Kalamazoo Public Schools

# EXCELSIOR

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## IMPORTANT DATES

**Board of Education Meetings**

Thursday, Sept.13 & 28, 2017
7 p.m.
Administration Building
1220 Howard St.

For more information, call (269) 337-1572

**First Day of School**
Sept. 5, 2017
K–12 attend a.m. only
No half-day kindergarten

**First Full Day of School K–12**
**First Day for Half-Day Kindergarten**
Sept. 6, 2017

**Winter Break**
Dec. 25, 2017–Jan. 5, 2018
School resumes Jan. 8, 2018

**Spring Break**
April 2–6, 2018
School resumes April 9, 2018

**"Achieve what you aspire to be. Don't let people tell you can't do something or what you want to do is impossible. Make an impact. So many of us choose our path out of fear disguised as practicality. What we really want seems impossibly out of reality and ridiculous to expect, so we never dare to ask the universe for it."**
***Duncan Wallis**, student, Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center graduation*

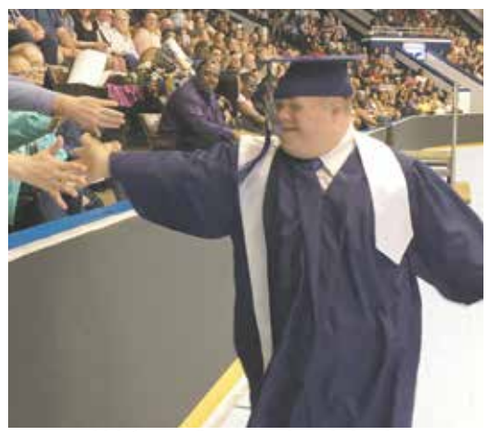
# Congratulations to the Class of 2017

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



Loy Norrix seniors Jasmine Johnson, Itavianna Hill, and Iquavianna Hill wait for the start of commencement at Wings Event Center.

**"... stay motivated and don't let anything prevent you from graduation. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't."**
***Vallolec Rodriguez Ojeda, LN**, student, Advice for underclassmen*



Kree Mayo high fives audience members during the graduation procession for Loy Norrix High School.

**"If you didn't think you could graduate and you are this evening, what else is possible that you may not have believed was possible at one point in your lives?"**
***Dr. Michael Rice**, superintendent, Adult Ed. graduation*



Averil Crocker and Cassandra Somers laugh with friends before the Kalamazoo Central Senior Awards Ceremony.



She'Ron O'Neal–Wright, Davison David, and Colby Stratton (L to R) were ready for the KPS Adult Education graduation ceremony at Chenery Auditorium on May 22.

**"What kept pushing me to do my best was the Kalamazoo Promise. I knew that I couldn't give up this wonderful opportunity that you and all of the other donors offer. I made a promise to myself that I was going to go to college and make my father proud."**
***Austin Topham, KC**, student, Thank you letter to Promise donors*

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# Class of 2017 in the Spotlight



LaTaya Berry shakes hands with Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice as she walks across the stage at the Kalamazoo Central graduation.



Kalamazoo Public School 2017 Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center graduates. Front row (L to R) Ian Hawthorne (LN), Samuel Ratliff (LN), Ava Wood (LN), Maileen Bugnaski (LN), Amirah Bin-Mahfouz (KC), and Ashley Bynum (LN). Back row (L to R) Vaughn Taylor (LN), Duncan Wallis (LN), Kevin Mitchell (LN) , Jesse Pollens-Voight (LN), Lachlan Woods (LN), Addison Krueger (LN), Jackson Kujacznski (LN), and Makaila Furderder (LN).

**"The most influential people in my life are my mom and dad and Ms. Pelligrino. These amazing adults changed my thinking about school, life, and music. These adults are my heroes."**
***Destiny Staggs, LN**, student, Most influential person*

**"My advice for under-classmen would be to just be yourself, high school is a time to find yourself, and you can't do that if you're constantly pushing the real you back just to 'fit in.'"**
***Alysia Wiard, KC**, student, Advice for underclassmen*



Jordyn Boggan and Marcel Coleman stepped outside with friends after the Kalamazoo Central Senior Awards Ceremony.



Aaryeska Steele said she was nervous before the KPS Adult Education commencement ceremony at Chenery Auditorium on May 22.

**"The other thing that I find to be the most helpful about the Promise, other than the money, is the motivation that it gives students."**
***Kaelan Firth, LN**, student, Promise thank you*



Amoree Tatum and Ivy Warren-Johnson (L to R) are ready for the Loy Norrix High School graduation ceremony.

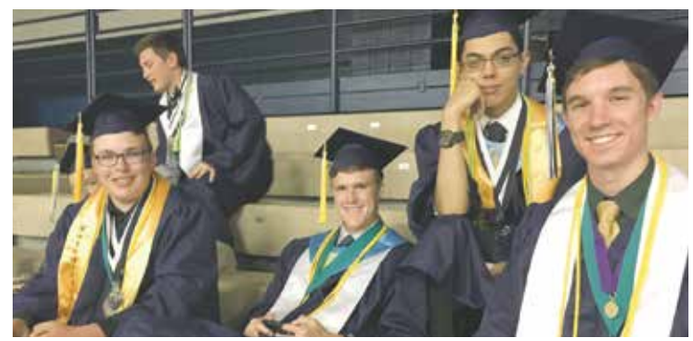


Front row from left, Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program principal David Gamble, Malissa Luckett, Demarco Venton, Diana Whitmore, Allison Diamond, teacher Beth Session,teacher Matthew Gorton, and KPS Superintendent Dr. MIchael Rice. Back row from left, Sierra Kershaw Jordyn Boley, Hunter Bilicke, Brennan Cox, Jesse Volenski, Scot Johnson, Jacob Volenski, and Ethan Meyers.



Phoenix High School Principal Mark Hill, center, poses with students Samantha Vandenburg, Amarion Canda, Asharia Banks, Sidney Fruge-Crayton, Niera Winters, Johnnae Woods, and Parrish Yates, who received state commendations at the Phoenix senior awards ceremony.

**"National Honor Society taught me about the importance of serving your community and in my senior year taught me leadership skills..."**
***Kelly Higgins, KC**, student, Best HS memory*



Loy Norrix seniors Lachlan Woods, Morgan Kenbeek, Evan Wheat, Hamza Turkistani, and Ian Hawthorne relax before graduation.

# Five Students Earn Heyl Scholarships

Eleven local students were awarded Heyl Scholarships to the WMU Bronson School of Nursing and Kalamazoo College. This year five of the 11 scholarships were awarded to Kalamazoo Public Schools' seniors.

The winners from Kalamazoo Public Schools were: Kalamazoo Central students Samuel Meyer and Subi Thakali, and Loy Norrix students Hannah Pittman, Reace Hammel and Julia Townley.

Pittman, Meyer and Thakali will attend Kalamazoo College; Hammel and Townley will attend WMU School of Nursing.

The scholarship provides tuition and fees, housing and a book allowance for students studying nursing at Western Michigan University or science or math at Kalamazoo College.

Winners generally have a high school grade point average of 3.5 or better; a SAT verbal of 500 and math of 550 or greater; or an ACT composite greater than 25; a challenging high school curriculum including one year each of biology, chemistry, and physics and four years of math; an interest in science, math, or nursing; strong writing skills; and strong teacher evaluations.



