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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meetings

Thursday, Aug. 15 & 29, 2019
7 p.m.
Administration Building
1220 Howard St.

Board Advance Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 2019
6:15 p.m.
Media Center
West Main Professional
Development Center
1627 W. Main St.

For more information, call
(269) 337-1572

First Day of School

Sept. 3, 2019
K-12 attend a.m. only
No half-day kindergarten

First Full Day of School K-12

First Day for Half-Day
Kindergarten
Sept.4, 2019

Winter Break

Dec. 23, 2019-Jan. 4, 2020

Spring Break

April 6 - 10, 2020

Phoenix High School
undergoing \$6.4 million
renovation, moving
for 2019 - 2020
school year.
Read more, page 20.

Congratulations to the Class of 2019

Special graduation edition: See inside for the names of graduates, photos, and selected student stories.



Brianna French, Jayshawn Fullerton and William Fulton wait for the Kalamazoo Central graduation to begin.



Phoenix graduation 2019: Ashah Allen, Salutatorian



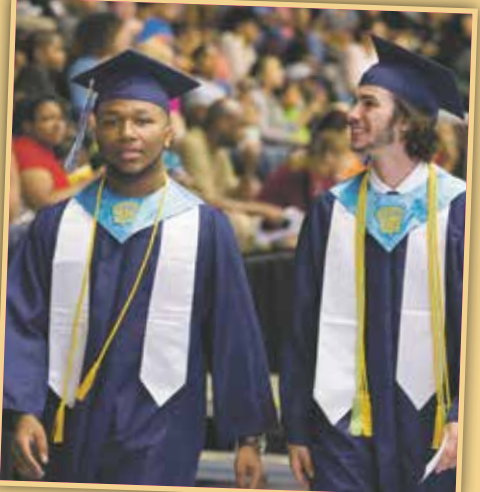
Before the start of the Loy Norrix candlelight ceremony, from left, Rebecca Thompson, Caitlin Scott, Zoe Srackangast, and Jenessa Sok smile for a photo before heading into the auditorium.



Phoenix students pose before graduation. Clockwise from top left: Quincie Alexander, Alvin White, Nia Allen, and Kamryn Troxler.



Alexus Smith pauses for a kiss during the Kalamazoo Central commencement.



Deon Kelley and Dustin Keltsch march into Wings Event Center.

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Congratulations to Our Graduates

Class of 2019, congratulations! It was a pleasure to attend your graduations this year and to honor your many accomplishments.

At the Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program (KILP) graduation, I spoke about four-letter words, including one I particularly dislike: can't. I also reflected on Henry Ford, good doubt, and better failure.

At the Kalamazoo Adult Education graduation, I shared the importance of dreaming big. I di-

aled up the original dream keeper poet, Langston Hughes, and urged graduates not to let anyone step on their dreams.

At the Phoenix graduation, I quoted Shayla Anderson, a member of my Phoenix Student Advisory Council (SAC), who had told her fellow SAC members just a few weeks earlier: "Your past is not your future." Go ahead, Shayla.

At the Loy Norrix graduation, apart from a somewhat unusual "Catch My Woah" intro-

duction, I discussed George Eliot's exhortation: "It's never too late to be what you might have been."

Below is my Kalamazoo Central graduation speech. I share it with you in its entirety because I think that, upon reflection, it is a theme that we all — graduates or not — should periodically consider. Who are the giants in our lives? Just as importantly, for whom will we serve as giants in their lives? As high school graduates, it is not too early for you to be giants in the lives of your younger

brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, friends, teammates, and neighbors. Help us help other young people, as we have helped you along the way.

As many of you know, after 12 years of helping raise up KPS students, this summer I begin a new role as the Michigan state superintendent. It has been my honor to work with dedicated and caring KPS teachers, support staff, and administrators on behalf of KPS students. I will forever appreciate our students' energy,

intelligence, resilience, humor, irreverence, and strong sense that one can become the dreams one has for one's life. Thank you for the opportunity to be your superintendent.

Congratulations, Class of 2019! You should be proud. We who helped raise you up certainly are.

*Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Kalamazoo Public Schools
2007-2019*

June 6, 2019 Kalamazoo Central Graduation

Thank you, Ms. Boggan. President Sholler-Barber, members of the board of education, Mayor Hopewell, Deputy Superintendent Start, Assistant Superintendents Green and Dorsey-Smith, Directors Bergan, Saunders, and Edwards, Ms. Boggan, distinguished Kalamazoo Central staff, parents, grandparents, other honored guests, and, most importantly, the Kalamazoo Central Class of 2019, good evening! Please give it up for our 2019 graduates!

Class of 2019, the gifted and uplifted, the big and the bad, the happy and the rad, sometimes angry, sometimes sad, intentional, quintessential, can-you-be-more-than-essential?, top of the heap, often deep, never a creep though at times much more than a peep, we appreciate YOU. And we're here to celebrate you, Class of 2019, we celebrate you not as the teachers or the preachers, but as the FEATURES of tonight's graduation. That's right: It's your night. (Yeah, I said it: there's a Seuss in every doctor!)

Graduating this evening, Terrence Bell, Kaylana Jones, and Hannah Koshar served as members of my Student Advisory Council this year. Please give them a big round of applause.

Class of 2019, 12 years ago, in 2007, when you were in first grade, I asked a group of 20 KC students who among them was taking an Advanced Placement

course, roughly the equivalent of a college-level class. One student of 20 raised his hand. Let's try it tonight. Class of 2019, if you took at least one AP class during high school, please raise your hand. Go ahead, Class of 2019!

In 2010, nine years ago tomorrow, President Obama spoke at the Kalamazoo Central graduation. At the time, the district's four-year graduation rate was 63 percent. Eight years later, the district's four-year graduation rate was 75 percent, and the five-year rate was 80 percent. Last year's Kalamazoo Central graduation rate was just shy of 89 percent. Bridge Magazine honored KC as one of 40 Academic State Champs this year, the ONLY SCHOOL in Southwest Michigan to earn this honor. We're like the Jeffersons, at KC and in KPS: We're moving on up!

So here's the thing, Class of 2019. We've improved, but we can continue to improve. And YOU have improved, Maroon Giants Class of 2019, but you can continue to improve.

Thirteen days ago, at your senior awards ceremony, you taught me to take a selfie with 300 of my best friends: YOU! Who knew that you could take a selfie with so many people? Who said you can't teach an old dog, a very old dog, new tricks?

I told you that day that TONIGHT, on your graduation, I was going to speak with you about different types of giants, about looking back and paying it forward.



Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice was honored at the Kalamazoo Central senior awards ceremony. Kaylana Jones, president of the class of 2019, and Hannah Koshar were members of the Student Advisory Council.

Now when I say I'm going to speak about different types of giants, I don't mean Jolly Green giants, or about legends-in-their-own-minds giants. I'm not talking about Hall of Fame giants, Greatest of All Time giants, made for TV giants. I'm talking about giants-in-the-lives-of-others giants.

Everyone stands on other people's shoulders. Everyone. No exceptions. There are giants in everyone's lives. Ms. Boggan stands on the shoulders of people who were giants in her life. Ms. Salak as well. Ditto for Mr. Gardner, Mr. Straka, Mr. Patterson, Ms. Williams Johnson, Ms. Wintz, Mr. Bullmer, Ms. Lee, Mr. Hafer, Coach Gardner, Ms. Bruwer, Ms. Debysser, Ms. Bonebrake, Coach Spada, Ms. Garza, Ms. Posey, Officer Robinson, Officer Ray, Officer Thomas, Officer Dyson, and all of your other teachers, administrators, and support staff. We all have giants

in our lives, people to whom we have looked up, people who have coached and pushed and prodded us to be more than we were at a given moment in our lives.

On whose shoulders do YOU stand, Class of 2019? Who has helped you on the journey? Just as importantly, have you thanked the GIANT or GIANTS in your lives for what they have done to get you here today? If you haven't, it's time to do so. If you have, it's always a good time to appreciate YOUR GIANTS again. We all stand on others' shoulders, Class of 2019. Please give it up for the GIANTS in your lives.

Who will continue to help you on the journey? When we are young, people pour into us without our asking: often parents or grandparents, teachers or coaches, faith leaders or youth leaders. As we get older, we choose our giants. Who are YOU choosing as

YOUR GIANTS as you graduate from high school and move into adulthood and the next chapters in your lives? Who are YOU choosing to help you become the you that you want to be in your lives?

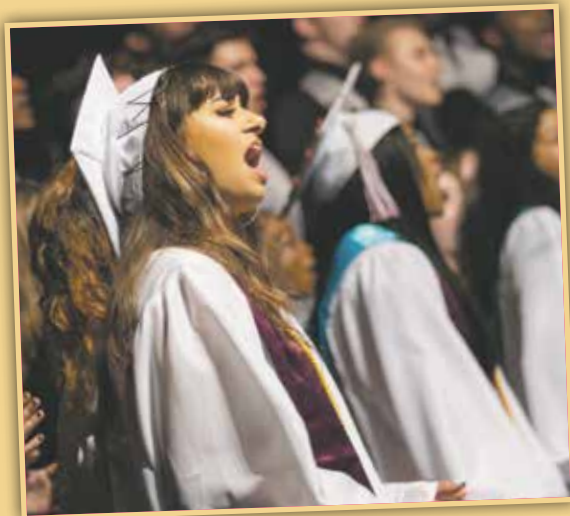
Finally, and just as importantly, Maroon Giants, for whom will YOU be GIANTS in their lives? Many of you have younger sisters and brothers, neighbors and friends, teammates and acquaintances. Who is going to benefit from YOUR guidance as YOU have benefited from the guidance of others? One day, years from now, who is going to say that you were their GIANT, you were one of the people who helped in their journey through life?

Maroon Giants, please raise your hand if you expect to take advantage of the Kalamazoo Promise. Terrific! Please give it up for the generous, anonymous donors of the Kalamazoo Promise. Check it out: You can't pay back the donors...but you can pay it forward. You can pay it forward by being the GIANT in someone else's life.

So as we salute you, Class of 2019, young, scrappy, and hungry, in the words of Hamilton, we also ask you to be part of the rising tide that is Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo Public Schools. Don't just be giants in name: be giants in deed.

Class of 2019, it is an honor to graduate with you and to celebrate your graduation with you this evening. Congratulations!

Class of 2019 in the Spotlight



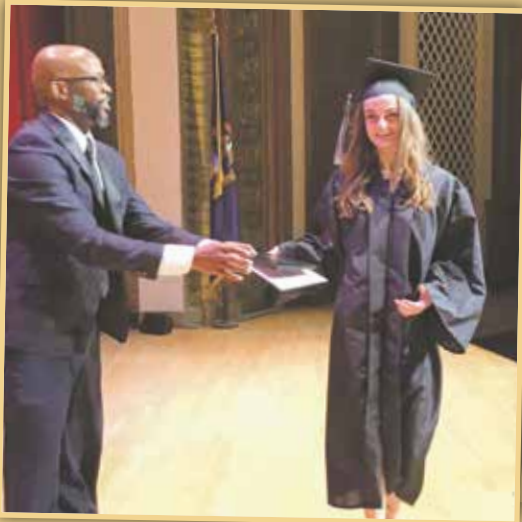
Olivia Ampey performs with the choir at the Kalamazoo Central graduation.



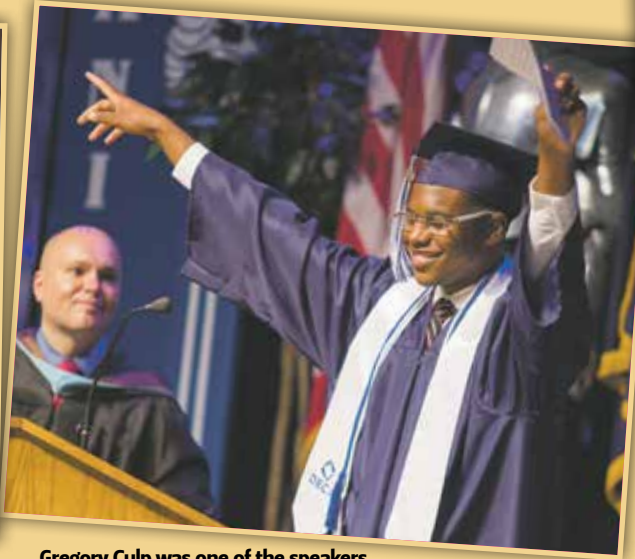
Hannah Sherman and Zoe Srackangast process into the Loy Norrix commencement.



