportunity to capture ourselves, particularly our physical appearance, and convey an image to others in the manner of our choosing. The characterization that we live in a post-truth society suggests that objective facts and evidence are less influential in shaping public opinion than emotions and personal beliefs. In such a world, “the truth” becomes frighteningly eclipsed by “my truth” with subsequent concerns about relativism and even nihilism soon to follow.

Without commenting on the potentially solipsistic nuances and connotations for each of the aforementioned Words of the Year, it also seems worth noting their emphasis on self-serving behavior. Though the publisher’s own Oxford English Dictionary may not define goblin mode or rizz, the Urban Dictionary and Wikipedia—two stalwarts of academic research—explain those terms as follows:

goblin mode: a type of behavior that is unapologetically self-indulgent, lazy, or greedy, typically in a way that rejects social norms or expectations

rizz: a person's ability to seduce a potential (usually female) love interest; charm or “game.”

Yikes. Whether casually hedonistic or patently disrespectful, these words bespeak a toxic cultural landscape. The most recent addition to the list, the selection for 2024, is likewise indicative of some potentially concerning cultural trends and individual behaviors observed in society today, which likely impact all of us to some extent in our current Internet Age:

brain rot: the supposed deterioration of a person’s mental or intellectual state, especially viewed as a result of overconsumption of trivial material, especially online

To be fair, the Oxford University Press does not aim to make moral claims or evaluations about the words it annually acknowledges. Rather, they nominate potential Words of the Year by using software to collect and scan approximately 150 million English words in use online, and after compiling this data, a team of dictionary editors, lexicographers, and other staff members evaluate the offerings and determine the final selection based on the word’s notability and relevance.

The truth of the matter is that while I do not see these words as necessarily driving our culture, I would like to posit that they reflect the increasingly self-centered nature of our society. As your time as a Hill Country student draws to a close, my hope and prayer is that your educational experience has primed you for a lifetime of discipleship and sacrifice as you pursue not only excellence in your academic and professional endeavors but seek to impact our world by sharing the life-changing reality and love of Jesus Christ. While the prevailing worldly sentiment may be that it is perfectly acceptable to wallow in narcissism, hedonism, or other self-serving ideologies, Jesus calls us to a better way forward, and we are collectively blessed to invite others on that journey as well.

In chapter 16 of Matthew’s gospel, Jesus foretells his death and resurrection to the disciples, though Peter bristles at the idea, and his followers struggle to comprehend the kind of sacrifice he intends to make on their—and the world’s—behalf. Furthermore, Jesus declares the following: *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?”* Though we may not literally take up a Roman cross in the manner that Christ did, he also calls us to give up our lives, perhaps sacrificing certain kinds of worldly success or personal preferences in exchange for something far greater. As you approach your graduation—an incredible milestone in your life as a young adult—you likely find yourself at a point when success in college, in your career, and in other areas of life seem like the utmost priorities. These are not bad things in and of themselves, but my encouragement and challenge to you are that as you embark on the next chapter of your respective journeys, you do not lose sight of the formative years you had with your families, churches, and Hill Country, all of which have hopefully prepared you to pursue excellence in ways that advance the gospel and share God’s love with others, refusing to “forfeit your soul” in the process.

Congratulations, Class of 2025! We are grateful for your indelible impact on our school and pray that you will seek to honor and glorify Christ, serving him and others with your lives.



JANAE JOY WALLACE | *Valedictorian*



I came to HillCo in 6th grade and plan to attend Abilene Christian University to study Art Education. Though I could go on about how they have cultivated my intellect and skill in eloquently sharing my ideas, what has truly impacted me the most is the love the teachers have for their students. I have never felt so recognized and valued as a person, and all of the staff have hearts full of compassion for every one of us. As someone who wants to be a teacher, I am inspired to carry on the love they have for me into the rest of the world. Thank you so much for all you have done—I will never forget you!

ELIZABETH HOPE HUANG | *Salutatorian*



I came to Hill Country in 2nd grade, and over the past eleven years, I've been deeply blessed by this Christ-centered community. Through the care of my teachers and the encouragement of my peers, God has refined and strengthened me. Hill Country equipped me to think critically, lead with humility, and approach the world through a biblical lens. As I head to the University of Texas to study Public Health (pre-med), I carry with me not just knowledge, but a deep trust in the Lord's plan. I'm forever grateful to my teachers for encouraging my enthusiasm for learning and to my friends for always pointing me back to Jesus. Thank you to everyone who's walked with me—your love and support have made all the difference.

