



Cove graduate wins HOSA competition

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Brenda Thomas has lived in Copperas Cove all of her life, and went from grade school to high school in the CCISD school system.

She graduated from Copperas Cove High School in May of this year and was named the Class of 2025 Valedictorian. Now Thomas is embarking on a new journey, but will always be grateful to her teachers for everything that she has learned.

She is now attending the University of Texas at Austin to become a registered nurse.

While she was attending Cove High School she was involved with HOSA which stands for a student-led organization that promotes career opportunities in the health industry by developing leadership skills, providing hands-on experience, and encouraging responsible citizenship among students in secondary, postsecondary, and collegiate programs.

Through activities like the Competitive Events Program and leadership development, HOSA helps to recruit and prepare future healthcare providers for a variety of roles.

Her preparation and hands-on learning while attending high school gave her all of the tools that she needed to be successful in the first ever HOSA competition for Patient Care Technician. Thomas competed against many students in Texas to win the Patient Care Technician title in April of this year.

She along with 51 other students who competed from across 28 states went on to the international HOSA competition. Vying for the same title and once again Brenda Thomas won first place in the Patient Care Technician category and along with that title a gold medal and \$1,000 dollar college scholarship.

In all 1,140 students competed at this year's competition. The event was put on by the National Health Career Association. 47 high school students and five post secondary/collegiate students

qualified for the HOSA International Leadership Conference which was held in June 2025 in Nashville, Tennessee.

The competition had two rounds. The first was a written test which touched on topics such as patient care, electrocardiogram (EKG), phlebotomy and infection control. The second round was an assessment of the students hands on face to face patient skills.

Thomas says that she has been learning a lot being involved with HOSA, and she has learned a lot from her grandfather who she is close with, and who has always supported her. Because of that relationship she is wanting to focus her attention on helping the older generation as a geriatric nurse.

Miss Thomas said, “I really enjoyed the whole process and competition, and I got to compete against some great students from the United States and from all over the world. It was fun and it was a great learning experience.”

“What was great about the competition was that it was a chance to apply everything I’d learned in the classroom and on the job.”

Thomas say’s, “Because I was already pursuing my PCT certification through NHA, I felt prepared—but the real value was learning how to bring empathy and emotional care into every skill. Competing confirmed my decision to become a geriatric nurse and showed me just how meaningful bedside care can be.”

“If I could give anyone who is seeking a career in healthcare advice it would be, “I would say just jump in and go for it. We need more doctors, nurses and other health care professionals.”