Phoenix students Jo'Nathan Davis, Deasia Andrews, and Deondrie Robinson pose before graduation.



Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program Director David Gamble hands Amanda Poff her diploma at graduation.



Gregory Culp was one of the speakers at the Loy Norrix graduation.



Marcus Wright (left), Novia Rolland, and Cameron Bolton take a selfie after the Kalamazoo Central graduation.



Seniors Robert Isaksen, William Bowser, Thomas Outinen, and Christian Zehner before the Loy Norrix Candlelight Ceremony.



Terrence Bell reveals his secret identity at the Kalamazoo Central graduation.



Raven Givan was pretty in pink for the Phoenix graduation.

Excellence in Education Recognizes Outstanding Seniors

Dr. L. Marshall Washington, President of Kalamazoo Valley Community College, was the guest speaker at the Excellence in Education program held April 17 at Western Michigan University’s Fetzer Center.

Excellence in Education recognizes the top-achieving high school seniors from Kalamazoo County’s public and nonpublic high schools. This year, 46 seniors were selected for the honor, which comes with a \$1,000 scholarship. Each student also named an educator who significantly impacted their K-12 education.

“The Kalamazoo area has a long history of educational excellence and innovation, so it is fitting that we continue the tradition of honoring those practices through the Excellence in Education program,” said committee chair Keevin O’Neill, superintendent of Vicksburg Community Schools.

The Excellence in Education program is the result of collaboration among all

Kalamazoo County public and nonpublic schools and local foundations, education groups and the business community. Using a model developed in Battle Creek under the leadership of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the program was designed in 1986 to focus community attention on the academic and professional excellence of graduating high school seniors and educators within Kalamazoo area schools.

The Excellence in Education program is supported by a permanent endowment established at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. Funding for the endowment was raised through the leadership of the Monroe-Brown Foundation, with strong support from local foundations, businesses, organizations, and individuals.

For more information, please visit the Excellence in Education webpage at kresa.org/exined.

Listed to the right are the 2019 Excellence in Education Student Scholarship Winners:

Twelve KPS Students Graduate from KAMSC in 2019

Twelve Kalamazoo Public Schools students received certificates of completion from Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center this May. KAMSC offers an advanced and accelerated learning environment for students across Kalamazoo County.



The graduates from Kalamazoo Central High School are:
Al-Faraj, Allie
Crawford, Sienna
Glass-Chapman, Hannah
Lanting, Rachel

The graduates from Loy Norrix High School are:
Cornieles, Antonio
Isacksen, Robert
Lane, Aidan
Outinen, Thomas
Srackangast, Zoe
VandenBerg, Mia
Vander Beek, Colin
Zehner, Christian



Allie Al-Faraj Kalamazoo Central High School Parents: Christine and Ali Al-Faraj College: University of Michigan Major: Chemistry Significant Educator: Mark Cardwell	Hannah Glass-Chapman Kalamazoo Central High School Parents: Amy Glass and Ross Chapman College: Undecided Major: Comparative Literature and East Asian Language & Culture Significant Educator: Colleen Chapoton	Rachel Mei Lanting Kalamazoo Central High School Parents: Ashley and Steven Lanting College: Kalamazoo College Major: Computer Science Significant Educator: Linda Lee	William Shaw Kalamazoo Central High School Parents: Susie and Brandon Shaw College: Kalamazoo College Major: Computer Science Significant Educator: Rex Hafer
Tess Cowles Loy Norrix High School Parents: Julie Renner and Greg Cowles College: Undecided Major: Film Significant Educator: Jameeka Johnson	Robert Isacksen Loy Norrix High School Parents: Sue Ellen and Bob Isacksen College: University of Michigan Major: Computer Science Significant Educator: Colleen Chapoton	Kevin Mehta Kalamazoo Central High School Parents: Alpa and Sandeep Mehta College: Michigan State University Major: Pre-Medicine Significant Educator: Tia Hohler	Suja Thakali Kalamazoo Central High School Parents: Surendra and Binu Thakali College: Undecided Major: Chemistry Significant Educator: Valerie Krzewski
Carter Eisenbach Loy Norrix High School Parents: Elizabeth Eisenbach and Jim Escamilla College: Kalamazoo College Major: Chemistry Significant Educator: Matthew Porco	Will Keller Loy Norrix High School Parents: Donna and Robert Keller College: Kalamazoo College Major: Biology Significant Educator: Patrick Greeley	Thomas Outinen Loy Norrix High School Parents: Mary and Mark Outinen College: University of Michigan Major: Engineering Significant Educator: Anne Lewis	Christian Zehner Loy Norrix High School Parents: Monica and William Zehner College: University of Michigan Major: Computer Science Significant Educator: Matthew Porco

Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program 2019 Graduates

Davis, Stacey Jordyn
Frazier, Tamyra Marae
Gardner, Tah-Zay Juan Lee
Holland, Andrew Scott
Lamorandier, Jordan David James

Markou, Ariadne June
Poff, Amanda Rene
Rasmussen, Aimee Faith
Richardson, Christian Alexander
Runyon, Elisha David

Smith, Porshy’a Lashye
VanderMyde, Kathryn Ann
Watkins, Alexander Grant Allford
Wolfe, Camryn Elizabeth

NOTICE

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

Director of Student Services

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard Street
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Mary McGowan: Building Her Future on a Solid Foundation of Skills

Going from treehouses to houses for the homeless, Mary McGowan has found her future in the construction trades.

The recent Loy Norrix High School graduate turned a childhood passion into a viable career through her experiences with the Education For Employment construction trades program. The Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency's EFE program provides students with hands-on experiential learning in areas such as law enforcement and education.

When she was younger, her family ran a kennel and she learned how to build dog houses. Later, she remembers building a treehouse with her grandpa and father.

"I love making things. I'm a crafty person," said McGowan, 18. "During my sophomore year, I asked my counselor about the construction trades program and I've been in it ever since."

Through the class, she's had the opportunity to explore all aspects of residential construction, trying everything from drywalling to roofing, and flooring to insulation. The work has had real-life applications. The class builds a home for Habitat for Humanity each year, and one of her aunts moved into a house she helped build.

She plans to enroll in Kalamazoo Valley Community College this fall and transfer to Western Michigan University or Ferris State University in the future. She hopes to move into construction management after college.

McGowan was one of the few females enrolled in the construction trades EFE program.

"At first it was a little iffy, because everyone was looking at me crazy because I was the only girl. The boys were definitely surprised to see a girl in class," she said. "I was like, 'I really enjoy it. I don't care what anyone thinks.' Then everybody was like, 'It's so cool you're doing construction. How did you get into it?'"

She said she got along fine



Mary McGowan, Loy Norrix 2019 graduate, was an EFE building trades student and a Young Woman of Achievement winner from the YWCA.

with the boys, "but you have to get along to get things accomplished."

McGowan was recently named one of the YWCA's 2019 Young Women of Accomplishment. She was nominated by Loy Norrix counselor Rebecca

Learner.

"Mary stands out as a leader in the EFE construction trades program," Learner wrote in her nomination. "Her dedication and follow through in a field that is dominated by males is amazing. She has inspired other under-

represented populations of students to explore nontraditional career paths.

"Life is not easy for this family, and I think it's important to recognize Mary's strengths and stand behind her as she moves forward into her future."

Her parents are Brenda Ollis and Dante McGowan. McGowan attended Washington Writers' Academy and Milwood Magnet School before attending Loy Norrix. While in school she played saxophone for eight years, including doing jazz band at Norrix.

McGowan said she'd encourage other girls to try the construction trades, especially if they like to work with their hands and to be outside. The class provides a feeling of satisfaction with every completed project, she said.

"I like getting real experience. And, I can use it any time in life, like if I have my own house or if anyone else needs help," she said. "I love the excitement that comes with building, and the sense of accomplishment after it's all done makes you feel so good."

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PORTAGE – THURSDAYS, 7 pm at Overlander Bandshell

AUG 1 ALAN TURNER AND THE STEEL HORSE BAND

PARCHMENT – SUNDAYS, 6:30 pm at The Stage at Kindleberger

AUG 4 BEN DANIELS BAND

AUG 11 THUNDERWÜDE

AUG 18 MAY ERLEWINE AND THE MOTIVATIONS

AUG 25 BRONK BROS

DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO – WEDS, 5-8 pm at Bates Alley

AUG 7 OUT OF FAVOR BOYS

AUG 14 SCHLITZ CREEK BLUEGRASS BAND

AUG 21 ZION LION

AUG 28 THE GILMORE

KALAMAZOO – SUNDAYS, 4 pm at Bronson Park

AUG 11 THE FEEL GOOD

AUG 18 TOM KNIFIC QUARTET

OSHTEMO – SUNDAYS, 6 pm at Flesher Field

AUG 18 KANOLA BAND

Visit KalamazooArts.org

Kaylana Jones: Doing Her Best to Follow Her Nana's Advice

When Kaylana Jones was little, her grandmother Kai Jackson, would drop her off somewhere and then yell out the window, "Take over!"

Jones would yell back, "OK!"

Jones, 18, graduated in June from Kalamazoo Central High School. Her beloved "Nana," Kai Jackson, was a long-time Kalamazoo Public Schools employee who worked at Northeastern and Edison elementary schools and Milwood Magnet School. She passed away in July. Her parents are Kaii Thomas and Charlie Jones.

Jones seems to have taken her grandmother's advice throughout high school — taking over and taking charge. She was the senior class president, president of the local chapter of ASCEND/Ivylettes, a group associated with the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, winner of a 2019 Young Woman of Achievement Award, and winner of the YWCA 2019 Lewis Walker Social Justice Award. She volunteered with Link Crew, National Honor Society and her church, Mt. Zion Baptist Church — among other things.

"I think it's way better to be super busy," Jones said. "I definitely think being in a lot of things, especially when you're in high school, allows for that great exposure, that great training that will be helpful when you're older."

When she looks toward the future, one of the foundational moments that inspires her dreams is from her junior year when she gave a speech on "The Definition of a Black Woman," an essay that helped her win the local ACT-SO talent competition sponsored by the NAACP. She traveled to Dallas to compete at the national ACT-SO contest.

"When I read it in class, everyone stood up and was clapping," Jones said. "It made me feel so good. It warmed my heart. I was literally on the verge of tears."

She'd like to continue working on themes of female empowerment and to start an organization aimed at helping young women develop self-respect and positive self image. She said she worries about younger girls who seem to struggle with the con-



Kaylana Jones wants to inspire achievement in other young women.

cept of self-respect, especially in today's world of social media and self-promotion.

"I was working on the Title IX committee at school, and we were digging deep into why there are so many cases where young ladies felt the need to post inappropriate pictures and to do things with young men," she said. "I think the bottom line is we don't respect ourselves. Also we don't know the best way to represent ourselves. We don't know how deep representation can go.

"You hear it from adults all the time. How you represent yourself on social media will help you get a job. It will help when you want to start a business. It helps when you network. It's just a very, very big influence."

She said that sometimes fellow students would say to her they thought she was much older.

"They'd say, 'You really look like you have it all together. You carry yourself so well,'" Jones said. "I'm like we're the same age. I'm still trying to get into college.

I'm still trying to figure it out."

But whether in person or online, she sees a certain responsibility to be her best self — and to share only that best self online.

"People are watching me. I want to keep it up and to allow myself to be an encouragement for other young women."

Kalamazoo Central Principal Valerie Boggan said Jones knows how to lead and is always respectful of others.

"Kaylana is a powerhouse. She is determined to succeed, and she stands up for what she believes in," said Boggan, who nominated Jones for the YWCA honor. "She is reflective of seizing the moment and taking advantage of all the opportunities afforded her. She is assertive and is willing to take constructive criticism. When things don't go as planned, she picks herself up, brushes herself off and continues to forge ahead."

When she talks about promoting female empowerment, she sees her potential role in some pretty impressive terms, perhaps pursuing public policy and working with leaders such as Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. "She's so passionate about what she's doing. She's young and she's in Congress. And, I think, wow, we need more women in Congress."