**2017 Kalamazoo Public Schools Heyl Scholars — Front Row; L to R: Hannah Pittman, Reace Hammel and Julia Townley, all from Loy Norrix HS. Back Row, L to R: Samuel Meyer and Subi Thakali, both from Kalamazoo Central HS. Pittman, Meyer and Thakali will attend Kalamazoo College; Hammel and Townley will attend WMU School of Nursing.**

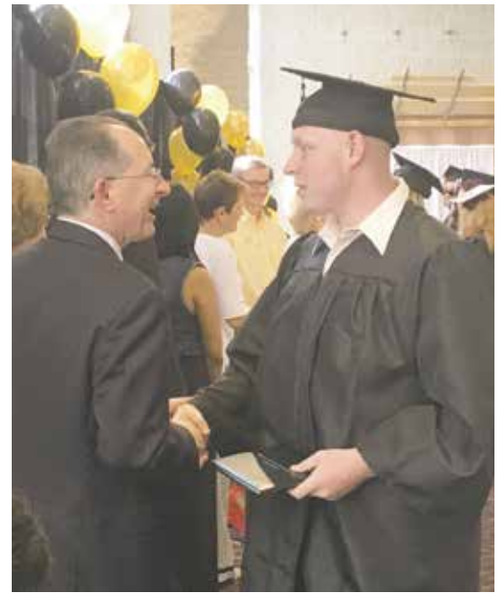


**Phoenix principal Mark Hill congratulates Sharnez Williams at the commencement.**

**"To the anonymous donors of the Kalamazoo Promise Thank you for gift that keeps on giving ... (Graduates) now others will stand on your shoulders."**

***Valerie Boggan**, principal, KC Graduation*

# Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program Holds Commencement



**KILP graduate Jesse Volenski shakes hands with KPS Superintendent Michael Rice at the KILP graduation ceremony.**

The Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program, Kalamazoo Public School's newest alternative high school, held its first commencement ceremony June 2 at Kalamazoo Central High School.

Fourteen students graduated this year from KILP. KILP opened in the fall with 60 students. The program offers smaller class sizes with flexible scheduling and a significant online learning component. The school serves students who need to focus on credit recovery.

KILP principal David Gamble welcomed the audience and commended students and staff for making the program's first year a success. "Congratulations to you all. I am looking forward to witnessing your accomplishment of your future goals."

KPS Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice spoke at the graduation.

"Graduates, I appreciate you. More to the point, I appreciate your resilience, your steeliness, your determination to finish high school. You would not be denied," Rice said. "It's not that people, including you, didn't have doubts along the way. They — and you — certainly did. The trick is not to be so consumed by doubts that you are paralyzed, that you can no longer move forward in your lives."

He encouraged the graduates to continue their educations to further their options for the future.

"Your resilience, your strength, and your determination are portable. You can and do take them with you in life. You will continue to benefit from them as you use them to accomplish more and to accomplish greater."

KILP will continue next fall with 100 students. KILP graduates are eligible for the Kalamazoo Promise. For more information on enrolling, contact principal David Gamble at the school at (269) 548-0190.




# William Wright: Bound for the Front of the Classroom Since Fourth Grade

It all started in fourth grade with a great teacher.

William Wright attended Spring Valley Center for Exploration and his teacher was Marlean Wilson-Bridges.

"Basically, she had a way of connecting with students that allowed education to be fun and where you wanted to come to school," Wright said. "She just treated everyone equal. She had an impact on our lives, because in fourth grade we weren't doing basic fourth-grade work, we were doing middle-school work also."

Wright graduated from Loy Norrix High School in June. He has been accepted at Western Michigan University where he received a Fund for the Advancement for Minorities in Education Scholarship, which will provide a full-ride while he pursues a degree in elementary education.

His parents are Bryan and Shelly Wright, and he has an older brother Bryan, who is attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and a younger sister who attends Hillside Middle School.



**Loy Norrix senior William Wright in Woods Lake second-grade teacher Marlean Wilson-Bridges' classroom. He works on math with Kewan Greene-Hemphill, left, and Davon Norman.**

Wright attended Kalamazoo Central for three years, before transferring to Loy Norrix for his senior year. He was a member of the National Honor Society and Link Crew. He played basketball, football and track. Among Wright's other activities, he was a member of FCCLA, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. The Kalamazoo Central advisor for FCCLA, teacher Lisa Boulding, pushed him to run for vice president for the Michigan chapter of the group, in which his emphasis has been on education.

He participated in Education for Employment in its Teacher Academy and complemented that experience by volunteering in the nursery at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and by volunteering weekly at Woods Lake Elementary School: A Magnet School for the Arts, where Wilson-Bridges now teaches.

"I like working with kids," he said. "I just want to make an impact on children's lives, just as she did. That's the main reason I want to go into education. I also know there are not a lot of male teachers, specifically black male teachers. I feel it will help, being a role model."

"I feel it will help if they know they have someone in their lives who is similar to them, and who probably understands the things that are occurring in their lives."

He also hopes to tap his love of sports by coaching. Athletic rules require students to maintain a 2.5 grade point average to play — but he said that wouldn't have mattered with his parents. They expected him to do well in school.

"As an athlete you have to manage being a student first and an athlete second," and that's a lesson he hopes to impart on his future students.

Wilson-Bridges is more than excited to see Wright pursing education.

"It's so important to have a young black man in the classroom so the children can see that," she said. "A lot of African American boys don't get to see men in that role. The boys will say, 'I want to be like Mr. Wright. I want to do what Mr. Wright is doing.' He had that power, that presence among the children."

"I just hope that when he's in college, he can come back to my class. He's just an amazing kid."

**"There have been many influential people in my life but one of the most outstanding people I know is my mother. She is the hardest worker I know and she is always in my corner when I need her."**

***Evan Wheat, LN**, student, Most influential person*



**Brittany Day laughs as she greets KPS Board President Patti Sholler-Barber at the Loy Norrix graduation ceremony.**






# Kalamazoo Central Class of '47 Will Hold 70th Reunion

The Kalamazoo Central High School Class of 1947 will hold a reunion luncheon at noon on Saturday, Sept. 9, at the Park Club, 219 W. South St. For more information, contact Betty Lou (Luce) Lum, (269) 345-4916 or Ken Warren, (269) 327-0709.

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**(269) 337-0161**

All other inquiries should be directed to:

**Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources**
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# Phoenix High School Class of 2017

Aguilar, Sayde
Alvarado, Esmeralda Alexandra
Anderson, Tariq Elijah
Banks, Asharia Rashia
Beamon, Tessa Rose
Bigby, Kambreion JeSean A
Bird, Kiara Abrianna Montese
Branham, Heaven Nicole
Breece, Briandon Paul
Buchanan, Senquest Ariana
Burnett, Keefa Charmel
Bushouse-Patterson, Jhasmne Elizabeth
Canda, M.Amarion Takoria Nachele
Carouthers, Asianah Shanice
Chapman, Samurai Clives
Cook, James Christopher
Cryer, Martyce Cordell
Dockery, Nathan Wilson
Edmonson, Antrell Tariq Aquavion
Edwards, Ja'mia Elise
Foster, Asanta Chanell
Fruge-Crayton, Sidney Jules
Gaddie, Bobby Ray Antonio
Gibbs, Dyesha Michelle
Glenn, Malcolm Johnathan
Granados, Lizbeth Faridy
Hapson, Brianna Monique
Hernandez, Ignacio Julian
Hillsman, Elexus Destiny
Johnson-Davis, Kobe Keith
Kittel, Magnolia Roselle
Lindsey, Dayesha Briana Marie
Mattox, Victor Lee
McAllister, Alicia Catherine Anne
Molette, Kristian Janae'
Moore, Delvontay Latrell
Murphy, Latrelle Da'mon
Norman, Darnell
Peck, Christopher Micheal
Perez, Isabel Nayeli
Phillips, Kwamarian Aakee
Prolo, Abigail Katherine
Pruitt, Shamon Rehem
Pye, Essence Joi
Roberts, Shala Lachelle
Rodgers, Breanna Alyssa
Shears, Sarral Kyle
Smith, Joshua Darryl
Snell, Makhi Devon
Spencer-Bowden, Devine Ra'mone
Stewart, Essence Nicole
Thomas, Summer Cha'more La'chele
Thomas, Tyvon Kawan
Thompson-Johnson, Tyler Obryant
Torres, Gustavo Angel
Vandenburg, Samantha Jo
Vescoso, Skye Marlene
Ward, Abrahm Thomas
Westerfield, Madisyn Davi
White, Brandon Maze
Willhite, Jaunta Raeanne
Williams, Chandra Sharday
Williams, Cliffesha Monet
Williams, Sharnez Latrice
Winters, Niera Adenika
Woods, Johnnae Ketria De'Kalia
Yates, Parrish La Shae
Sprague, Elmahdi Matthew

