

For Immediate Release

Valedictorians, Salutatorians Announced for Cedar Shoals, Clarke Central, Classic City high schools

Athens, Georgia — The Clarke County School District is proud to announce the 2022 valedictorians and salutatorians for Cedar Shoals, Clarke Central, and Classic City high schools. These students earned the highest and second-highest grade-point averages in their graduating classes, respectively, and will be joined by their classmates at CCSD's graduation ceremonies this week.

"Congratulations to these high-achieving students for their hard work and determination in their pursuit of greatness, both in the classroom and in all of their other activities," said CCSD superintendent Dr. Xernona Thomas. "We congratulate all of our 2022 graduates for the work they have put in to reach this important milestone and wish them many more successes as they venture into the next chapter of their lives."

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CEDAR SHOALS HIGH SCHOOL

Valedictorian — Hadiza Sarr

Cedar Shoals valedictorian Ms. Hadiza Sarr is currently a member of National Honor Society, Beta Club, and the Bridge to Employment program, where she serves as member of the management team and as an International Ambassador. During her time at Cedar Shoals, she has also participated in the Student Government Association, St. Mary's Explorers Program, softball, and she was the Cedar Shoals First to First Coordinator for the 2020 elections. Ms. Sarr enjoys volunteering with events such as Safe Trick or Treat, cleaning the streets around the school, and serving as a poll worker for the Athens-Clarke County Elections Office.

Ms. Sarr is also a Foundation Fellow for the Class of 2026 at the University of Georgia. There, she plans to earn a bachelor's degree in Cellular Biology and a master's degree in Public Health, concentrating in Epidemiology or Health Promotion. In addition to pursuing a dual degree, she is on a pre-health track and believes that having both perspectives in community health and biological science will prepare her to become a better physician assistant.

"Hadiza is one of the most intelligent young ladies I have ever met at Cedar Shoals High School, and she has represented our school in an extraordinary manner," said Cedar Shoals counselor Shamikia Bolton. "She is a hard worker, dedicated to serving her community, and she loves to build relationships with people from diverse backgrounds. Hadiza is a natural-born leader and a team player. I know she will continue to strive for academic excellence on her educational journey. It has been an honor to serve as her school counselor."

Salutatorian — Jacob Weiszer

Cedar Shoals salutatorian Mr. Jacob Weiszer has been involved in the National Honor Society, Beta Club, and Mathematics Club, while playing on the varsity soccer team and in the school's

marching band. He is also Sports Editor for the school's BluePrints student magazine and a member of the AFTY Religious Youth Group. His community service involvement includes serving as a YWCO Summer Day Camp volunteer, first-grade Religious School volunteer, and Teens in Action Camp volunteer.

Mr. Weiszer plans to attend the University of Georgia, starting this fall, and double-major in Finance and International Business on a track to receive either a Master of Business Administration or Juris Doctor (law) degree.

"Jacob is an intelligent and hardworking young man who has been an active student at Cedar Shoals High School," said Ms. Bolton. "He is a critical thinker who enjoys working with people and helping to solve problems. It has been an honor to serve as his school counselor, and I know he will continue to make us proud."

Principal Antonio Derricotte had this message for the 2022 Cedar Shoals valedictorian and salutatorian: "To our Distinguished Jaguars, Hadiza and Jacob, congratulations! Your work ethic and determination epitomize the dedication and passion you have tirelessly demonstrated to be named valedictorian and salutatorian! The Cedar Shoals family is proud of you and wishes you the best as you continue to climb to new heights on your educational journey!"

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CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Valedictorian — Ludwig Lechtreck

Clarke Central valedictorian Mr. Ludwig Lechtreck has been a member of the varsity tennis team and the Academic Bowl team. He served as a student representative on the Local School Governance Team (LSGT) and the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. He attended the Governor's Honors Program, and he is the recipient of the Charlotte and Claude Williams American History Award and the Marge Schneider Memorial Science Award.

Mr. Lechtreck plans to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology starting this fall and study computer science.

"Ludwig is one of the most intellectually-gifted students I've had the opportunity to work with at Clarke Central," said CCHS counselor Heidi Nibbelink. "What stands out to me even more than his academic prowess is his kindness, generosity, and his willingness to put himself in the position of novice and not expert. He's always up for trying new things and learning new skills."

"Ludwig is one of the hardest-working students I have taught in my time at Clarke Central High School as well as one of the most capable academic students," added Mr. Lechtreck's advisor, Matthew Regester. "Ludwig demonstrated his strong ability to learn independently and how to professionally communicate during the digital learning period for Clarke Central and in his dual-enrollment classes. He has proven himself to be a deserving valedictorian through his tireless work, natural brilliancy, and great club involvement at Clarke Central."

Salutatorian — Gretchen Hinger

Clarke Central salutatorian Ms. Gretchen Hinger is a four-year letterman and team captain of the varsity softball, swim, and golf teams. Along with athletics, she is the National Honor Society

chapter president and Sports Editor for the school's ODYSSEY Media Group, where she has won a multitude of national and state awards for her journalistic work. Outside of school, she is a coach for the Downtown Dolphins Swim Team and swims with Athens Bulldog Swim Club year-round.

Ms. Hinger will be attending the Georgia Institute of Technology in the fall and plans to study aerospace engineering.

"Gretchen is a positive force in our school and community," said Clarke Central counselor Lisa Smith-Proffitt. "She is a leader who believes in equity by encouraging and supporting women in the STEM field."

Ms. Hinger's advisor, John Ritzler, added: "I can't think of anyone who could possibly deserve the honor more. Gretchen is everything that a Gladiator can be: a scholar, an athlete, a community leader, and a kind person. After four years with Gretchen, it's hard to imagine Clarke Central without her. We will miss her as much as her future will welcome her."

Clarke Central principal Dr. Swade Huff had this to say about this year's school valedictorian and salutatorian: "Congratulations to both Ludwig and Gretchen for their prestigious recognition! To be named valedictorian and salutatorian is indicative of their work ethic and intrinsic motivation to be successful in life. They have represented our school community with pride during the past four years, and we wish them well with their future endeavors. Go Glads!"

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CLASSIC CITY HIGH SCHOOL

Valedictorian — Abreanna Daniel

Salutatorian — Jamal Mattox, Jr.

Ms. Daniel plans to attend Piedmont College and major in education. Mr. Mattox plans to attend Athens Technical College and major in computer technology with the goal of becoming a computer technician.

"Abreanna defines what a great student should and can be, always smiling and willing to assist others," said Classic City principal Dr. Johnathan Page. "Jamal was a quiet and humble student who always did the right thing, no matter what."

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