Is that definitely where she will end up? Maybe. Or maybe she will turn to one of the other dreams she's had through the years: astronaut, lawyer, teacher.

Where she lands may not be just about her choices, she said. One of the biggest lessons she learned this year is to trust in God.

"I was always worrying about what I want to do next," she said. "Trusting in God allowed me to be open to different possibilities. I definitely want to work with people. I want to have real conversations with people, whatever field of work will allow me to do that. I want to be a voice for them."

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Lillia Bistrek: A Tough Disease and a Good Attitude

Lillia Bistrek missed her kindergarten ball.

She had the dress and everything, but then her family found out she had a surgery scheduled that day. There was no way to reschedule.

“When we got to the hotel where we were staying, my mom said there must have been a fairy because she left a crown for me in the room,” Bistrek said. “I went to the hospital in my gown and wearing my crown.”

So this past school year when Bistrek, 18, was named homecoming queen, and she got to wear the fancy dress – and the crown – in front of everyone, it felt like life coming full circle.

“It felt like, ‘Oh, wow!’ It kind of made up for what I missed starting off school. It’s just a high school thing, but it meant a lot to me.”

Bistrek says everyone at Loy Norrix probably knows her because she has a rare disease.

But it’s just as likely that everyone knows her because she is a pole-vaulter, drum-beater, firecracker of positivity, who seems to be able to laugh at anything – even the disease that has dominated her life since she was a toddler.

It’s called eosinophilic gastroenteritis.

“Basically, I have too many white blood cells in my esophagus, stomach and duodenum, that’s what makes it so rare,” she said. “Some people may have too many eosinophils in just their stomach or just their esophagus, but mine were in all three.”

Diagnosed when she was 2, she spent the next nine and a half years on a feeding tube. The first three years, she was limited to ice, water, a special sucker and a dietary formula that was injected into the feeding tube.

“I’d steal food out of the trash. There were locks on the fridges and alarms on the cabinets,” Bistrek said. “I’d have my siblings help steal food for me, but every time I ate



Lillia Bistrek, homecoming queen, with mom Laura Felton-Zerafa at the 2018 Loy Norrix homecoming.



Lillia Bistrek, pictured with her mom Laura Felton-Zerafa, has been drumming since fifth grade.

something, it would mean going to the hospital.”

That made for a rough childhood. She couldn’t eat with other children at lunch, instead she’d have to sit in a room with a paraprofessional, who would feed her with a syringe. At birthday parties, if people forgot about her diet, she’d leave the room when the treats came out and go find an adult to talk to.

“It kind of sucks. Eating brings a lot of people together,” she said. “But I grew up with it.”

Eventually, the doctors began adding foods to her diet a

few at a time. They’d do a biopsy to see how she reacted and if it was OK, they’d add a few more items.

Now, she can eat fruits, vegetables, potatoes, rice, quinoa, shrimp and fish. She can’t have eggs, milk, wheat, tree nuts, peanuts, oats, rye, barley, or crawfish. She still travels with an EpiPen in case she comes in contact with certain foods – sometimes just touching them or smelling them can set off her allergies or asthma.

Bistrek’s disease affected more than just what she could or

couldn’t eat. The feeding tube she had until middle school meant no contact sports. The tube sometimes ruptured just from rough housing with friends. Her mother would have to remove the tube and push a new one into her stomach. “It was the worst pain,” she said. “I’d go through surgery over having that done any time.”

Today, the feeding tube is gone, but the scar remains, a deep indentation on her stomach. But true to form, it’s not the scar that defines her – it’s her response to it.

Bistrek pulls up her shirt to show off her bellybutton, which she got pierced the summer before her senior year.

“You’re a girl and when you wear a bathing suit, people stare (at the feeding tube scar) and say, ‘Oh my gosh, what happened?’ I thought, why not put something sparkly next to something dull?”

Bistrek danced ballet until the tube was removed. But, when she had the chance to play sports in high school, she dumped ballet for volleyball and then track, where she competed in pole vault, long jump and the 200 meter.

Coach Ted Duckett was one of the most influential people in Bistrek’s high school experience. Not just because he was a great coach, but because he was an adult she could turn to for advice about anything.

“I’ve held true to what I believe in, and I want to wait to do everything. It’s been hard,” she said. “I’d go to him and say, ‘Everybody else is doing this. Everybody is drinking and smoking and having sex.’ He’d say, ‘What? Do you want to be the fool?’ He always has some little life lesson for you.”

Also influential has been band director Aaron Mirakovitz, who has been at Loy Norrix for two years. Mirakovitz calls Bistrek “a great musician, natural leader, and empathetic peer.”

“He’s taught me discipline for sure,” she said. “He’s taught

me that hard work and practice will get the job done. Well, perfect practice – not practice. You have to have perfect practice. If not, you go back and do it again, and go back and do it again. He’s direct and honest. He wants what’s best for the band as a whole and he wants to make the band program better, which he has.”

She performs with marching band, pep band and concert band. “My favorite is marching band. I love doing choreography with the band. I like things to be precise,” she said. “But, I love any kind of music. I listen to songs from Iraq, Egypt, Cuba. It doesn’t matter. If it’s moving, you can tell it moves other people.”

The other person who has made a difference has been her mom, Laura Felton-Zerafa. Her father is Tolan Bistrek.

“My mom has always been there for me,” she said. “She hates it when I say this, but she’s literally my best friend. You get to make a little speech for homecoming. My mom died because I gave her a shout out. She says, ‘I’m your mother. I’m not your friend.’”

“But, my whole life, she was the one I’d wake up to after surgery. I love her so much.”

Bistrek plans to enroll in Kalamazoo Valley Community College in the fall, with hopes to continue her studies in occupational therapy at Western Michigan University.

She wants to work with patients in the hospital – inspired by all the time she spent in the hospital, surrounded by medical caregivers.

“Everyone has a story. There is always going to be someone who has it worse than you. I’ve always thought I can’t sit here and complain about my life and how I can’t eat this or that and have everyone feel bad for me. You don’t want to be that person. You want to be the person who has a good attitude about things.”

William Bowser: 'You Can Take the Man Out of Norrix, But You Can't Take the Norrix Out of the Man'

Sometimes there's not a big story, there's just a small story. A story about finding your place, a place where you feel like you belong.

Sixth grade at a local charter school didn't go very well for William Bowser. His parents, Julie Bowser and William Bowser, suggested that he try switching schools for seventh grade. He might find a better environment, plus Kalamazoo Public Schools offered The Kalamazoo Promise.

Bowser refused. He wanted to give it one more try at his old school.

"Seventh grade was phenomenally difficult. I had a difficult time with the kids. I had a difficult time with the teachers," he said. "I should have made the switch sooner."

The 2019 Loy Norrix High School graduate plans to study respiratory therapy at Grand Valley State University in the fall. Outgoing and joking, an athlete, one of the students selected to speak at the 2019 graduation — Bowser is one of those guys everyone knows.

"When I look back on this

as a senior, it's really amazing how I came from being someone no one knew, to being someone who is being interviewed," Bowser said. "I've gotten to hold positions of leadership and to do some things at KPS. I've been very lucky and blessed to do these things with my classmates. I'm glad to have been able to work with them and to be their friend."

Bowser said he felt an immediate change when he enrolled in Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts for eighth grade.

"I just felt more welcome," he said.

At Maple, he took his first Spanish class, and is now fluent in the language. He also tried track for the first time, after running cross country at his old school.

"I liked the feeling of it. When I got to Loy Norrix, track took off. I met Coach (Ted) Duckett," Bowser said. "He is an inspiring man. He taught me how to push myself and showed me I could be the best at this sport."



William Bowser at Prom. Yes, he knows it is a silly photo, but it was the one he wanted to use.

Bowser ran varsity all four years at Norrix, and served as the team captain as a senior. He ran the 400 meter, the 4x4 relay and occasionally the 4x800 relay.

Asked what it is like to train with Duckett, who is legendary at the school for his intensity and his longevity, Bowser laughed.

"You don't train with Coach Duckett," he said. "He tells you how to train and then you train for Coach Duckett."

"It was a wonderful experience. When he tells you something or shares some wisdom he has, you definitely listen. He has a very commanding presence and he's an exceptional leader. He really inspires his runners."

Bowser also ran cross country, he said, shaking his head a little ruefully and with a definite laugh in his voice.

"In cross country, there's not a lot to talk about. I did not do it well," he said. "It was not my coach or my ability that kept me in it. It was my feeling for my team and how much they cared for me. They say collective suffering is a great bonding experience."

His best friends — Jack Wormalink, Clayton Hyde, and Keegan "Delaware" Hughes — are all buddies from the cross country team.

"The only thing that kept me around was the team," Bowser said. "Every person — from the seniors when I was a freshman, to the freshmen when I was a senior — was definitely interesting. They were excellent people who I was lucky to be teammates with. I know that they'll do great things in the future."

Bowser is hard pressed to cite the best or worst advice that he ever received about high school, but he does have some advice of his own for high school students.

"I think it's easy for the mass media to put people in different boxes, but Norrix is a place that can't be put in a box," he said. "When you're in these four walls, it's almost like the Twilight Zone. Things are so different here. It brings everyone closer. More places should be like Norrix. It would help people understand the real world better. I've been real lucky to have this experience. I'm going to miss it a lot."

"I guess it's true what they say: 'You can take the man out of Norrix, but you can't take the Norrix out of the man.'"



NATIONAL AVIATION DAY OPEN HOUSE

AUGUST 18, 12 - 5 PM

Visit the Air Zoo's original building, the Flight Discovery Center at 3101 Milham Rd., for FREE!

Celebrate the Air Zoo's 40th birthday with us with activities, refreshments and amazing aircraft!

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airzoo.org/celebrate40



6151 PORTAGE RD. PORTAGE, MI 49002
EXIT 78 OFF OF I-94 (269)350-2848

LN Class of 1979 Planning 40th Class Reunion

The Loy Norrix Class of 1979 will hold its 40th reunion from **6 - 11 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 24**, at Western Michigan University's Fetzer Center. The evening includes dinner, music, dancing, and a cash bar. Cost is \$40 per person or \$75 per couple. Payment can be sent to:

Julia Roellchen Koestner
203 Stearns Ave.
Kalamazoo MI 49008

For more information on the class and to connect with old friends, visit the Loy Norrix High School Class of 1979 on Facebook or call Koestner at (269) 491-0523.

Jadakiss Lewis: Trusting the Process, Taking Care of the Little Things

Jadakiss Lewis thinks it was about the second day of high school. There was a football game that day, and a fight broke out. The police were called out, and he and other students were almost expelled.

“I remember it like it was yesterday,” said Lewis, 18, and a recent Kalamazoo Central graduate. “I realized that’s not what I wanted to do with my life.”

Luckily for Lewis he is a talented athlete, who has been able to make a name for himself at Central on both the football field and the basketball court, and that gave him focus in high school. Lewis, who plays point guard, has signed to play basketball at Olivet College in the fall. He is the son of Clisha Graves and Tyrone Lewis.

“I just love the game,” he said. “I love learning about the game and getting better every day. Every game is like a new challenge. You can’t look down on your opponent. You have to respect everyone.”

Basketball is a lot like life, the way Lewis describes it.

“It just about hard work and being dedicated and trusting the process,” he said. “Rome wasn’t built in a day, and you don’t get results overnight. You have to live in the gym and do all of the stuff that matters, do all of the little things.”

That includes getting up at 5 a.m. to run three miles before school, attending class, and doing your homework even when you’re tired after practice.

“You have to stay focused,” he said. “It’s so easy to get off track in the world we live in today. I do everything just knowing all the stuff I’m doing now will be worth it in the long run.”

Kalamazoo Central Principal Valerie Boggan said, “When he began at Kalamazoo Central, he was making poor choices in the community with his friends. He is no longer a part of that. He



Jadakiss Lewis was a standout on the football field and the basketball court for Kalamazoo Central High School.

has several younger siblings for whom he has assumed the father figure role. In addition to being there for his siblings, he also takes KC students, who are at risk, under his wing.”

All of that sounds pretty basic, but life has been challenging for Lewis. The biggest challenge has been dealing with his mother’s prison incarceration for the last two years.