# 2017 Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program Graduates

Hunter Nicholas Bilicke
Jordyn Tyler Boley
Brennan Michael Cox
Allison M. Diamond
Hunter Augusta Garrison
Scot Eric Johnson
Sierra Ann Kershaw
Malissa Rose Marie Luckett
Ethan Henry Meyers
James Ratliffe
Demarco Lamont Venton
Jacob Eugene Volenski
Jesse Allan Volenski
Diana Elizabeth Whitmore



**KILP students await the start of the program's first commencement ceremony.**

# Education For Employment Honors 19 KPS Outstanding Seniors

Nineteen Kalamazoo Public Schools students were named Education for Employment Outstanding Seniors.

EFE is a Kalamazoo County award-winning career and technical education program offered to 10th-12th grade students. Programs are held in a variety of locations including high school buildings, college campuses, and actual business and industry sites.

Outstanding Seniors are nominated by their EFE teachers. Teachers can nominate one student from each of their programs, with a maximum of three students from each program, per school.

A scholarship committee selects students from the nominees to receive a scholarship based on each student's academic achievements, community involvement, extracurricular activities, and future goals. This year, the program awarded $53,600 in scholarships to 62 students.

The 2017 Kalamazoo Central High School and Loy Norrix High School EFE Outstanding Seniors are:

Lacey Burke, Loy Norrix, health science
Anthony Dougherty, Loy Norrix, mechanical drafting
Brandon Howard, Kalamazoo Central, mechanical drafting II
Devon Ivy, Kalamazoo Central, business management administration
Maddie Jones, Loy Norrix, automotive technology
Isaiah Livers, Kalamazoo Central, business finance
Jalin Long, Kalamazoo Central, accounting
Destiny Mabron, Loy Norrix, business finance
Mya McNett, Kalamazoo Central, marketing
Kayla Mitchell, Kalamazoo Central, veterinary science
Max Neeley, Loy Norrix, digital video production
Ava Peeters, Kalamazoo Central, art and design career skills
Elizabeth Perez-Vasquez, Loy Norrix, health science
Karley Reed, Kalamazoo Central, electronics and robotics
Kameron Shears, Kalamazoo Central, business management administration
Ariel Thomas, Kalamazoo Central, culinary arts
John van den Hombergh, Kalamazoo Central, electronics and robotics
Kiah Whitfield, Kalamazoo Central, marketing
Victoria Zehner, Loy Norrix, business finance

# Sheridan Britney: From Track Stand Out to Varsity Wrestler

Sheridan Britney knows some people think she started wrestling to meet boys.

She rolls her eyes.

You look extremely gross after practice. You don't smell good — you smell like the rest of the team," Britney said. "Wrestling is too gross for me to do it for a boy."

Britney, 18, graduated in June from Loy Norrix High School where this year she served as co-captain of the varsity wrestling team along with her brother Roy Britney Jr. She lives in Kalamazoo with her father Roy Britney. Her mother is Sheila Britney. She plans to attend Adrian College in the fall.

Britney didn't start out as a wrestler. She's a runner and was on the Loy Norrix track team where she ran the 200 and 400 meter, as well as the 4x400 relay and the 4x200 relay. She began running because her father ran track at Western Michigan University.

In the time between her freshman and sophomore track seasons, she started weight conditioning. That happened to be the same time the wrestlers were training.

"It was the hardest conditioning I'd ever done," Britney said. "A lot of guys struggled with the running in conditioning, but it wasn't that bad for me because of track. Coach (Darrick Parker) said, 'Why don't you come out and wrestle? You don't have anything to do anyway.'

"I thought it was an all-guys sport. I didn't think girls were even allowed to wrestle. There were some guys on the team who were like, 'You won't make it through the wrestling season, you won't even make it through conditioning.' So, of course, I had to try."

She won one match and lost seven as a junior varsity wrestler. But, she signed up the next year.

"The coaches were shocked to see me come back in my junior year," Britney said. "I couldn't let that be my final record."

Her junior year she won 24 and lost 14, and her senior year, she won 10 and lost 14.

"I really like wrestling," she said. "I like being part of a guys' team. They all treated me like the rest of their teammates. I had a good time. The coaches are funny. My teammates are funny. And, it gave me something to do in the winter time."




**Loy Norrix graduate Sheridan Britney was training in the off-season for track, when she was recruited to join the wrestling team. She was co-captain of the Norrix Varsity wrestling team in her senior year.**

An added benefit: It made her a better runner.

"I like cut 5 seconds off my personal best record. It was ridiculous. In the 400 meter, I went from 65 to 60 flat, which as far as the 400 is concerned, is a big jump."

Track coach Greg Savicke said he'll miss her talents next year.

"Sheridan is an outstanding athlete as well as an outstanding person," Savicke said. "She is very well liked at school, gets great grades, and is very focused in all of her endeavors.

"She really shined in track where she is a four-time varsity letter winner. Sheridan will be greatly missed next spring, but I'm looking forward to seeing what she does at the next level."

Britney said she enjoyed being captain of the wrestling team this year, because it changed how the other athletes related to her. Some wrestlers were shocked to see a girl walk out to shake hands with the opposing captain at the beginning of tournaments but other than that — and a few rude comments — most people were supportive.

She took most of her opponents in the third period of the three-period matches, meaning she had to be in better shape and have more endurance, to wear out her competitors.

"I just had to be as fast as possible when I was making moves. I had to know exactly what I was doing. I couldn't slip up," she said.

"No guy wants to lose to a girl. So they are using 100 percent effort to defy every single one of your efforts. Wrestling is the hardest thing I've ever done."

Athletics are her main extracurricular activity, but academics are her top priority, she said. One, because she has to work hard to maintain her eligibility, and two because her parents simply demand good grades. Outside of sports and homework, she plays clarinet in the marching band and bassoon in the symphonic band. In the winter, she likes snowboarding.

As she looks forward to college, she worries — like many students — about leaving behind friends and finding new ones. She gave a shout out to her track teammate Nuru Lewis, who will be taking Britney's place in all of her events. "I don't want her to worry."

"Norrix gest a lot of bad press. People say kids at Norrix or rude or whatever," she said. "I personally had a great time at Norrix. I think the people at Norrix are quality people. I've seen people sit alone at lunch, but I think everyone can find a friend at Norrix."