SENIOR WALK





LOGAN JOSEPH BERZINS

NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



GRACIE ANN BOCKUS

NHS
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESEE, KNOXVILLE



JORDIN LINNEA BOULWARE

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



BELLA GRACE BURGAN

NHS
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY



LANDON COLE CARR

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY



ALEX DANIEL CEPEDA

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



CARTER CLEARWATER CRAVENS

GAP YEAR



NATHAN MICHAEL DORRIS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS



CRISTIAN ILAN FLORES

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



LANCE JAMES FRUHLING

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



BLADE CHRISTIAN GILLEY

NHS
TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



MARY CLAIRE GILLIAM

HARDIN-SIMMONS UNIVERSITY



GRANT NICHOLAS GREENE

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



OLIVIA GRACE HOHMAN

NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



ELIZABETH HOPE HUANG

NHS
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



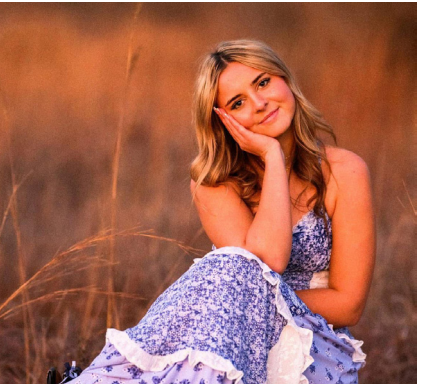
CHELSEA REIGH HUDGENS

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



KATELYN ALENE HUTMACHER

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY



JULIA LOVE JACKSON

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



RYAN CHRISTOPHER KIM

NHS
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



KADEN MICHAEL KNISLEY

GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY



CREED MATTHEW IVAN KOURI

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



WESLEY JOSEPH KWAN

NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



AVERY MARIE LYONS

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



KAYLA RAYNE MAKI

NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



CLAIRE ELIZABETH MORRIS
NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



CHARLES LUKE NELSON
LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY



MAXIMUS QUANGVINH NGUYEN
NHS
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS



ASHLEIGH DANAЕ O'BANION
NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



GRACE MADELINE O'BRIEN
NHS
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS



DANIELLE NICOLE ORBOCK
WESTMONT COLLEGE



PENELOPE JUNE PALMER
NHS
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS



LAUREN MARIE PARR
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



GRIFFIN MICHAEL RADKE
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



JACOB DOUGLAS RASBERRY
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



ABRAM MICHAEL RHEINHEIMER
NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



ISABEL PENELOPE SASS
GEORGIA MILITARY COLLEGE



ELIZABETH ANNE SAYLES
NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



DANIELA ANNELISE SCATA
NHS
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



HENRY EDWARD SCHAEFER
TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY



ISAAC DAVID SHIN
NHS
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



JOSHUA JAMES SHUFFIELD
NHS
TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY



NICHOLAS ANDREW SILBERMANN
NHS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO



GABRIELLA REESE VILCEK
NHS
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESEE, KNOXVILLE



JANAE JOY WALLACE
NHS
ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



CHRISTIAN PHILIP WILSON
TRINITY UNIVERSITY



ALYSSA CHRISTINE WOODFORD
NHS
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

The Lord **BLESS YOU** and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and **BE GRACIOUS TO YOU**;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and **GIVE YOU PEACE.**

NUMBERS 6:24-26

ALPHA OMEGA

Graduates



Gracie Bockus



Cristian Flores



Blade Gilley



Chelsea Hudgens



Wesley Kwan



Avery Lyons



Kayla Maki



Ashleigh O'Banion



Grace O'Brien



Lauren Parr



Elizabeth Sayles



Isaac Shin

ALPHA OMEGA

Graduates



Joshua Shuffield



Christian Wilson



Alyssa Woodford

Alpha Omegas are students who have attended Hill Country Christian School for 12 consecutive years.

Class of 2025 ACCEPTANCES

Abilene Christian University • Auburn University • Augusta University • Austin College • Baylor University • Belmont University • Bethany College
Biola University • California Baptist University • Charleston Southern University • Colorado Christian University • Colorado State University
Dallas Baptist University • East Texas Baptist University • Elmhurst University • Erskine College • Full Sail University • Georgia Military College
Grand Canyon University • Hardin-Simmons University • Harding University • Hillsdale College • Indiana University (Bloomington) • Iowa State University
LeTourneau University • Liberty University • Lipscomb University • Long Island University (Brooklyn) • Louisiana Tech University • Mississippi State University
New Mexico Military Institute • New Mexico Tech • Northern Michigan University • Norwich University • Oklahoma Baptist University
Oklahoma Christian University • Oral Roberts University • Ouachita Baptist University • Penn State University • Point Loma Nazarene University
Rochester Institute of Technology • Sam Houston State University • Samford University • Savannah College of Art & Design • Schreiner University
Sewanee: The University of the South • Southern Methodist University • Southwestern University • Tarleton State University • Texas A&M University
Texas A&M University (Corpus Christi) • Texas Christian University • Texas State University • Texas Tech University • The University of Alabama
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville • The University of Texas at Austin • The University of Texas at Dallas • The University of Texas at San Antonio
Trinity University • Union University • United States Air Force Academy • United States Coast Guard Academy • United States Naval Academy
University of Arizona • University of Arkansas • University of California Davis • University of California, San Diego • University of California Santa Cruz
University of Colorado Boulder • University of Florida • University of Georgia • University of Houston • University of Kentucky • University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
University of Miami • University of Mississippi • University of North Texas • University of Oklahoma • University of St Andrews • Virginia Commonwealth University
• Weber State University • West Virginia University • Westmont College • Wheaton College • William & Mary College



The Class of 2025 has been offered
merit scholarships in excess of

\$7,600,000

CONGRATULATIONS, *Class of 2025*



Hill Country Christian School of Austin
12124 RR 620 N | Austin, Texas 78750
512.331.7036 | www.HillCountryChristianSchool.org
Preparing for College. Preparing for Life.

We partner with Christian families to impart truth, cultivate character, and inspire service while preparing college-bound students to think logically, communicate effectively, and impact the world with the love of Christ.

Subject to the Constitution of the United States and all applicable state and federal laws, Hill Country Christian School of Austin does not discriminate against applicants or students on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin in its admissions or in the administration of its education policies, programs, or activities. In addition, subject to the Constitution of the United States and all applicable state and federal laws, Hill Country Christian School of Austin does not discriminate in its employment practices.