“It’s just been me and my dad the last two years,” he said. “I had to become a man early so my brothers and sisters can keep a smile on their faces. There are times it was rough, but I never gave up.

“My mom and my dad never gave up on me, so I can never give up on them.”

Others who have inspired him to keep pushing have been football coach Carlton Brewster, basketball coach Ramsey Nichols, family friend Danny Primer, and his uncle Billy Williams Jr.

He wants to inspire a sense of hope in other students. When he goes to college, he plans to study communications or education.

“My goal has never been to go to the NBA,” Lewis said. “It’s always been to get as far as I can go, so I can come back and instill everything I’ve learned in others. I want to make sure people don’t mess up where I messed up and to come back and make Kalamazoo a better place. I want to give children hope and for them to know that whatever they dream and wish is possible.

“I feel like everybody is different and everyone can make an impact. I feel like me helping other kids is going to do me a favor. If I make it, if they make it, we’ll be opening plenty more doors for other people. That’s what I want to do, open as many doors as possible in the world.”

Phoenix High School 2019 Graduates

Abrajan Contreras, Yulianna	Gray, Shantel Chrishenna Greig, Alexander Jacob	Powell, Donavan Nickee
Alexander, Quincie Daequan	Haske, Jordan Kay Hayes, Tre’quan L	Pritchett, Tyron Leenardo
Alguarellles–Bell, Marcell	Henderson, Trayon Damere	Ramos–Morales, Rosalinda
Allen, Ashah Mone	Irby, Chavious Jalen Ernest	Robinson, Deondrie Demetrues
Allen, Nia M	Jean, Dante	Robinson, Kelissa Jade
Anderson, Shayla Lashay–Ann	Johnson, Joshalyn Charmayne	Rumph, Bennett Avery
Andrews, Deasia Najee’ Saimone	Knox, Cole Dwuan	Shepherd–Friday, Ke’asia Moyaa
Asberry, Qion Darqua	Kye Lee, Tyrone Anthony	Simmons, Alliahmeen Abukara
Bailey, Taylor Ja’don	Kye Lee, Tyrone Jermaine	Singleton, Jae’shawn Ameere
Bowden, Amir Hakim	Libbett, Ky’Daeyania Jyala Keann	Smith, Shaelinn Jannae
Brashers, Dreshawn Colione	Lipsey, Voronica Annette Maikoski, Phoenix	Stitt, Alaiyah Desire’ Timmons, Jessica Annmarie
Brown, Alijah Monique–Sabres	Mangan, Alexandra Leigh	Troxler, Kamryn Jaide
Brown, Daquay Michael	Martin, Zachary Paul	Vaughn, Terrence
Carter, Joyce Anett Keyaira	Martinez Lopez, Luis Anjel	Wagner, Chase Michael
Carter, Korea Oshianna	McMartin, Devin Marcus	White, Alvin Roy
Cruz, Joynette	Messenger, Wyatt Andrew	White–Sills, Romar Zion
Daniels, Bahiyyah Margarite	Morrow, Demario Antaniel	Wilkins, Raegan Lynn
Davis, Jo’Nathan Hale LeVeal	Munch, Mya Nichole	Williams, Xavier James
Dixon, Dontrelle Da’Qua Lonnie	Murdock, Antonette Marie	Woods, Tyree Latrell
Donaldson, Sap’phire Andrea Renee	Norris, Natalya Armany	Wright, Ontrell Javon
Du Bois, Jalen Rashad	Obreiter–Weiandt, Christopher	York, Dynell Demetrius
Felix, Mariela Anahi	Osler, Shaquailya Kanjanic	
Fields, Keyshon	Outlaw, David Alexander James	
Follmer, Andrew John		
Givan, Raven Lashae		
Graff, Micah Kenzon		



KPS Board of Education Secretary Jennie Hill shares a laugh with Phoenix grad Kamryn Troxler.

Kalamazoo Central High School 2019 Graduates

Adams, Dainen Robert-Dwight
Aguila, Daniel Rafael
Aguilar-Dimas, Angela
Aguilar-Mendez, Jorge Bernardo
Ahmed, Eman Mahmoud
Al-Faraj, Allie Salha
Al-Gharib, Aisha Amatur Rahman
Aldiney, Belsem Muthanna
Alexander, Ashlyn Rehana
Alhamada, Rasha Faisal Rafea
Allen, Darquarion Deshawn
Amisi, Bahati Machozi
Ampey, Olivia Grace
Anderson, Diaiysha Nicole Lynn
Anderson, Keonna Latrice
Anderson, Tamia Tyshai
Ankley, Samuel David
Antonowitsch, Kurt Andrew
Armstead, Zaniek Deshaun
Armstrong, Nevaeh Delores
Aro, Andre Virgilio
Arvidez Martinez, Jennifer
Baker, Philip Emmanuel
Ballinger, Riley Jordan
Banks, China Monay
Baraka, Kitoko Tadzai Maat
Barnes, Kymahri Della
Barrett, Sierra Cecily
Bates, Clarice K
Bean, Jaquavion Latrell
Beilby, Taylor Nicole
Bell, Terrence Alvin
Beverly, Dammon Christopher
Beverly, Derrek Irvin
Beville, Johnathan Marquise
Blair, Catherine Jane
Blankenship, Ryan Michael
Bolton, Cameron Neal
Booth, Danazia Jean Maye



Janay Brown and Kentaiya Bryan, center, cheer during the Kalamazoo Central graduation.

Bowen, Seth David-Bedford
Bradford, Noah Jonathan-Bernard
Brewer, Joshua Devon
Brown, Brandon Daniel
Brown, Janay Faith
Brown, Krysten Marie
Bryan, Kentaiya Lee
Buchanan, Marcus Randal
Buchanan, Mattalis Morrale
Buffin, Thomas Jack
Byrd, Jewell Marie
Cardenas Jones, Arianna Marie
Carter, Emmanuel James
Casey, Nolan Tyler
Castaneda, Yaraletzy Adlai
Cazares Coronado, Aylin
Chenier, Andrew Stephen
Cichy, Andrew Joseph
Clabin, Amy Lei
Clark, Karis Cruz
Cobb, Rickelle Marie
Coleman-Reason, Zar'rieha Dayasha
Cook, Zachary Ray
Copon-Jennings, Bianca Hailey
Coronado-Guzman, Marifer

Cox, Idris Raquid
Cramer, Oscar Bradley
Craven, Dajon L
Crawford, Sienna Reign
Crenshaw, Mariah
Crum, Daniel Kinsey
Cuevas, Christina Demetra
Daniels, Aazonus Charvae
Darling, Patrick Isaiah
Davis, Amyre Jade
Davis, Kevin Duane
Davis, Xavier Premeir
DeYoung, Jeffrey Paul
Dickens, Austin Jeffrey
Dixon, Shawniece Danae
Dobbins, Devond Daniel
Dohm, Kirk Andrew
Dohner, Emalyn Jessa
Duminie, Akaylah Brianne
Eason, Deandre Omar
Echols, Arreyanna Rayshanda
Eckert, Emily Grace
Eddington, Cameron Michael
Edmonds, Alik
Lawrence
Edmonson, Rahmad Ali
Edwards, DaJuan Hezekiah
Evans, Lafayette Lovell

Felske, Chloe Jae
Filer, Kaylyn Renee
Finjap, Cerica Nboseh
Flores, Violet Aurora
Ford, Arvante
Ford, Kavon Deshawn
Fraleigh-Burgett, Ethan Christopher
Freed, Alyssa Anne-Marie
French, Brianna Lynne
Fullerton, Jayshawn Jamon
Fulton, William Andrew

Garba, Dado Abakar
Geary, Sean
Gerhard, Jake Daniel
Ghazal, Johanna
Gibson, Sanah Bre-Katherine
Gill, Jayla Jamaya
Gillam, Johnny Amaru
Gilland, J'cashion Jah'zell
Gillish, Zachary David
Gilmore, Dar'Tavia Danpier
Glass-Chapman, Hannah Ju

Glenn, Amira Evette
Glover, Jaime Louise
Goheen, Kolby Michael Richard
Gonzalez, Enrique
Gonzalez, Rocio Nicole
Goodwin, Faylin Priest Dejaun
Gordon, DaVaughn Howard
Grant, Malachi Jibri
Grays-Coleman, Niquay Clifton-Lamar
Griffin, Cole Romell
Grubb, Zachary Ross
Gutierrez, Pikasso Javier
Habibullah, Nasrullah
Hafzul, Syafiq Bin
Hammond, Catherine Marie
Hammond, Joseph Nathaniel
Harvey, Jordan Montrel
Haus, Shira Leah
Hawkins, Destinee Shai'ahhr
Hawkins, Montario Kwantre
Hayes, Dae'lyn Dajuan
Hemingway, Brooks Schafer
Henderson, Anieyah Shonyell Dajana
Henke, Kora Kay
Henley, Samuel Spencer
Hess, Emma Marie
Hill, Tyler James
Himmelein, Ben Keith
Himmelein, Brooke Leigh

Hiser, Keirstean Elizabeth
Hodgkins, Jonathon David
Holtman, Cameron Trey
Honeywood, Amir Dejah
Howard, Natalie Marie
Hudson, Raheem
Hughes-White, Yazmyne Ta'neke
Jeffries-Fields, Kennedy Capri
Jennings, Aidan Lee
Johnson, Cameron Shafer
Johnson, Jakaria Keymon
Johnson, Ryan Thomas
Johnson-Lee, Inneary Kierei
Johnson-Streeter, Miya Armane
Jones, Jada Lashae'
Jones, Jayovna Myee
Jones, Kaylana Mayte
Jung, Morgan Jade
Kelly, Imani Khafre
King, Mary Linnay
Kochanski, Jenna Lynn
Koshar, Hannah Katerina
Lajiness, Sophia Rose
Lanting, Rachel Mei
Lartridge, Thomas Gabriel
Laurin, Hunter Jon
Leipzig-Freed, Spencer James
Lewis, Jadakiss Nasjir Darkeise
Lindsay, Ronald Alonzero
Linkfield, Emma Kay
Linkfield, Ryan Jacob
Linkfield, Sarah Abigail
Loofboro, Logan Michael
Ludlow, Domonic David
Lyons, Sarah Elizabeth
Matthews-Tigues, Arrison Dyquise
McCallum, Ian James
McConkey, Shannon Kathleen
McGill, Alonzo Dean
McGowen, Katherine Marie
Mehta, Kevin Sandeep
Mejeur, Karsyn Kay
Mitchell, Amaiah Jameelah
Moore, Anisa Yasmeen
Moore, Kevin Keyvon



Ronald Lindsay, Emma Linkfield, Ryan Linkfield, and Sarah Linkfield, from left, process into Wings Event Center during commencement.