## Lachlan Woods is Named National Merit Michigan State Scholarship Winner

Loy Norrix High School student Lachlan Woods has been awarded a National Merit Michigan State University Scholarship. He is enrolled in the James Madison College and plans to double major in political science and history, with the goal of attending law school.



**Lachlan Woods**

Wood graduated in June. He also graduated from the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center. While in high school he dual enrolled at Western Michigan University. He participated in the Academically Talented Youth Program English program at WMU for three years and has completed seven AP classes.

He played varsity tennis for four years and was the captain for the past two years. Woods joined the Norrix dive team last year earning a JV letter. He participated in forensics during his freshman year. He is in the final stage of earning his Eagle Scout awaiting the board of review process.

**"The most influential person that helped me through high school was my mother, Teresa Wallace, who is an inspiring woman with a story to match."**

***Charles Hammond, KC**, student, Most influential person*



**Norma Salazar Romero and Makeda Garrett wait for the 2017 KPS Adult Education commencement ceremony to begin.**

# Reace Hammel: A Head Start on Her Nursing Career Thanks to EFE — And a Big Heart

Reace Hammel went into high school with a plan.

She told her counselor that she wanted to be on track to graduate, to take as many requirements as possible in her first two years, so she could save her junior and senior year for something she "really liked" — although she didn't know what that was yet.

She knows what it is now: nursing.

Hammel, 18, is a 2017 graduate of Loy Norrix High School, and as a winner of a 2017 Heyl Scholarship, she has a full-ride to Western Michigan University to study nursing. She lives in Kalamazoo with her father Matt Hammel.

The caregiver in her, Hammel said, may be part of her personality inherited from her mother, Rachel Jessup, who died in 2010, after an overdose of prescription pain medications.

"My mom died when I was 11," Hammel said. "She was also a nurse. I know I've taken things from her personality. I just know she was so respectful and so kind to all the people she met and she was really caring. I definitely see that in myself and try to apply that in my life in a big way. I think her mindset made me have a good perspective on the world."



**Reace Hammel participated in Education for Employment as a health sciences student, which allowed her to study at Bronson Methodist Hospital. She won a Heyl Scholarship and plans to to study nursing at Western Michigan University.**

She said her mother remains one of the most influential people in her life, even though she was young when her mother passed away, and at first her death didn't really register.

"Sometimes I wish someone would ask about it. It's not like you forget," she said. "You're living right now, but you think 'I used to have this whole other life that used to be so different.' Sometimes, I'm like wow things could be a lot different, but I try not to let that stop me. This is life now.

"I made myself grow. I went from relying on a lot of others to being my own individual. It made me grow up and realize how time is so valuable and people are so valuable."

She said that while she always admired her mother, she didn't discover her own passion for health care until she took an anatomy class, where teacher Mark Lowrie urged her to enroll in the Education For Employment class in health science.

"One thing that everyone that meets Reace quickly learns is that she truly is a good person inside and out," Lowrie said. "When she had mentioned an interest in nursing, I thought that the EFE courses would be perfect for her. I knew that she would do well in the classes, specifically with the hands-on activities and was pleased to see that she excelled in them."

Education for Employment is a Kalamazoo County career and technical education program offered through the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency. It includes classes in everything from culinary arts to robotics. The program is open to students in the 10th through 12th grade and is held in high schools, at colleges and in business sites around the community. Hammel, for example, worked at Bronson Methodist Hospital as part of her EFE classes.

Hammel has earned her basic life saving certification and her EKG certification through the program. She's also completed a workplace observation and internship through EFE. The class also volunteers at Heritage Community. Through the professional health science program she will be a certified nurse's assistant by the start of the summer — and have a job in health care before she starts college.

"EFE has definitely made me very independent with my studies," she said. "I've had to rely on myself to learn the information very quickly because the class is so fast-paced. It also helped me set my priorities."

Hammel thinks she'd like to be a trauma care nurse. She spent time in a trauma unit as part of an internship.

"I just really love to help people who can't help themselves. That's the time they need the most help," she said. "Everyone on that unit at Bronson was like a family. It was something I could see myself being a part of. There are times in trauma when you have to take a step back and think about what you're doing because it's so crazy."

Lowrie said he can easily imagine Hammel helping people in need.

"Reace is a kind soul, and when I consider someone who is sick, in pain or in need, I earnestly believe that she will provide compassionate care to her patients, easing their cares with an adeptness that will make us all proud," he said.



**Loy Norrix High School Peace Jam students prepare to walk through Edison Environmental Science Academy for the second annual clap-out, which shows elementary school students what it looks like to graduate. The Norrix students hold signs announcing where they will be attending college.**


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# Kalamazoo Central High School Class of 2017



**KC staff member Magnolia Little, in black, and students (L to R) LaCaya Smith, Amari Parham Buchanan and Amanda Watson await the Kalamazoo Central Senior Awards Ceremony.**

