Dear Graduate and Parents,

We are excited to be celebrating the 21st Annual NYS LEAH Commencement Ceremony and would like to let you know how blessed we are to welcome you to the LEAH Class of 2016. We call this ceremony a “commencement” ceremony rather than a “graduation” ceremony because instead of thinking of this as an end of your school years, we consider this a celebration of the beginning of what God will be doing in your life.

Please carefully read through the following items of interest so that you can make necessary arrangements for you and your family.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location/Time: The commencement ceremony will take place at the Voller Athletic Center (VAC) at Roberts Wesleyan College near Rochester, NY on June 4, 2016. The ceremony will begin at 5 PM. A pre-ceremony slide-show presentation of graduates’ photos will begin at approximately 4:30 PM. Graduate families do not need to register for the LEAH Jubilee if they are only participating in the commencement ceremony. If entering the main doors, please identify yourselves as a graduate family to be granted entrance.

Jubilee and Facility: As the Commencement Ceremony, we are sharing the facilities with the NYS LEAH Upstate Homeschool Family Jubilee and space is tight. When entering the building, remember we are guests of the Jubilee. Please do your best to be sensitive to what is going on around you and remember that your children are your responsibility. There will not be very much for anyone to do in between commencement events and you may want to bring something for younger ones to do. We have worked hard with the organizers of the Jubilee to coordinate all the events to eliminate as many scheduling conflicts as possible, but we are aware that it is not perfect and there may be areas in which we could exhibit grace.

Please be advised that the VAC (gymnasium) is not climate-controlled. If it is warm outside, it will be warmer inside.

Guests: Guests may enter the VAC after 3:35 PM and will not be charged the conference fee. There are tickets required for the commencement ceremony as there is limited seating. The Vendor Hall will have closed at 1 PM but vendors may still be packing up as guests begin entering. Please have your guests be respectful as they work their way to their seats.

Tickets: Tickets are required for the commencement and are general admission. No one will be admitted to the gymnasium without a ticket. The tickets are for either bleachers or accessible floor seating. You will receive the tickets you requested for your guests with your commencement package. Graduates and parents DO NOT NEED TICKETS.
Seating: **Tickets are required** and are general admission, either bleachers or accessible floor seating. The only reserved seats are for the graduates and their parents, so please make arrangements for any other children to sit with someone else.

Parking: There is ample parking in the vicinity of the VAC. A campus map is available online at: [www.roberts.edu](http://www.roberts.edu) with parking lots and buildings clearly marked. Parking is free and there are many handicapped spots available.

Hotels: If overnight accommodations are needed, visit [www.leah.org](http://www.leah.org) to obtain a list of hotels that are extending special rates for the LEAH Jubilee. Please take note of deadlines.

Meals: Our day is very full, with only time for brief meals/snacks. I suggest you eat before you arrive or plan to pre-order breakfast or lunch from the Garlock Dining Hall on campus. There will also be approximately one-half hour after the rehearsal and before line-ups when there would be time to grab a snack. To pre-order meals from the dining hall go to: [www.leah.org](http://www.leah.org). The deadline to order is May 1, 2016. You are welcome bring a cooler with you although you may not bring your food into the Dining Hall.

**DETAILED INFORMATION**

Parents & Graduates: In order for this day to run smoothly, everyone needs to be prepared and **ON TIME**. These instructions should answer most of your questions, but there will be a short Q & A at the rehearsal.

Special Needs: Each of you will need to climb a small set of stairs to the stage, and then exit down more stairs. There will be volunteers to assist you, but if climbing stairs is a problem for you, or, if you have other needs, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make arrangements.

Attire: Please remember that **modesty** is the rule and this is a special day. Both parents and graduates will be on stage for the diploma presentation.

Photos: Each graduate (with parents) will be center stage for a very brief photo opportunity after receiving their diploma. The official photographer will take the stage photographs and make them available to order. This year there will be NO taped area in the center aisle in front of the stage or off to the side for the benefit of your guests. Please ask your guests to stay seated, as it will be disrupting to other guests if folks are leaving the bleachers. There is also a safety concern regarding many people moving around, exiting, and returning to the bleachers. **No video cameras are to be set up in the aisles.**

If you have not yet ordered professional portraits, go to: [http://www.lrsiiimages.com/leah_conv.html](http://www.lrsiiimages.com/leah_conv.html) for pricing and order form.