Kalamazoo Central HS 2019 Graduates (continued)

Student Athletes Declare Intentions to Play College Sports

Morales, Ramiro	Roth, Heather Marie	Turner, Rodney Lamar
Moreno-Aguilar, Juana	Ruiz, Thomas	Uekert, Jack Patrick
Jasmin	Sanford, Kylee Jean	Underwood, McKinley
Morrow, Jordan Josiah	Sarver, Jonathan Edwin	Lavern
Motan, Arein Damous	Schirripa, Anthony	Unger-Branson, Alora
Murray, Taylor	David	Beth
Myles, Leilani Jovae	Scott, Shante'ya Marie	Vankrimpen, Nolan
N'Bunh, Cantenuma	Scott, Trinity Monet	Ryan
Nguyen, Matthew Bao-	Servant, Shione Anieya	Vanravenswaay, Tyler
Giang	Seubring, Thomas Ross	Daniel
Nichols-O'Neal, Jazel	Shackelford, Beth Anne	Vargas, Alejandro
Nycole	Shaw, Miriah Ann	Vargas, Angel
Norr, Genevieve Amelia	Shaw, William Thomas	Vestal, Nina Joan
Nuechterlein, Terry	Shepard, Serenity	Eggers
Stephen Baffo	Simone	Victoria, Miles Joseph
Oviedo, Aurora Aurelia	Sidwell, John David	Voight, Lauren Kamile
Palmer, R'shaun Cortez	Skuratowicz, John	Walker, Kenyon Jared
Parish, Jared Rey	Christopher	Walker, Levi Michael
Parker, John'tae Jay'len	Smith, Alexis Sierra	Waltz, Daniel Aristotle
Parks, London Dale	Rose	Ward, TreVante'
Paulo, Hugues	Smith, Jordan Ryan	MarQuis
Fumiembo	Smith, Olivia Louise	Wark, Gabrielle Pilar
Payne, Christian David	Snyder, Tyler Alvino	Warnicke, Elise Joanne
Peake, Nadia Nicole	Solis-Castaneda, Laura	Da Neul
Peete, Terreque Marie	Lizbeth	Wasson, Maurice James
Perez, Bryce Antonio	Sommers, Alexis Lynn	Weal, Emily June
Phillips, Jack Brady	Sprung, Ravi Him	Weekley, Zonterio
Phillips, Ramiya Annise	Stacer, Aidan Daniel-	Glenn
Phipps, Rontay Leon	Meixner	Wells, Airiyanna
Poole, Justin Matthew	Stevens, Ambriel Jean	Wells, Destiny Nyaa
Posey, Leasia Rayona	Stone, Samantha Bray	West, Katelyn Breanna
Post, Austin Allen	Strebs, Meadow	Wheeler, Karley Marie
Preston, Jakob Michael	Lynette	White, Di'avon Lamont
Preston, Julia Jolie	Streeter-Key, Curtis T.	Whitfield, Amaya Lynn
Price, Trinitee Davine	Strickland, Victoria	Willard, Brenden
Ragan, Remington	Marie	Michael
Alyssa	Strunk, Christopher	Willhite, Jomaun
Rahnavardan, Ashkahn	Michael	Raymal
David	Sykes, Shakira Renee'	Williams, Isaiah Mariano
Rai, Gurman	Takyi, Angeley Adjoa	Williams, Rayquan
Raines, Deshani Lorice	Tank, Cassandra Elayne	Andrew
Ramber-Jach, Dylan	Taylor, Olivia Camille-	Wilson, Alecia Rachelle
Edward	Elizabeth	Winkle, Erik Bryant
Ray, Karolynne Korea	Taylor-Mcmillon,	Winters-Brown, Joshua
Reed, Dakota	Tonesha Lashei	David
Remington	Thakali, Suja	Wolf, Regina Christian
Reed, William Jermaine	Thomas, Eric Alexander	Woodcock, Wesley
Rice, Samuel John	Thomas, Navia	William
Richardson, Quay'von	Cheyenne	Workman, Aja'naeia
Amontrae	Thompson, Jayquan	Delesa
Robertson-Rosas,	Lamar	Wright, Marcus Jordan
Xochitl Guadalupe	Tipton, Quamon Tyres	Yost, Elyse McKenna
Rodriguez, Karmon	Tonthola, Peter	Zach, Lauren Alexandra
Mariah	Torres, Monica	Zackery, Terrance
Rodriguez, Paulina	Tran, Kevin	Dawson
Anabel	Trice, Mai'er Manuel	Zamarripa Ruiz, Valeria
Rolland, Novia Lashee	Tucker, Mikequerion	Rubi
Rooble, Filsan Ibrahim	Damoni	Zarate, Alyssa Lind
Rostick, Serenity	Turkey, Mariam	Zarate, Brian Monroy
Moynae	Mohammed	



Students display their school colors during the Kalamazoo Central 2019 Signing Day.

Congratulations to the following students who have been great competitors for Kalamazoo Public Schools. These students have committed to play sports at the collegiate level. Their achievements and future plans were celebrated in the spring at their respective schools.	Marcus Wright, football, Adrian College	Jadakis Lewis, basketball, Olivet College
	Dainen Adams, football, Adrian College	Karley Wheeler, swim, Olivet College
	Kavon Ford, football, Adrian College	Riley Ballinger, softball, Adrian College
	Jack Uekert, football, Kalamazoo College	Loy Norrix High School
	Terrence Bell, football, Itasca Community College	Dustin Keltsch, track and field, Hope College
	Alika Edmonds, basketball, Kellogg Community College	Will Keller, men's soccer, Kalamazoo College
	Destiny Wells, volleyball, Kalamazoo Valley Community College	Haile Andrews, men's soccer, Spring Arbor University
	Sanah Gibson, cheer, Saginaw Valley State University	Maeve Novotny, women's soccer, Kalamazoo College
	Navia Thomas, cheer, Saginaw Valley State University	Cameron Heintzeman, swim, Alma College
	Andre Aro, swim, Hope College	Emma VanHouten, swim, Hope College
	Sam Ankley, swim, Kalamazoo College	Nmeso Nnebedum, basketball, Siena Heights University
		DeAndre Worthy, basketball, Lake Michigan College

Kalamazoo Central
Zonterio Weekley, football, Western Michigan University
Xavier Davis, football, Lawrence Technological University
Faylin Goodwin, football, Northwood University
McKinley Underwood, football, Wayne State University
Maier Trice, football, Albion College
Levi Walker, football, Adrian College

FALL AT THE KIA



FRIDAY, AUGUST 2: EVERYONE'S A MEMBER DAY
11 am-8 pm: Free admission / 8 am-8 pm: \$20 off a fall class or workshop with on-site registration / 10 am-8 pm: 10% discount in the shop
5-8 pm Art Hop fun throughout the museum



SEPTEMBER 4-14: ART CLASSES FOR ALL
Adult classes start September 4-11 / Saturday youth classes start September 14
Scholarship applications welcome by August 6



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14: FREE COMMUNITY DAY PARTY
Free admission and family fun to celebrate new exhibitions, 11 am-5 pm:
Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem
Resilience: African American Artists as Agents of Change
Where We Stand: Black Artists in Southwest Michigan
Enjoy storytelling; refreshments; art-making projects led by artists Brent Harris, James Palmore, and Al Harris; performances by artist Tanisha Pyron, and more.

Juliana Huxtable, Untitled (Psychosocial Stuntin'), detail, 2015, color inkjet print, 40 x 30 in. The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum purchase with funds provided by the Acquisition Committee 2015.8.1 © Juliana Huxtable Courtesy the artist and American Federation of Art

KALAMAZOO INSTITUTE OF ARTS

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Free parking and entrances on South and Lovell streets

Loy Norrix High School 2019 Graduates

Adams, Kayla Elizabeth
Ademodi, Yohaness
Selassie I. O.
Alphonse, Julianne
Ishimwe
Alvarado-Gutierrez,
Vanessa
Anderson, Jaelyn Milan
Anderson, Yoshiya Jun
Andrews, Hailemicael
Alexander
Apperley, Zayne Gary
Aranda, Christopher Ian
Arevalo-Balboa, Lisette
Atkins, Wyatt Everett
Barker, Mitchell Steven
Batzloff, Emily Lu
Bell, Marshawn
Alexander
Berry, Imani Polita
Besser, Kailynne Astrid
Best, Isabel Anne
Bettison, Branden Lance
Bigcal, John Vincent
Atunay
Bistrek, Lillia Grace
Black, Robert Edmund
Blanks, Ja'niyah Denise
Boblet, Olivia Nicole
Bond, Noah Theodore
Borden, Zachary Lynn
Bowser, William Gabriel
Britney, Roy Adrian
Brodhagen, Danielle
Marie
Brooks, Morgan Jeanette
Brown, Zoe Madison
Brown-Outlaw, Dayzia
Ah'Dionna Deshonna
Caldwell, Madisyn Jordan
Campbell, Tajamara
Tyshawna
Capetillo, Analyse Del-
Cielo
Carnell, Emma
Carrier, William Michael
Carter, Dejanella Porshay
Castaneda, Miguel Angel
Castillo-Bonilla,
Jacquelyn
Chapman, Woodri'ona
I'vonna
Claveria, Esmeralda
Yesenia
Cobbs, Dimitrius Amir
Coleman, Kedzie
Lexington-Bleu
Conley, Baker Nicholas
Conley, Kavon Armani



Julienne Alphonse and Aline Umuhoza are all smiles at the Loy Norrix graduation.

Cool, Peyton Annaliese
Cornieles, Antonio
Enrique
Coss, James Yeager
Cowles, Tess Renner
Cox, Berkley Todd Albert
Cox, Ethan Ian
Crill, Emanuel Emontre
Crothers, Maeve
Francesca

Culp, Gregory Stephen
Curtis, Trent Jacob
Dales, William David
Dalke-Davis, Alexander
Dean
Damashek, Beatrix Alice
Darden, Aria Bobbi
Davis, Gabrielle Frances
Aliyah
Davis, Mytchell Trevor

Dearman, Matthew
Alexander
Dillon, Regan Elizabeth
Doerschler, Nathan Carl
Domanick, Joseph
Andrew
Doster, Emerald Faye
Driz, Joshua-Adrian
Evangelista
Dunigan, Steffon Demar

Dunning, Leeann Marie
Dye, Kylazia Jameas
Eberhard, Zachary Steven
Eisenbach, Carter James
Elben, Tyler Paul
Elias-Elias, Jhair
Elliott-Redlin, Elizabeth
Ingrid Moon
Ely, Olivia Belle
Emenheiser, Grant Edward

Enriquez, Ismael Ivan
Fields, Teresita de Jesus
Fillingham, Brady Andrew
Foster, Nadia Makila
Fries, Cillya Ann
Fulbright, Lily Charlotte
Gibson, Gentle Denerd
Gonzales, Caleb N
Gonzales, Samuel Hassen
Gonzalez, Joseph John
Goodman, Aaliyah
Tamera
Grimmer, Naomi
Angelina
Guerrero-Jamaica, Bryn
Hall, Halona Alexis-Kay
Hanfland, Madison
Elizabeth
Harback, Alexandria
Grace
Harris, April To'nesha
Harris, Nikia Marie
Harris, Shelia Isabella
Hauke, Abigail Lee
Hawkins-Davis, Aviona
Marie
Hazen, Kolton Thorn
Heffernan, Tyanna
Elizabeth
Heintzelman, Cameron
Lee
Herschleb, Nina Mae
Hinds, Michael Paul
Hobson, Isaiah James
Holm, Christian
Alexander
Holmer, Madison Paige
Holtz, Emily Rosemarie
Hoogerheide, Stephanie
Nicole
Hoover, Tyler Marie
Hoppe, Macy Elizabeth
Hoskins, Ovy'once
Lasean
Hudson, Tanaja Manea
Huggins, Christopher
LaRon
Ingraham, Hayley Renee
Isacksen, Robert
Christian
Jackson, Cemeelah
Aaliyah
James, Bailey Andrew
James, Ivan Dejuan
Jerue, Mikaela Nicole
Johnson, Nadia Roquel
Johnson-Ford, Ajana
Zakiyyah
Jones, Alexandra

Elizabeth
Jones, Ciera Marie
Jones, Olivia Louiza
Julien Mouton, Alexis
Karen
Kalhorn, Timothy David
Keller, Will Perry
Kelley, Deon Lee
Keltsch, Dustin Wayne
Kilpatrick, Vanessa Nicole
Kimbrough, Brielle Marie
Renee
King, Abigail Elisabeth
Robertson
Kissel, Parker Michael
Kleber, Aria Greer
Knight, Sierra Marie
Knutson, Emma Sophia
Koprek, Sigourney
Oranna Rose
Koss, Mackenzie Bertie
Labadie, Julia Eleanor
Lambert, Madison Kay
Lambert-Williamson,
Dakota
Lane, Aidan Kyle
Lara Ibarra, Melanie
Anette
Lawson, Ronald James
Leake, Naashar Cesar
Leonard, Jaree Latrice
Lesatz, Jaylee Raine
LeSuer, Etienne Conrad
Liddle, Zachary
Montgomery
Lipsey, Samari Arionno
Littke, Alandra Grace
Loc, Joseph Te'o
London, Steven
Lawrence
Lopez, Brisa Giselle
Lopez, Makenna Marie
Luz, Edwin
Marcinkowski, Diana
Lynn
Marion, Alexandra
Synclair
Marshall, Grace Eden
Martin, Tori Charmaine
Mathieson-Rinock,
Rowan Lyons
Mazei, Luis Diego
Mboup, Mohamed Issa
McClenton-Langston,
Ciera Chrishelle
McDade, Marco Robert
McGowan, Adrianna
Rachelle
(continued on page 11)



Dylan Vanderkley, Marleigh VandenBussche, and Emma Van Houten recite the Pledge of Allegiance during the Loy Norrix graduation.