Abbott, Jonell Lynn
Acosta, Isabelle Rose
Adams, Khalil Shakur
Addison, Justin William
Al-Faraj, Hassan Ali
Alexander, Darien Joseph
Alexander, Darquinn James Orville
Alexander-May, Aliya Jazmine
Alexander-Pritchett, Scheniya Niree
Andrews, Kathleen Elena
Arbogast, Nicholas James
Archer, Reynaldo Trevor
Atkins, Ashley
Atkins, Shannon Derrell
Augusta, Nakyia Cheyenne
Barbosa, Fernando Levi
Barrett, Char'quez Tray'von
Bates, Haley Althea
Bell, Shaquel A'Nyah-Nichole
Benson, Patrick Phillip Anthony
Bergen, Jonathan Michael Marcus
Berry, LaTaya Givonna
Betz-Thorn, Nicholas Alexander
Bin-Mahfouz, Amirah Fahad
Birchmeier, Morgan Chelsea
Blakes, Tiondra Josephine Marie
Blanks, Latrice Ashontae'
Boggan, Jordyn Jenae
Bolliet, Chloe Kim Marie
Bolton, Jonah Andrew
Bradford, Diamond Ny'Keysia-Nicole
Bradshaw, DeLawren Lannell
Branch, Havilah Simone
Bull, Demari Stanford
Burnett, Tyron Ontario
Burnette, Jalen Earl
Burrel, Olivia Simone
Burton, Evon Shaniece Marie
Bush, Roy Malik
Bzizi, Hanin Fawzi
Camilli, Madeleine Anne
Canfield, Samuel Emmet
Carpenter, Adajah Nariah Nicole
Caruso, Joshua Paul
Carver, Jaidyn Marquise
Castaneda, Nathan Zaid
Cegers, Juanisha Chirrelle
Cerpa, Samantha Rose
Charleston, Andrias
Chavez, Deandra Deon
Chlaihawi, Ahmed Amer
Clark, Rae'shauna Reeann
Clarke, Kristal Darlene Ann
Coakley, Vincent Christian
Coleman, Marcel Patrick
Cook, Caitlin Celia
Corey, Cassandra Lynn
Crocker, Averil Nicole
Cunningham, Cara Nichole
Cunningham, TahTianna Mae Louise
Czuhajewski, Amy Jo
Daniels, Chyna Shakyia
Darden, Danyall Nycole
Deyoung, Travis John
Dhaliwal, Gurleen Kaur
Doezema, Zakariah Emanu
Donald, Dequaireus Chester
Dunning, Uniquewa Zhane'
Eason, Deasia K
Echols, Deantra Nicole
Echols, Shannon Randall
Echols, Shawn Michael
Edwards, Devonte' Andrew
Eisenhauer, Talia Lucille
Eisner, Jonah Andrew
Ellis, Amir Jeriah
Essix, Aviance
Fowlkes, Ajane' Ariel
Frank, Marquis Jarrell
French, Hannah Elise
Fulton, Patrick Thomas
Galloway, Jaela Renee
Gallup, Nicole
Garcia, Jessica Nazaria
Garcia, Nayely
Glover, Jacintha Margaret
Gonzalez, Antonio Salvador
Goulette-Blank, Tegan Jaymes
Grady-Foth, Ta'tyana Yazmia Lena
Grayson, Anthony Ramon
Gries, Sara Taylor
Griffin, Cyrus Daniel
Gross, Noah Jay
Grubb, Briana Leigh
Gutierrez, Jazmin Taylor
Hagemann, Joshua Vaughn
Hahn, Lilionnah Heatherose
Hale, Hope Ckimnise
Hamilton, AuTeonna Mosha
Hammond, Charles Andrew
Hardin, Allison Naomi
Harper, Jaliyah Renee
Harris, Anasia Nychea
Hasman, Elijah Samuel
Hatfield, Chancellor James
Heffner, Brandon Anthony Joseph
Hegler, Devarius Ahmaad
Hemphill, Ar'reon Jaquise
Henke, Kali Ann
Henriksen, Abigail Jean
Hernandez Lopez, Marcelina M
Higgins, Kelly Ann
Hively, Graydon Mac
Hoehle, Samantha Shania
Hoskin, Kyron Jawone
Howard, Brandon Wayne
Howard, Melaika Olivia-Yvonne
Howse-Willard, Chase Raworth
Husain, Syed Saib
Hutton, Mya Louise
Ivy, Devon Lamar
Jackson, Adrian Necole
Jacobs, Trevor John
James, Chandler Miles
Jennings, Elise Dene
Johnson, Darshay Denise
Johnson, Ebony Javon
Johnson, Kevin Darnell
Johnson, Naomi Victoria
Johnson, Steven Ward
Jones, Allison Nicole
Jones, Khalil Kyree
Jones, Malcolm Tyrese
Jones, Tevin Andrew
Jones-Cummings, KayLynn Alexis
Kalhorn, Alexandra Renee
Kaminga, Dalton Gene
Keeler, Alysha Kyra
Keller, Benjamin Heath
Khan, Amman Patrick
Kindle, Dominique Marie
Kirkpatrick, Erin Elizabeth
Kirschensteiner, Morgan Sage
Kirshman, Hallee Mikay
Knox, Carley J
Krause, Erin Josephine
Kubiak, Grant Arthur
Lamar, Damerion Naquay
Landreville, Brigitte Christine
Lee, Enrico Letrelle
Lee, Kendrick Francisco
Lewis, Tiffany Lanae
Livers, Isaiah Maurice
Long, Jalin McKennieth
Mack, Samuel Marquise
Maddox, Destiny Marie
Malone, Ahmad David
Manney-Morris, Alanna Jilian
Martin, Ca'Jon Asante
Marton, Dennis Earl
McGee, Makala Imani
McGhehey, Liam Edward
McNett, Mya Mackenzie
McPherson, Kolandria Lorise
Measzros, Isabel Lila
Meyer, Samuel Paul
Mezei, Lorand
Miller, Frederick Andrew
Miller, Kegan Christian Wegienka
Mitchell, Danielle Nicole
Mitchell, Kayla Renee
Monroe, Trey Jeter
Morgan, Arjanae' Nashae
Morris, Rashad Amir
Morris, Sydney Angela
Mozina, Madeleine Alberts
Mpofu, Rodryck Jay Vusi
Norman, Ahmir Keishon
Nsenga, Roselyn
Nunez Murillo, Analilia
Ollie, Bass O'neal
Owens, Toshanae Thierra Alexis
Pal, Jordan Dimitrius
Parham Buchanan, Amari Danyelle
Parish, Logan J
Parthun, Shelby Elizabeth
Paulson, Diana Marie
Peeters, Ava Lisa
Pequeno, Carmen Olivia Lee
Pierson, Katy Marie
Pimpleton, Auikea Mone'
Pollard, Ciara Marie
Price, Dayanna Christa Carolin
Pullins, Devin Devel
Rager, Eric Joseph
Raines, Jemiah Jasmine
Raseman, Benjamin Hyunsuk
Reed, Karley Kaitlyn
Ridenour, Austin Ezekial Scott
Robinson, Kamya Aunche'
Rolland, Ra'nya
Rothwell, Virginia Rae
Ruiz, Inti Shandor
Russcher, Jackson Alan
Sadiq, Omari Nkosi
Sakho, Destiny Aileen-Geightsana
Sandoval, Jose Antonio
Schiller, Madison Rae
Schmuhl, Andreana Danielle
Scholten, Nathan Daniel
Schuhardt, Jared Everett
Shears, Kameron Aton Antjuan
Shepherd, Felicity
Sidwell, Rosemary Carolyn
Smith, Cody Michael
Smith, LaCaya Mikal
Smith, Ricquan Darnell
Smith, Tristan
Snyder, Rebecca Joy
Somers, Cassandra Marie
Sosulski, Nicholas Carl
Spencer, Kal-El James
Spink, Grace Carolyn
Sprague, Heshima
Sprung, Andi Him
Stankus, Gavin Hunter
Stanley, Jenna Beth
Stein, Rogdree'Aun Dean
Stubbs, Emma Claire
Sundila, Ryda Davi
Sunlin, Michaela Danae
Swift, Michael Robert
Sykes, Jaqueva Denise Marie
Thakali, Subi
Thall, Victoria Elise
Thomas, Ariel Doenice
Thompson, Blake Yamir
Tipton, Ky'Erra Shaneq
Topham, Austin Carl
Trejo, Cristian
Tyner, Jacob Carl
Uekert, Joseph Leigh
Underwood, Natile Nicole
Underwood-Hawkins, Mykeia Ida Lindzay
van den Hombergh, John Joseph
Van Natter, Madison Lynn
Van Zoest, Benjamin William
Vankrimpen, Kaleb Lee
Vargo, Hailey Elizabeth
Vaughn, Al-Nisa Imen-Mash
Vazquez Placido, Brian Ivan
Venus, Olivia LaRose
Vincent, Jeremiah Anthony
Waber, Rebecka Lynnmarie
Walker, Jevon Anthony
Washington, Robert Lee
Washington, Sydney Marie
Watson, Amanda Marie
Weekley, Qwantalla Char'les
Whitcomb, Daniel Rothert
Whitfield, Kiah Denelle
Wiard, Alysia Morgan
Wichtman, Mackenzie Kristine
Wilkerson, Devyn MarKeith
Williams, Roniqua Denea
Williams, Tiana Sasha
Wilson, Amanda Victoria
Withers, Karsen Clay
Woodcock, Sydney Renee'
Woodson, Ke-Shaun Renee
Wright, Paige Jean'ne
Yarbrough, Jonathan Courtney
Ybarra, David Glenn
Zackery, Tariq Xavier
Zaczek, Taylor Rain

**"Never give up regardless of the circumstances. You are most important and never let something or someone get in the way of your success."**