Video of the Ceremony: LRS IMAGES will be offering a DVD of the entire ceremony at a reasonable price. To receive a discount you must order by May 1st. Go to: [http://www.lrsiiimages.com/leah_conv.html](http://www.lrsiiimages.com/leah_conv.html) to order or for more details.
What to bring:

Your Cap/Gown/Tassel/Diploma
Tickets
**a package with your order will arrive in early May**
Bobby pins to hold cap
Camera, extra film, batteries, and someone to use it!
Brush, comb, tissues
Safety pins (you never know!)

Schedule for the day

7:45-8:40 AM – Jubilee Breakfast - needs to be pre-ordered. Garlock Dining Hall

9:00 AM – Graduate Breakfast – Must have pre-registered - Ellen Stowe Room within Garlock Dining Hall.

10:00 AM – Speakers Graduate Breakfast – Parents of pre-registered graduates are invited. Ellen Stowe.

10:30 AM – Graduate Breakfast ended.

11:30 AM – Arrive at the Voller Athletic Center (VAC) at Roberts Wesleyan College and find restrooms, locker rooms, or changing rooms. See the enclosed map of the facility. The individual photos are the first event, and you will want to change into your cap and gown.

12-1:00 PM – Jubilee Lunch – needs to be pre-ordered. Garlock Dining Hall

12-1:00 PM – Individual photos taken in the gym. If you ordered a portrait package, please do not forget to have your photo taken. The photographer will be able to accommodate any who did not previously order portraits.

1:00 PM – Assemble at the NEAR SIDE of the gym for the group photos. This area is located along the track near the bleachers; watch for the sign. Your name will be on a list by height with the tallest graduates closest to the bleachers. Each group will line up on the bleachers when directed to do so. Please try to remain quiet so that you can hear and follow instructions. We cannot wait for you; if you are late you will miss the photo. Parents: there is not much room in this area and your help in keeping this area clear for the graduates is appreciated.

1:45 PM – Or when group photo is completed: Head directly to the floor seating, where the rehearsal will take place. There will be volunteers to assist you. Please find your seats as quickly as possible. It will take a while to seat almost 400 people so that the rehearsal can begin on time.
2:00 PM – Or when everyone is seated: Rehearsal begins. **Grads and both parents** should be in attendance unless prior arrangements have been made with Holly. **Please be on time.** If you should arrive late, please quickly and quietly, find, and take your seats.

3:30 PM (approx.) – Rehearsal ends. Seating area must be vacated immediately so it can be set up for the ceremony.

3:35 PM – **Guests** may the gymnasium for commencement seating.

3:50 PM – **Grads** will be able to view the Pre-Ceremony DVD in the **Garlock Dining Hall.** This is the only opportunity for the graduates to view the slideshow as they are lining up when it is show to the parents and guests.

4:00 PM – **Parents** line up in the same order as rehearsal on the **Upper Level of the VAC.** There are stairs or an elevator to reach the upper level. There will be a volunteer and signs to assist you. Please follow their directions. You will be entering at **4:10 PM** whether everyone is in place or not. Again, it takes a while to seat 250+ so please be on time. There are only enough seats reserved for parents. Siblings will need to sit with other guests.

4:30 PM – **Grads** line up in the same order as rehearsal on the **Lower Level of the VAC.** There will be signs and someone to assist you. Tassels should be on the left, you will be instructed as to when to switch to the right.

4:30 PM – Parents have been seated and the Pre-Ceremony DVD begins

5:00 PM – Ceremony begins

7:00 PM (approximately) – Ceremony ends. Recessional begins for graduates with parents following. **Please ask guests to remain at their seats until the parents have exited the gym.** When leaving the gym, graduates (and parents) are to continue out to the main lobby area (Lower Level) to greet guests.

If you have questions, feel free to contact us:

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** We are heading to Rochester on June 1st, so use Holly’s cell number: 585-362-5833 **