Loy Norrix High School 2019 Graduates (continued)

McGowan, Mary	Pineau, Saryna Faith	Stoken, Parker Joseph
McKissic, Joshua Charles	Pinkster, Julia Renaye	Stratton, Kamryn
McMillon, Gabrielle	Porter, Andrew Steven	Elizabeth Bayleigh
Victoria	Prehn, Austin Michael	Swift, Delvin Tobias
McMillon, Hannah	Prieto, Ramsey Louis	Tackett, Aries Rain
Elizabeth	Ralat Mercado, Allyson	Taplin, Kylie Elizabeth
McMullen, Brianna Rose	Jamil	Taplin, Rebecca
McNair, Nathan Richard	Ramos, Abrianna Dalia	Shiobhan
McWethy, Jared Blake	Randazzo, Joshua	Taylor, Oliver Howard
Mejia, Aline Siclary	Nicolas	Taylor-Effinger, Jordan
Metcalfe, Thomas	Razo, Jose Eduardo	Simone
Xavier	Reece, Deisiana	Terrian, Hannah Marie
Milam, Ronald Clare	Monique	Thomas, Chase Ryan
Millard, Jayden Kain	Ridderbos, Alexander	Thomas, Maxwell Gray
Miller, Devin	Jonathan	Thomas, Rylee Nichole
Guadalupe-Faith	Roberts, Abigail Grace	Thompson, Nicklas
Miller, Elijah Brooks	Roberts, Andrew Carl	Christopher
Mitchell, Naree Dwayne	Robinson, Jayden	Thompson, Rebecca
Moncrief, Breeana	Jamar	Sunshine
Lois-Renae	Rojo, Jorge Andres	Tidwell, Asiana Naysia
Montero, Luis Ezra	Roman, Eduardo	Timmerman, Justin
Moore, Raquan Raenell	Rossi, Thomas Svend	Lamont
Morabito, Ricco Patric	Rutherford, Gavin	Tolin-Lee, Makenzie
Morales, Tristen David	Quinn	Maleah
Morgan, Madison	Sackett, Richard Lee	Tran, Jake Ly
Brooke	Salamun, Sean Patrick	Udvardy, Dakotah
Morris, Treasure	Salas, Yesenia	Dawn
Shamiece	Salazar, Bridget	Umuhzoa, Aline
Moss, Isaac Henry	Saul, Carly Jean	Van Houten, Emma
Moton, Shaun Laquinn	Scott, Caitlin Nicole	Haven
Muchmore, Grace	Scott, Tatyahna	VandenBerg, Mia Aleath
Roxanne Sayre	Evelena Nicole	VandenBussche,
Mujica, Marcos	Seaman, Heidi Carolyn	Marleigh Marie
Murphy, Robert Bradley	Seelbinder, Alexander	Vander Beek, Colin
Nagel-Bennett, Eleanor	Jason	Walker
Suzanne	Self, Aaron Kristofer	VanderKley, Dylan Peter
Nayeem, Mehran	Selvidge, Calvin Charles	Wadford, Jazminique
Ndayikengurukiye, Lewi	Shantz, Kathryn Sun-	Faith
Newhouse, Hannah	Hee	Wallace, Jordan Lee
Elizabeth	Sherman, Hannah	Ward, Naquaria
Nnebedum,	Marie	Rochelle
Nmesomachi	Small, Josephine Ethlin	Weatherall, Kiara Onvia
Echezona	Smith, Alysia Coleen	Whalen, Lily Catherine
Nonato-Nonato, Daniel	Ann	Wheeler, Tristan David
Novotny, Maeve Lauren	Smith, Aumar	White, Zariah Aujahnea
Ocampo-Sandoval,	Rayshawna	Wiessner, Samuel Jay
Miguel Angel	Smith, Bailee Marie	Williams, Jordan Elijah
Okpechukwu, Ebube	Smith, Jeremiah Deron	Willis, Makieya Kalise
Happy	Smith, Ophelia	Worden, Brandon Bryce
Outinen, Thomas	Elizabeth Kylee	Phillip
Michael	Sneed, Zackary Tucker	Worthy, DeAndre'
Overhiser, Ty Christian	Sok, Jenessa Na'shae	LaMar
Palmore, Kenndrel	Soria Ramirez,	Young, Caleb Dean
Artray	Fernando	Young, Tyrell Antonio
Peals, Robert Lee	Speikes, Stephan	Zabib, Raghad Ahmad
Perkins, Elena Xrista	Eugene	Zabib, Rahaf Ahmad
Peterman, Cade	Spinney, Trenton Scott	Zehner, Christian
Michael	Spitzer, Zachary Paul	Joseph
Phillips, Cameron	Strackangast, Zoe Liu	Zuniga, Paula
William	Stewart, Ian Padraic	

Seven KPS Students Honored with Heyl Scholarships

Ten students from Kalamazoo County high schools, including seven Kalamazoo Public Schools seniors, received Heyl Scholarships to attend institutions of higher education in the 2019-20 school year to study STEM-related fields. Seven of the students will attend Kalamazoo College, while the other three are attending the Western Michigan University School of Nursing. The students were honored at a dinner May 31 at Kalamazoo College.

The seven KPS honorees are: Samuel Ankley, Kalamazoo Central High School, attending Kalamazoo College; Suja Thakali, Kalamazoo Central, Kalamazoo College; Macy Hoppe, Loy Norrix High School, attending Western Michigan University School of Nursing; Emma Knutson, Loy Norrix, WMU School of Nursing; Sierra Knight, Loy Norrix, WMU School of Nursing; Carter Eisenbach, Loy Norrix, Kalamazoo College; and Rachel Lanting, Kalamazoo Central, Kalamazoo College.

The prestigious scholarships are available to graduates of



From left, Karika Ann Parker, executive director, Heyl Scholarship Fund; Samuel Ankley, Suja Thakali, Macy Hoppe, Emma Knutson, Sierra Knight, Carter Eisenbach, and Rachel Lanting.

the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center, who meet other requirements of grade point average, standardized test scores, references, and rigorous coursework. The scholarship covers tuition, room and board,

and book fees. The scholarships were established in 1971 through the will of F.W. and Elsie L. Heyl. F.W. Heyl was the first director of research at The Upjohn Co. and taught at Kalamazoo College.

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Naree Mitchell: Dreams of Joining Police Force Fuels Change for Norrix Grad

When Naree Mitchell started as a freshman at Loy Norrix High School, he ended up spending way too much time in behavioral specialist Darryl Matthews' office.

Matthews checked Mitchell's transcripts and was surprised. "His lowest grade in middle school was a B. I said, 'You're not a knucklehead, so what's going on?'" They started talking about goals and focus and that's when Mitchell had a surprise for Matthews.

"He said he wanted to be a police officer," Matthews said. "I laughed. He said, 'No, I really want to be a police officer.' I said, 'Well you need to conduct yourself as a law-abiding citizen right now. You can't wait until after high school.'"

Mitchell, 18, shakes his head and smiles a little when he talks about his freshman year and the start of his sophomore year and admits it was rocky. He was disrespectful. He'd walk out of classrooms. Swearing. Basically, "I was doing what I wanted and not being a good person," he says.

Two things made a huge

difference in Mitchell's high school experience and helped put him on the path to achieving his goal of becoming a police officer: swimming and Education For Employment.

His sophomore year, he had an aquatics class, and swim coach Paul Mahar suggested he join the swim team.

"I began to swim and our coach would always tell us that we need to behave a certain way because it reflects on the whole team," said Mitchell, 18. "I felt I needed to do my best not only to make myself a better person, but to make the team look good."

That team experience was compelling to Mitchell. He didn't want to sit on the bench, and he didn't want the team to lose points because he couldn't compete. There were slip ups, and there were times his coach had to pull him aside to talk to him, but there was also the time Mahar nominated Mitchell for one of the school's People's Choice Awards, that recognized students for exemplary behavior, change, or achievement.



Naree Mitchell worked with the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety officer Brian Brusach through Education For Employment.

The other driving force, was exactly what Matthews pulled out of Mitchell: He wanted to be a police officer.

In fact, he's wanted to be a police officer ever since he can remember.

"I feel like every kid wants to be a cop, but a lot of people, as

they get older, they change their minds, but it didn't happen for me," he said. "It's just always been my dream.

"A lot of people don't like the police. But the police have a really hard job. I like the challenge they have to face every day. I also like the fact that as a police officer you're going to see people on what could be the worst day of their lives. No one calls the police on their good days.

"You're going to be there. You can help comfort them, reassure them that you're going to help them through their problems. I like that you can really be there for somebody and help them."

He's seen that side of the law. When his aunt and infant cousin were murdered, he was impressed by the police officers who dealt with his family. They helped keep the family calm and provided them with information. "They were amazing. That's what the police do. You're with people at the craziest times in their lives and you help make a difference."

By the end of his sophomore year at Loy Norrix, Mitchell was already volunteering as a cadet with the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department when he applied for the EFE law enforcement program.

Education For Employment provides students hands-on training in a number of areas of study ranging from education to food service. In the law enforcement program, Mitchell studied interview techniques, met with different divisions in the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety, such as criminal investigation, operations, and the fire marshal. Working with KDPS, he has become a recruiting sergeant for the EFE law enforcement program and he represents the department at cadet competitions where students have to demonstrate knowledge in marksmanship, and handling building searches, traffic crashes, and domestic violence scenarios.

Mitchell plans to enroll in Kalamazoo Valley Community College to earn an associate's degree in criminal justice. He said that eventually, he'd like to work for the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety.

Matthews said he's proud of Mitchell for choosing a path and sticking with it. There were people who tried to dissuade him from his goals, but Mitchell stuck with his dream despite peer pressure to do otherwise.

Mitchell is the son of Ronald and Marie Cole.

Mitchell said he knows his career choice is not necessarily popular with some people. He said some people will tell kids, "Oh, the police are bad guys who are just trying to hurt you. As a police officer, I think I could go into the community and really change that by talking with kids."

He especially wants to help add to the diversity of the police force, which he feels can only help make policing more effective.

"I want to serve the community where I came from. I can really relate to the people in the community. I'm not just someone coming from out of nowhere and popping into Kalamazoo. And I want to show people you can step out and make your own path."

Dinosaur Park is open to the public!

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f in y

Shannon McConkey: Growing From an Anxious Child to an Awesome Young Woman

High school was not easy for Shannon McConkey.

It wasn't that she wasn't smart enough, it was that the whole social experience was overwhelming.

The people, the crowds, the anxiety.

"I think that when I was younger, I always had anxiety," said McConkey. "I'd wake up in the middle of the night from anxiety dreams. I was always a very nervous, shy kid. I just didn't know what anxiety was until high school, I guess."

"I just thought I was nervous all the time. When I got to high school, it got really bad. Being around large crowds frightens me a lot — and there are a lot of students at Kalamazoo Central."

The anxiety issues were coupled with the fact that she didn't anticipate how challenging high school would be.

"I thought it was going to be a lot easier than it was," said McConkey, 18. "I thought I could slack off and catch up later."

McConkey, a 2019 Kalamazoo Central graduate, laughs at her own immaturity.

"That did not happen. After that, I dug myself into a deeper hole, which proved to be very difficult to get out of."

"The first and second trimester, I was like, 'I don't know what's happening.' The last tri, I owned it and I thought I

messed up pretty bad."

Messing up pretty bad meant she'd failed three classes.

Luckily, at the start of her sophomore year, she met some influential teachers, with whom she bonded. They motivated her and reminded her of all the things she enjoyed about school. She did Grad Point to make up some of the credit and re-took some classes.

That year, she took her first Advanced Placement class with English teacher Christopher Bullmer, because she'd heard "he'd be an incredible teacher."

That year, however, Bullmer committed suicide. McConkey, like many Kalamazoo Central students, was devastated.

"When you struggle with depression and stuff, it's really easy to get unmotivated," she said. "He saw that was happening with me. His room was just a safe space. No matter what the problem was, you could always go to him and talk to him, and he helped you come up with a solution, no matter what. That's what he did with me."

When she looks back, she wonders if Bullmer was so understanding because of his own struggles. She said he taught his students one final lesson with his death.