***Sydney Morris, KC**, student, Advice for underclassmen*

# Loy Norrix High School Class of 2017



**Sophie Nielsen, Hana Lee and Nicholas Loken wait for the start of the Loy Norrix commencement ceremony.**

Abrams, Kenyale Renee' Rae
Adams, Jasmine Nicole
Allen, Bruce Ronald
Alphonse, Joyeuse Irakoze
Alvarado-Gutierrez, Fernando
Ao, Qixuan
Arevalo, Yaressy Yisel
Arrasmith, Sydnee Rene Anne
Augustine, Grace Elizabeth
Baker, Christian David
Baker-Trotter, Hadari Malik
Bangura, Joseph Jusuf
Barnett, Bernard Alonza-Rinney
Bawkey-Mcnett, Carter
Bell, Jahmia Shaquay
Bishop, Ebony Monet Bess
Boblet, Nicholas Alexander
Boismier, Sophia Persephone
Bowerman, Tristan Zachary
Boyd, Anthony Grant
Brewer, Karah Teresa Marie
Briseno, Vanessa Gisselle
Britney, Sheridan Margaret
Brown, Taylor Ashley Denise
Bugnaski, Maileen Leoni
Burke, Lacey Rose
Burkey, Drue Alexander
Bynum, Ashley Ann
Cannon, Rachel Allegra
Carter, Jontavious D
Carter, Josephine Audrey
Castaneda, Jasminmarie
Castaneda, Ruth Aracely
Cavey, Eleanor Alice
Cavey, Noel Herman
Chapman, Kamryn Nicole
Chervenak, Alexander Stephen
Cole, Lauren Elizabeth
Conley, Griffin Alexander
Conley, Riley Morgan
Conner, Sharmina Enombi
Conrad, Montana
Davis, Kecia Miche'
Day, Brittany Alyssa
DeHaan, Andrew
DeLong, Joshua Thomas
Dennis, Tony Oreese
DeRango, Sophia Mary
DeRyke, Ashtin Nicole
Diaz, Giovani Andres
Dixon, Dennasia Rachelle
Dougherty, Anthony Joseph
Dreams, Takary Leeontae
Drzick, Lin Guo Chu
Dyre, Makayla Janee
Eason, Ariona Amire
Eason, Traci Terese
Edmonson, Jakia Lynn
Egloff, Maria Louise
Ely, Claudia Lauren
Fanning, Sean Cameron
Farrer, Abigail Rose
Feenstra, Brendan
Fenter, Jacob Austin
Firth, Kaelan Willow
Foster, Bernard Keon
Frazier, Myca Leona
Furderer, Makaila Lyn
Garcez, John Michael
Gbogi, Elizabeth Oluwaseun
Gettys, Wyatt James
Gilbert, Shanice Monique
Goodman, Lamont
Gordon-Wilson, MarTajha LaShell
Grado, Kierra Marie
Greig, Brandilyn Anna
Greschak, Emma Louise
Grooters, Andrew Lawrence
Grube, Taylor Alaine
Grube, Travis Lee
Hale-Sandifer, Ashantai Jayde
Hammel, Reace Leeann
Handley, Bailey Patrick
Harrelson, Shane William
Haw, Jonah Michael
Hawkins, Arika Kay'lyn
Hawkins, Morgan Zion
Hawkins, Winter Michelle
Hawthorne, Ian Robert
Haywood, Kayla Marie
Henderson, Ontaesha Lashae
Hentkowski, Joshua Robert
Hernandez, Juan Alejandro
Herschleb, James Allen
Hilgart-Griff, Nora Kate
Hill, Iquavianna Elaine
Hill, Itavianna Robin
Holmes, Bryce Ricardo
Hoogerheide, Jessica Leeann
Howse, Germar
Hruska, Joseph Harper
Hughes, Da'Jzon Tocques-Marquel
Hurley, Brooklyyn Monteo Letrell
Hybels, Lauren Elizabeth
Jaimes, Cristian
Jeudevine, McClain Michael
Johnson, Jachob Thomas
Johnson, Jasmine Nicole
Johnson, Kaijsa Christine
Jones, Madeline Elizabeth
Jones, Tavier Deon
Kahler, Alexis
Kanipe, Nathaniel Gregory
Kay, Katherine Elaine
Kenbeek, Morgan Fischer
Khabeiry, Claire Wineka
Knowlton, Leanna Jo Marie
Ko, Elizabeth Helen
Krueger, Addison Jeffrey
Kujacznski, Jackson Avery
Lager, Magdalena June
Landon, Edward Lee
Landwer, Curnica Racole
Larkin, Makayla Lynn
Lee, Hana Delaney
Lee, Hannah Christine
Lewis, Meghan Nikole
Loken, Nicholas Robert
London, Breanna Mae
Loomis, Sydney Amber
Lynk, Jillian Morgan
Mabon, Destiny Andre'a
Machin, Noah Johnathon
Mahonie, Natasha Marie
Mailloux, Daniel Joseph Ho
Maldonado, Salma
Maphosa-Osei, Angel Sibusisiwe
Maples, Chandler Allen
Maples, Chase Phillip
Marcinkowski, Jennifer Ann
Martin, Laura Elizabeth
Martin, Theodore Bruce
Martinez, Federico Alonso
Marure Melchor, Kevin Ussiel
McCollough, Antwion
McCue, Morgan Tyler
McDade, Patrick Joseph
McKissic, Marchelle Danet
Mears, Olivia Grace
Meinema, Jerod Michael
Merritt, Aidan Tahtinen
Mitchell, Jada Lee Ann
Mitchell, Kevin Lukas
Moore, Deante' Christopher
Morris, Abigail Ruth
Mortimore, Mason Gerald
Mortimore, Philip M
Musookho, Ebenezer Robert
Neal, Alexander
Neeley, Maxwell Seth
Nielsen, Sophie Electra
Noble, Marcel Malik
Palone, Jonathan Robert Lee
Perez-Vazquez, Elizabeth
Peterson, Mark Edward
Phillips, Rontaya Andrea
Pittman, Hannah Rose
Platte, Megan Joy
Pollens-Voigt, Jesse Gabriel
Prewitt, Ieisha Shanae
Prewitt, Myeisha Shanae
Rabb, Tristan John
Ratliff, Samuel Avery
Reed, Nicholas Allen
Remelius, Jacob Mackenzie
Richards, Adheiliah Adhaniah
Richardson, Sidney Logan Warick
Riemer, Amanda Ellen
Rinehart, James Michael
Ringo-Sims, Nya A
Roberts, Nathaniel Wil Dickerson
Robertson, Ariana Lynn
Robison, Aidan Ryan
Rodas, Jazmyne Deshay
Rodgers, Ajani
Rodriguez, Vanessa
Rodriguez Ojeda, Vallolec
Root, Austin John
Ross, Ryan Christopher
Rubin, Isaac Joseph
Runyon, Gabriel Isaac
Salas, Rene
Salinaz, Katline Joann
Sanchez Salazar, Rosa Isela
Schenimann, Leif Edward
Seals, Samuel James
Shannon, Deidra Dayonne
Shields, Jaylan Sincere
Silvey, Noah Andrew Samuel
Simpson, Andrea
Singh, Pawanjeet
Skiles, Madeline Grace
Smith, Tajh Quartey
Snow, Sophie McKenna
Soria Ramirez, Samantha Arlette
Staggs, Destiny Raeann
Stamper, Nicholas Scott
Stevens, Frankie Lyn
Stevenson, Chester Owen
Stovall-Word, Daniya
Suzor, Emily Jo
Swafford, Margaret Elise
Swift, Delano James
Tatum, Amoree Rashaad
Taylor, Vaughn Rae
Terrian, Alexis Morgan
Thomas, Connor Ryan
Thomas, Hunter Alexandra
Thompson, Rachel Genevieve
Tillison, Audrey Irene
Timmerman, Hailey Shirree
Tomsons, Dagnija Edite
Townley, Julia Lisette
Turkistani, Hamza Mohammad
Valdez, Isabella Adriana Maria
VanderRoest, Michael Jhon
Vargas, Levi
Verity, Veronica Isabella
Waddle, Sierra Michelle
Wagoner, Erika Nikole
Waldo, Parker Evan
Walker, Amyah Tyra Minnie
Walker, Walter Louis
Wallace, Alexandria Gabrielle
Wallis, Duncan Gregory
Ward, Cassandra Faye
Warren-Johnson, Ivy Majied
Webber, Kimberly Lee
Welch-Wilder, Cailey Elaine
Welch-Wilder, Reibekah Lynn
Whalen, Isabelle Jayne
Whalen, Michaela Jane
Wheat, Evan James
White, Zaria Brianna Devine
Whitehead, Emma
Wilke-Flowers, Cameron Xavior
Williams, Dar'Quarion Dawon
Williams, Jadyn Ivy
Williams, Sacha M
Williams, Stefan Eric
Wilson, Carolyn Sue
Wilson, Jonathan Stuart
Wilson, Maeve Christine
Wood, Ava Chen-Hua
Wood, Lena Chen-Chien
Woods, Lachlan Drew
Woodson-Brooks, Artevian Xavior
Worline, Laura Ann
Wright, William Charles
Zehner, Victoria Marie
Zheng, Yeqiu
Zook, Rachel Lauren
Zuniga, Ammy Jissell

**"The most valuable experience that I have had this year started with a Peace Jam service project. I started volunteering with the homeless community in Kalamazoo. These experiences taught me a lot about strength and dignity."**

***Taylor Brown, LN**, student, Best HS memory*

# Ignacio Hernandez: Finding a Place to Heal and Succeed at Phoenix High School

Ignacio Hernandez failed his first senior year.

He was still reeling from his mother's death, and his depression over that loss led to drug use and a suicide attempt.

His story could have ended there. He could have found himself going from a bad place to a much worse place.

But, that didn't happen thanks to the support of his family and help from the staff of Phoenix High School.

Hernandez graduated in June from Phoenix and he plans to attend Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

Hernandez attended Hillside Middle School and started high school at Kalamazoo Central High School, when his family moved to California. There, he attended several schools before his mother died in 2015 from complications following surgery.



**Ignacio Hernandez said Phoenix High School helped him succeed in his second attempt to graduate from high school.**

After that, he was just lost. He started doing drugs. It was after taking some psychedelic drugs that he tried cutting his wrists. He shows off the scars when he talks about having surgery to repair the damage to his tendons.

"That's just where I was at in my head," he said. "Now, I feel stronger and more humble. I feel more conscious about my actions and choices."

He had the choice of returning to Kalamazoo Central to redo his senior year, but he knew that wasn't right for him.

"I had already done a senior year. I didn't want to do another senior year," Hernandez said. "This was my second senior year and I knew it would have taken longer if I went over to Kalamazoo Central."

He'd heard about Phoenix when he first lived in Kalamazoo and knew it only as a place for students with troubled backgrounds, such as expulsions.

"But, it's totally not like that," he said. "There are some kids who have been through things who are really smart there. It's like a second chance. They're able to focus on you more because it's smaller. And, the teachers are really good."

The school also does a good job supporting students academically and emotionally, Hernandez said. He found it easy to make connections with teachers and the principal, Mark Hill. And, he especially appreciated a program that taught the students breathing exercises and meditation, which helped him deal with his anxiety and depression.

He also said Grade Point, the online credit recovery program, helped him easily make up classes.

He's proud of himself for graduating, but he says he couldn't have done it without his family's support, like his sisters Gabriella Ray and Carmen Miranda, his uncle Ricardo Ramierez and his brother Luis Hernandez, who live in California. His friends helped too: Wyatt Messenger and Zo Jonker at Kalamazoo Central, and Andrew Russon at Phoenix.

"I always knew I could do it," he said. "I just didn't do it the last time around. Now, I'm doing things right and taking my time."

# Tre and Maurice Frank: Making Education a Family Accomplishment

They should have done it sooner.

Husband and wife Maurice and Tre Frank earned their GEDs through Adult Education this school year. And, it was a lot easier and faster than either ever imagined.

Tre Frank, 25, and Maurice Frank, 29, were born and raised in Kalamazoo. Both attended Kalamazoo Public Schools, but they say that they each spent a lot of time moving, which made it difficult to connect to teachers and schools.

"I went to pretty much every Kalamazoo public school growing up," Maurice Frank said.

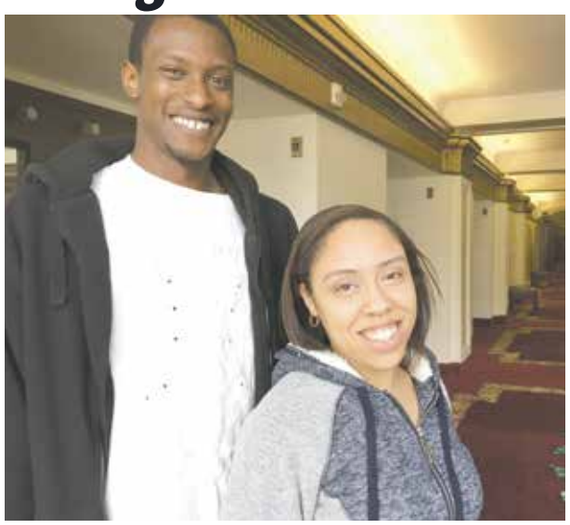
Tre Frank said she always knew she was smart. But, "I was a problem child," she said with a little laugh. "I was a rebel. I didn't like going to school. I didn't have any credits. It was just a focus thing."

Maurice Frank was attending high school, when he found out his girlfriend at the time was pregnant.

"I found out I was going to have a son," he said. "I was working at the time, and you know the school was saying you have to be at the school at this time if you want to get your credits. I figured working and taking care of my son would be the best for me at the time."

But as the years went on, they both regretted not having that high school diploma.

"I always wanted to finish," Maurice Frank said. "I'm from a family where the majority of my family never received their diplomas. I wanted to be one of the people who did."



**Tre and Maurice Frank tackled getting their GEDs together with help from the Adult Education program.**

Tre Frank works at Borgess Gardens and is now taking classes to become a certified nursing assistant, with hopes of eventually becoming a physical therapist — but the first step was earning a high school diploma. And, he is applying to trucking school, which also wants drivers to have a high school diploma.

The couple has been together for eight years and been married for one year. They operate as a pretty tight team, so when Tre Frank decided to go back to school, her husband was following close behind. Having a team approach to the goal was helpful, they say.

"You have someone to keep you focused," she said. "They just have the same goal as you."

Once they actually enrolled, the process moved quickly. She had her GED within three weeks. He started a little later and had his degree within six weeks. Tre Maurice said one thing that helped was that they both used online apps to prepare for the test — even before enrolling in adult education. That helped acquaint them with the test, both the types of questions they'd face and the process.

Maurice Frank said the Adult Education teachers are especially helpful. He and his wife went through so quickly they didn't really engage in many of the Adult Education classes, but when they did need help,"the teachers are hands-on and right there working with you."

He's proud that his son, Maurice Jr., has been able to watch him accomplish the goal of getting his high school diploma. The rest of his family is equally as proud of him.