"Everyone who had him realized how serious suicide is and how it can affect anyone, even if they put on a brave face,"



Shannon McConkey, right, overcame extreme anxiety to find success at Kalamazoo Central High School. Here, she poses with her friend Brooke Himmelein at the Kalamazoo Central graduation.

McConkey said. "I think he taught us to be more sensitive to the issue and to check up on our friends more."

In addition to finding caring adults in the building, McConkey said the school administration helped by creating a 504 plan to address her anxiety. The plan creates accommodations when she's having a bad day or feeling particularly anxious, which could manifest itself, by shaking, shortness of breath, or crying bouts.

"I can sit in an administrator's office until I calm down, get a drink of water, or take a short walk," she said. "Once I found a support system within the school, it all became a lot easier to deal with."

Her struggles inspired her to take an AP psychology class and built her interest in studying psychology in college. She plans to enroll in Kalamazoo Valley Community College in the fall.

She said teachers, adminis-

trators, and even security guards helped her when she needed it. People like Dylan Patterson, the Kalamazoo Central athletic director, who was the freshman principal her first year at KC, stuck with her. "He kept me on track, even when I wasn't doing what I was supposed to do."

Patterson said, "Shannon is an awesome young lady. She should be extremely proud of her constant self improvement. I have no doubt she will be successful in anything she chooses, because she understands what it takes to evolve."

Her parents Diane and Greg McConkey always supported her, she said. And growing a good support network of friends, like Genevieve Norr, Suja Thakali, and Brooke Himmelein, makes a huge difference too, McConkey said. Although the prospect of leaving high school brings new anxieties, she feels like she has grown and learned so much about how to manage her fears and concerns that the future is not nearly as scary as it once was.

"I guess finding someone to connect to and talk to and help get you through is what really helped me," she said. "Surround yourself with the best type of people you can. Believe in yourself. If you don't believe in yourself, nothing is going to happen. If you do, then you can do anything you want."

Norrix Seniors Celebrate Next Step with Post-secondary Reveal Day

To celebrate National Decision Day on May 1, Loy Norrix High School organized a Post-secondary Reveal Day for seniors. Seniors had the opportunity to decorate poster boards to announce their post-secondary plans. Guest speaker Janell "Nelly" Smith, a 2008 LN alumna who now works for The Kalamazoo Promise as an associate administrator, celebrated with the students and encouraged them to keep growing and to keep challenging themselves.



Caitlin Scott



Jeremiah Smith



Emily Batzloff



Ebube Okpechukwu

Mia May: Learning to Love Every Opportunity

For Mia May, high school almost sounds like a series of events that she didn't really want to do — and ended up loving anyway.

For instance, there was Early Middle College, a program in which students complete a fifth year of high school and then graduate with not only their high school diploma but an associate's degree or certificate from Kalamazoo Valley Community College as well. May, 18, has completed her high school courses and at the end of next year will also have an associate's degree in education, which will put her on the path to a teaching career.

But, it was a friend who first suggested EMC, and her mother who "made" her enroll. Her parents are Steve and Liza May.

"I was worried I was going to miss out on all of this fun senior stuff," she said. "But at one point, it just hit me: I like being a college student. I'm glad I did it. It gave me a lot more freedom."

The program begins as dual enrollment, with students working closely with advisors to select a class at KVCC in addition to their high school coursework. By the

end of the program, the students' schedules have reversed with most or all of their classes being held at KVCC and students taking the lead in planning classes and schedules.

"I feel more like an adult, doing my own thing," she said. "As long as I keep my grades up, it's all good. If you plan your schedule right, you can have a really good day."

It hasn't been easy. The KVCC classes are more demanding and she has to be more diligent with her work and be well organized. May is excited to be taking a step toward the career in education that she's always dreamed of — and she's doing it without having had to tap into her Kalamazoo Promise scholarship yet. She hopes to use that to attend Northern Michigan University in the future.

"I've always enjoyed kids, so helping them and being with them all day would be a dream. I'm not really there for the money. I'm there to help."

Another memorable experience for May — one that she really didn't want to do at first — was



Mia May is enrolled in Early Middle College, which is allowing her to earn her associate's degree in education while still enrolled at Loy Norrix High School.

work with PeaceJam, the student club that volunteers extensively in the community, organizes lectures with Nobel Peace Prize winners, and participates in international service projects. It was a friend who "dragged" her to the first meeting.

She traveled with the group to South Africa and to India, where they met families, learned about the cultures, and volunteered to work with children.

This year she delivered a speech before 2014 Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, who

personally invited her to return to India and to volunteer with his group.

"People are like, 'Why would you go to India?' But I think, 'why wouldn't you?'," she said. "I loved the culture and everyone was so welcoming. It was almost like in the movies with all of the spices and colors. It's really amazing. It was an experience I'll never let go of."

And, there was one more experience she'll never forget — another one that she undertook reluctantly. When she was a

freshman, her brother was on the wrestling team, and they asked her to serve as manager.

"I was really scared that first year, but the second year I asked a friend to do it with me and after that we really had a blast," she said.

Coaches Derrick Parker and Alex Hill have been like second parents, she said. They joked with them. They listened to them. They snuck them pizzas during final exams.

Hill said May was, "a joy to be around. She was a coach and a leader for the team, especially during her senior year. Life as a coach would be much more difficult without her around."

May will miss the coaches, especially their never ending stream of positive messages: You're going to do fine. You're going to do great.

"I feel like I can sit there and tell them anything and they would be there and help me through it," she said. "They're teachers as well, and if I had questions for them, they could answer them. They're great coaches, great people."

KPS Adult Education 2019 Graduates

Alcorta, Carolina	Hines, Nathaniel A	Gale, Bradley J
Alonzo, Erica	Schurr, Megan	Glaser, Alexandria
Brundage, James J	Marie	Gray, Scott Michael
Bushouse, Christian E	Keith, Kenneth O	Lee
Collins, Kajah E	Baker, Barbara Jean	Haskell, Derrick
Devers, Shawnte D	Fernandez, Felix Lee	Dewayne
Dingwall, Bo D	Hayes, Lily	Heard, Angela Doreen
Dixon, Ruby E	Montgomery	Jones, Dominique
Kline, Robert	Popp, Kalyn Marie	Denise
Laybourn-Morris, James	Reid-Lownsberry, Preston	Knuckles, Devontai J
Martinez, Sarah	Tayara, Molhem	Leonard, Cody J.
Page, Phyllis G	Vega, Linda Karoline	Maness, Joshua K
Rosario, Carmelo A	Bogue, Skylar L	Robles, Sabrina M
Saeman, Amanda E	Cortinas, Jaime	Salinaz, Alisa Mari
Thornquist, Mikael K	Crespo, Vanessa	Tuck, Billy Q
Williams, Adriane D	Maria	Wayne, Channelle
Gately, Matthew J	Davis, Adrian	Whitmore, Alicia
	Travon	Gabrielle

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Terrence Bell: A Path Lined with Good, Long Talks and Friends

There are some people who yell.

There are some people who hit.

There are some people who talk — a lot.

When Terrence Bell would lose his temper or make a bad decision, he could always count on his granddad Calvin Chetham to set him straight.

“When I got in trouble, he’d give me a lecture — a lecture that would last two or three hours,” Bell said with a laugh and a smile. “He was that male figure that I really needed. I don’t think I would have turned out the way I did without him stepping up into that role.”

Coming from a home where he was largely raised by a single mother, with his father in prison, Terrence Bell graduated from Kalamazoo Central this spring. He was selected as one of the student speakers for graduation. He plans to attend Itasca Community College in Minnesota, where he has signed to play football.

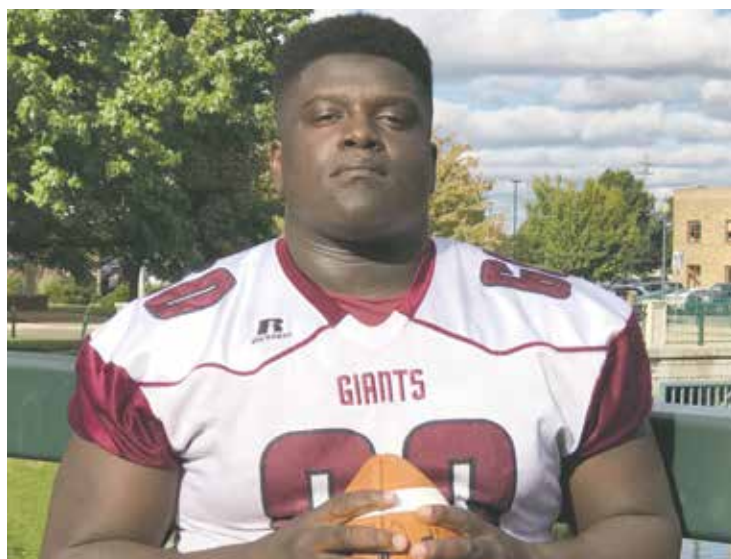
Bell, 18, has attended Kalamazoo Public Schools since kindergarten. He wasn’t always the best student, admitting that sometimes his anger got the best of him and got him into trouble. Things became more tumultuous when his father went to prison in 2010.

He said he felt that people who were angry with his father took out their frustration on him.

“I couldn’t run from it, because we have the exact same name. As soon as I’d tell somebody my name, I always got a dirty look.”

As a child, he said sometimes he blew up when that happened. It caused problems at school. It earned him some of those long lectures from his grandfather.

“There was a point in his schooling, where I thought, ‘Lord, just let him get through high school,’” Chetham said. “I would talk to him. Sometimes it did last awhile. I’ve been known in my family to repeat myself over and over again until it gets through to them. My kids say,



Terrence Bell turned his anger into positive energy to become a leader on and off the field at Kalamazoo Central.

‘OK, OK, I get it.’”

Chetham said his grandson has grown up a lot in the last few years, and the change is something amazing to witness.

“We are so proud of him at this point,” Chetham said. “I keep telling him, people don’t allow you to speak at graduation if they don’t see something in you. You have done an outstanding job.”

His grandmother is Marcella Cheatham. His mother is Marcia Jackson.

Bell said a lot of it is just a matter of maturing, but he also found much of his motivation to change in sports.

“Sports have always been important to me,” he said. “You connect with people, I think. Plus, I’m a competitor. I’ve always been competitive. I love to go against someone and have it be a competition.”

Throughout the years, he’s played basketball, baseball, football and track. He played football and track all four years in high school, playing defensive tackle and right guard in football and throwing shotput and discus in track.

Not only did he love the competitiveness of sports, but he liked the people he met.

“I came in as a freshman, and I saw how the older people acted,” Bell said. “I hung out with a lot of seniors in my freshman year. You get accustomed to how

they carry themselves and you start to carry yourself that way.

“Sports is key to maturity. You have school and you have sports. For me to mature in school, I felt I had to be better at my sports. For me to be good at my sports, I had to be better at school.”

Also important to his maturing was stepping into leadership roles at school. He

was a member of Kappa League, a high school arm of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. The group focus on leadership skills and community service.

Chetham is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi. The fraternity takes Kappa League members on college tours and arranges for high schoolers to compete in talent shows. The fraternity members also teach the students things such as table manners, how to tie a tie, how to dress for work, and business conversation skills.

One of the things Bell became known for on campus and in the community was leading the Kalamazoo Central football team in taking a knee during the national anthem. He said when San Francisco 49er Colin Kaepernick first began taking a knee to protest social and racial injustice, it inspired a lot of conversation among young players, but he found himself at the center of the controversy when he dropped to a knee during a game against Battle Creek Lakeview.

“I just went ahead and went

down. I don’t even remember it,” Bell said. Although he and other members of the team have been criticized for their actions, he said, “We’re one of the biggest schools in Michigan. I felt like it’s a platform we can use. Some people say leave that up to the pros, but I felt like why does it have to just be them doing it? Why can’t we all do it?”

These teammates are more than compatriots on the field, they are fast friends off the field as well. Among his closest allies: Kavon Ford, Jadakiss Lewis, Faylin Goodwin, Dammon Beverly, Derreck Beverly, Dajuan Edwards, and Rayquon Williams.

“If you see two of us sitting and talking and you walk away and come back 20 minutes later, there will be like 20 people standing around us,” he said with a smile. “We’re just people that people like to be around.