"I'm proud of myself," Tre Maurice said. "Before I got the GED, I was struggling to get by. As soon as I got it, everything started picking up. Once you get that education, doors open up for you.

"I'd tell people to go ahead and do it. Make that step."

# Isaiah Livers: 2017 Mr. Basketball Says There's Always Room to Improve

When you're named "Mr. Basketball," there's a good chance something like that could go to your head.

Isaiah Livers just smiles a little.

Livers, the 2017 Hal Schram Mr. Basketball award winner, selected by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan, says it wouldn't be right to get too cocky.

"I'm just blessed to have such an award on my shoulder," Livers said, his 6-foot, 8-inch frame taking up space in a little room in the athletic office at Kalamazoo Central. "There are a lot of cocky basketball players. Some have the right to be cocky. I'm not there yet. I haven't played a lick of college basketball. How could I be cocky? I'll just keep it that way. I don't ever want that. I want to stay humble, to keep working."

Livers graduated from Kalamazoo Central in June. He's committed to play basketball at the University of Michigan for coach John Beilein.

Livers has enjoyed basketball ever since he was 7 and pushed his way into the game his brother and dad, Morris Livers, were playing in the driveway.

"I thought that looks like fun. I was shooting on the side. What do you know, I was hitting more shots than my bigger brother," he said. "I was begging my dad to play basketball the next day. He got annoyed, but it was his fault. He loves it and he played in high school."

But as much as Livers loved the game, he loved another game more: baseball.

That was his main sport throughout the beginning of his high school career. That was his mother's fault. Angela Livers played baseball in high school.

"It was my first love," Livers said. "I still love baseball."

He played both sports, but baseball took most of his time. He devoted his summers to travel baseball — until the summer before his senior year. At that time, he talked to his coaches who acknowledged he had talent in both — but they left it to him to make the call.

"It's too difficult to do both in the summer and take it 100 percent serious. You have to practice. I said, 'I guess basketball it is.'" He began working out every day to get his weight down and to build muscle. He worked on improving his shooting range and finessing his passing and ball handling.

On his way to helping K-Central make it to the Class A quarterfinals this spring, Livers averaged 18 points, 14 rebounds, and 4.3 assists while shooting 54 percent from the field. He also shot 45 percent from the 3-point area and 81 percent from the free-throw line. He can play multiple positions and defend as well.

Playing both sports strengthened his overall skills, each helping him develop different kinds of focus.

"Basketball is a lot more moving when you're playing," he said. Baseball is a more focused, relaxing sport. You're going from that to a high-tempo sort of game. It's a lot different.

Livers is preparing for life in Ann Arbor now. That was never his plan. His dad was a Spartan and he thought that would be in his future, but he said he just found a better fit at the University of Michigan.

"I like Coach Beilein's philosophy and offense," he said. "I can shoot the ball on the perimeter, but he likes man-to-man defense. I can pretty well defend on the outside and inside.

"And me and Coach Beilein get along. Actually, it was baseball. He's a big baseball fan. That's how we started talking and laughing. I remember him telling me, 'I can see it Isaiah. We're going to go somewhere with this."

As he prepared to leave Kalamazoo Central, he said he had positive memories of the unique blend of people at the school, as well as some great staff such as principal Valerie Boggan and athletic director Dylan Patterson, and teachers and coaches who have supported him through the years.

"I can't thank them enough for all they've done," he said.

But, to his family, he gives the highest praise. In addition to his parents, he has several siblings, Branden Delk, Kennedy Livers, Brian Humprey and Aaron Smith. He also thanks his girlfriend Hope Hale. But, most of all, he thanks his parents. They always encouraged him in sports, but they let him choose his own path, whether it was choosing the sport to focus on or deciding on the school that he believes will take him to the next level in basketball.

In that realm, he puts the responsibility not on his family or his coaches or his teammates, but on himself.

"I talk to myself. It just keeps you motivated. There's a difference between doubting yourself and being motivated," he said. The talk sounds like this, "'You're nothing yet. You haven't made it yet. You haven't gotten there yet. If you keep working, you will get there. You have more room to improve. There's always more room to improve.'"

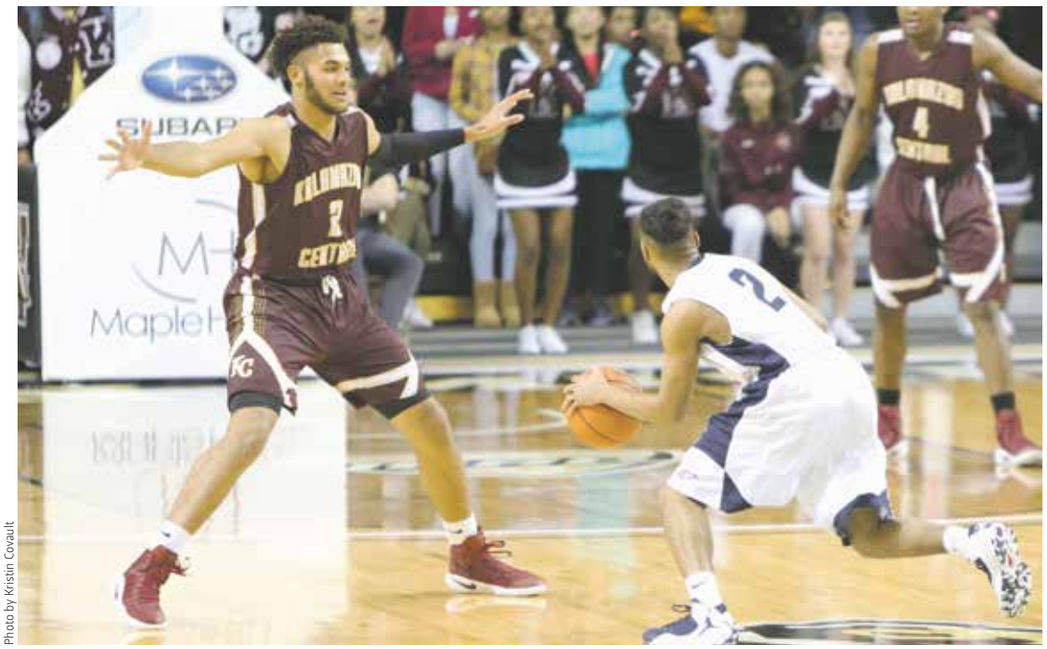


Photo by Kristin Covault

**Kalamazoo Central's Isaiah Livers faces off against Loy Norrix player Takary Dreams.**

**"As our school vision statement says "Inspiring Giants to become lifelong learners who create their own success." Let your Giant footprints echo into the future and resonate with excellence as you walk."**

***Subi Thakali**, student, KC graduation*

# Enroll in The Loy Norrix Child Care Center for Fall 2017

Is your child ready for preschool? The Loy Norrix Child Care Center, a five-star rated Kalamazoo County Ready 4s program, is accepting applications for childcare and preschool for fall 2017.



**Loy Norrix Child Care Center students study the world around them.**

The center is located inside Loy Norrix High School, 606 E. Kilgore Road. Open 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., LNCCC offers full-day and half-day enrollment, as well as a daily rate. Tuition is $155 a week for full-time care, $100 a week for half-day care, and $42 a day. Two snacks and lunch are provided for full-time students.

The school accepts 3- and 4-year-olds. Students must be toilet-trained. School district residency is not required for the program, which is open to the public.

For more information, call (269) 337-0264, or email hentschlearlym@kalamazoopublicschools.net.