“We’re on each other. If we see one slacking, we pick them up. If one of us goes through hard times, we all go through hard times together. It’s not even friends. It’s more like family.”

KPS High School Students Ride Metro for FREE!

Thanks to the new **Youth Mobility Fund**, high school students in Kalamazoo Public Schools can ride Metro buses for free with their student ID. Starting this fall, just scan your student ID when boarding the bus, show it to the driver, and find a seat.

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Rachel Mei Lanting: Finding Kindness, Compassion, and So Many Choices at K.C.

Rachel Mei Lanting was curious what life might be like outside of the small private middle school she attended.

What would it be like to try a big school with more choices in classes, more people, more variety in activities?

So, she enrolled in Kalamazoo Central when she was a freshman.

“I ended up falling in love with it,” said Lanting, who goes by Mei. “It’s so many new opportunities and new people. Even now in my senior year, I’m meeting new people in all of my classes, which I think is pretty amazing. I still have the small school feel with KAMSC (the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center), so it’s a very nice balance.”

She’s turned into quite an advocate for Kalamazoo Central, from which she graduated this spring.

“I feel like the people are so genuinely kind and compassionate,” Lanting said. “Before I wasn’t used to people greeting me in the hallways or saying ‘Hi,’ which is a very small thing. Going to Kalamazoo Central, I just felt like the vast majority of the students were really open and accepting even though I didn’t know anyone.”

Lanting said she wasn’t aware of it at the time, but she felt alone and isolated in middle school. Everyone struggles with their identity at that age, she said, but for her that was complicated by being one of the few minority students in her middle school.

“Going to Kalamazoo Central, it was culture shock being surrounded by such diverse students, but it made me feel so much better about myself,” she said. “In a big school, you can always find a place to fit in. So I was able to find other Asian students to connect with, other students of color to connect with.”

“And, I was able to overcome some of the prejudices I had unintentionally formed. I didn’t



Rachel Mei Lanting performed as a soloist with the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Orchestra this spring after winning the 2019 Concerto Competition.

realize I had them until I came into a big school. Then, I started thinking about the way I think about my classmates and it was like, ‘Wait, that isn’t right.’ I feel like pushing me out of my comfort zone made me a better person because I wasn’t relying on my immediate snap judgments that I could rely on in middle school. So, my maturity in high school wasn’t just academic, it was also personal growth.”

It wasn’t just the other students who made the high school experience special, it was the teachers too.

“I had amazing teachers all around,” she said. “You can tell they’re very passionate about their students. These amazing teachers care so much about their students.”

Now, Lanting’s younger sister Lee plans to follow in her footsteps and attend Kalamazoo Central, starting as a freshman next year. Her parents are Ashley and Steve Lanting.

Her advice to her sister, and any student as they start high school: Get involved in something right away.

For Lanting, that was

choir and eventually the school musicals.

“I did mainly choir my first year, and I did the musical and it was crazy. It’s like a huge group of 60 kids singing mixed chorus. Being able to sit next to someone in that musical group experience, you bond very quickly. I have so many friends from choir, even though I haven’t done it since my sophomore year.”

She had to drop choir because she was busy with other musical endeavors, her church, Westwood Christian Reformed Church, and KAMSC, the Kalamazoo County advanced math and science program that is administered by KPS. She plays oboe with the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Orchestra, and was the winner of the 2019 concerto competition. She performs with the KJSO’s woodwind ensemble. Lanting is also an accomplished pianist, winning an honorable mention in this year’s Gene Marcus Competition at Purdue University and attending the finals of the Michigan Music Teachers Association at Michigan State University in the spring.

The KJSO is known for

its demanding schedule and challenging repertoire for young performers — and that’s part of what Lanting has enjoyed about the experience.

“We play the same repertoire as the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra,” she said. “We don’t take it at a slower tempo or cut it in any way. There’s this atmosphere of encouragement that in nine to 10 weeks we’re going to do it, and it’s going to be amazing.”

KJSO Maestro Andrew Koehler remembers Lanting arriving for her first rehearsal — as a fifth grader. Lanting remembers that day too, and says she “sucked.”

Koehler says differently. “She was barely a middle schooler at that time; I couldn’t even see her above the stand. But the sound that emanated from behind that stand was already astonishingly mature. The quality of her playing lifts all those around her. She has a preternatural, professional-level calm and presence of mind in performance as well.”

As demanding as it was, her music has served as a needed respite from some of the

academic challenges she faced taking AP classes at K-Central and attending KAMSC, where again she seems to have thrived on the pressure.

There were times she says she struggled “to survive” — such as in calculus — but there were other moments she loved such as doing higher level research and computer coding. The math and science took. Lanting will be attending Kalamazoo College on a prestigious Heyl Scholarship, which provides a full ride to study math or science.

“I appreciated KAMSC because you don’t have to lock yourself into doing the math tract or the physics tract or the chemistry tract. They let you get a broad experience of the subjects.”

But more than the academics, she appreciates what KAMSC taught her about balance and being a good student. She learned to talk to her teachers, to ask questions, to seek their help when she was stuck. She realized the value in having a bond with her teachers and building trust based on hard work.

KAMSC physics and math teacher Mike Sinclair said Lanting is one of the smartest students he’s had over the years.

“She loves her music, but she’s really good at math and computer science,” he said. “When you meet someone who’s so multi-talented, you have two choices: You can be incredibly jealous — or angry that you’re not as talented. She’s just incredibly bright. And she has a good sense of herself. She’s very humble, very self possessed. I just love that young lady.”

Lanting is excited about starting Kalamazoo College in the fall. As she looks back at her high school years, she has only one regret: that she didn’t do more. “I was talking to a friend,” she said. “We decided if we could do high school multiple times, it would be nice to focus on different experiences. If I had time, I would have gotten involved with soccer or robotics.”

Tre'Quan Hayes: Finding a Different Route to Achievement

At the Phoenix High School commencement, graduate Tre'Quan Hayes thanked the Kalamazoo Public Schools Board of Education for realizing the impact of one word: "alternative."

Phoenix used to be known as Phoenix Alternative High School. That word comes with a stigma, a perception that the building and the program is less than. A belief that the students are all troubled.

Hayes, 18, however, graduated from Phoenix this spring. He did it with a 3.5 grade point average. He did it while working three jobs. He did it while attending church twice a week. And, he noted, he couldn't remember the last time he had so much as a referral in school.

Hayes was also named the school's first valedictorian, an honor newly installed at Phoenix to emphasize the academic achievements of its students.

Hayes took a break from his job as an activity helper at Milwood Elementary School to talk about the impact that Phoenix had on his life.

Hayes enrolled in Kalamazoo Public Schools in the sixth grade after attending several smaller schools and school districts. He was not a bad student, but his first two years at Kalamazoo Central High School were a little rough.

"One thing that didn't work was Kalamazoo Central was a big school," Hayes said. "I tend to get distracted easily. I'm very known. I like to have conversations with people, and I tend to lose track of my work."

Dropping out, however, was never an option he even considered. He'd witnessed the effects of quitting on other family members. He wanted to create a different history for his family. He was also determined to graduate with his peers. "I didn't want to be the laughing stock and graduate after everyone else in my class," he said.

After transferring to Phoenix, he saw a noticeable



Phoenix graduation 2019 valedictorian Tre'Quan Hayes.

improvement in his grades.

"I thought, 'why couldn't I do this at Kalamazoo Central?'" he said. "I realized it's because I'm in a smaller environment. There are not a lot of people in the classrooms. The teachers can pay more attention to you and spend more time with you one-on-one. They say, 'If you talk to me and give me a heads up when you're having trouble, I can help you.'"

Mr. Hill.

Mrs. Wilson-Banks.

Mr. Motley.

Mrs. Huntington.

Mr. Clay.

Mrs. Valler.

Mr. Friedman.

They all had an impact.

Phoenix Principal Mark Hill remembers when he first saw Hayes as a freshman walking from store to store on the west side, turning in job applications. He lived on the Northside, but told Hill he was walking because he was saving his bus tokens in case of an emergency.

When Hayes told him he was struggling in school, Hill encouraged him to try his high school. "I'm glad he made the decision to try Phoenix," Hill said.

"I saw the leadership potential in that young man, so I provided him with every

school's have inspired Hayes to think about pursuing a degree in education when he enrolls in Coppin State University in Maryland in the fall. Coppin is one of the country's historically black colleges and universities — or HBCU.

"There are so many kids that just need guidance," he said. "And I realized that when I was growing up there were not a lot of male teachers. Students need this kind of support. They need someone who really understands what goes on. You can tell a lot goes on at home and it shows at school. They can't control that. They need support from a young male adult, a mentor.

"I work well with kids. They respect me and I know how to talk to them. I'm not just the one yelling at them, but I check a kid and say, 'You're in the wrong now.' I'm quick to converse with them and understand what's going on. I spill into them as they grow."

Among others who have made an impact on Hayes are

various Galilee Baptist Church leaders he's worked with through the years, including Pastor Michael T. Scott, Deacon Raymond Ryan, Deacon Jerome Gardner, Mike Lawler, president of media ministry; youth director Dorla Bonner, Brother Edward Harris, and former Galilee minister Leon Coleman III, as well as Stones Church youth director Aaron Williams.

But perhaps his biggest sources of inspiration are his mother Chalita Smith, who is always his biggest supporter, and two of his younger sisters who live with them: La'nija Williams, a freshman at Kalamazoo Central, and Miracle Williams, a seventh grader at Hillside Middle School.

"I want my sisters to go to college," he said. "I'll be the first male in my family to go to college. I want to give them a bigger picture, to be able to say, 'My brother did it, and I can do it too.' I just want to see my mom proud of me. My mom is my biggest motivator because she's always been real with me."

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Phoenix High School Moving for 2019–2020 While Building Undergoes Construction

Phoenix High School will have a new address for the 2019–2020 school year, while its home building undergoes a \$6.4 million expansion.

Phoenix will relocate to the building located at 3333 S. Westnedge Ave., which currently houses the Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program. The programs will share the space — but maintain completely separate programming — for the upcoming school year. The school will be maintaining a closed campus at the temporary location.

Voters approved the funds for the expansion in the 2018 bond. The \$6,412,656 project includes four classrooms, a gym, locker rooms, restrooms, and a new counseling center.

“Space is important,” Hill said. “The building was initially built for babies and toddlers, so we’re fitting big kids in that space.”

Teachers packed the last

day of school and work began immediately to demolish storage sheds at the rear of the property, said Phoenix Principal Mark Hill.

That space on the east side of the current structure will be used for four new classrooms, a student center, and a gymnasium that will seat 400 people. The building will have a new heating, air conditioning and ventilation system, and already has new windows.

The construction will also create a counseling center to house therapy, socio-emotional supports, a behavior specialist, and guidance counselor.

Currently, it’s difficult to find space to deliver those services in a way that protects students’ privacy, Hill said.

“We have to be very intentional about preserving their privacy, and it can be problematic in the tight quarters,” he said. “Also, because things are cramped, there is little room for students who need



Tre’Quan Hayes and Ashah Allen, were named Phoenix High School’s first valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively. They were honored in May along with their classmates at Phoenix’s senior awards, and pose here with Phoenix Principal Mark Hill.

quiet space during the day. The additional space will give the kids more room to maneuver.”

Hill is especially excited about adding a gymnasium to the school. Phoenix offers basketball and cheerleading as extracurriculars, but the students have not had a stable

home for the programs. At various times they have practiced and held games at Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts and at the South Westnedge location. But, that makes transportation — and thus participation — difficult for some students.

The gym will allow the

school to host home games and tournaments and help create a stronger sense of community around the school. That will make the overall Phoenix program stronger, he said.

“Many students come to Phoenix because they want a smaller environment, but we want them to know they are in high school and to have the same high school remembrances as other students,” Hill said. “So we have spirit weeks and honor assemblies. And, sports are a big part of high school.”

The school also works to allow students to play on teams at Loy Norrix and Kalamazoo Central high schools. They also offer activities like yearbook, class trips and Grad Bash.

Because the staff will be in transition over the summer, those interested in enrolling in Phoenix, should call KPS Student Services at (269) 337-0161 for more information. Orientation will follow in the fall.

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Discover

Engage



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6–8 pm | CEN/Teen Studio

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Tuesday, August 6
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