

The Pirates' Hook



Senior Super-latives

Senior Columns

Seek And Find

Destin-nations

Shout-Outs

PHOTO BY SAUL JANIAK STEIN



Take the time to notice

Dear Class of 2025,

As graduation draws near, I want to take a moment to share a message of encouragement and reflection as you prepare for life beyond these halls. You've worked hard to reach this milestone, and you should be proud of how far you've come.

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PHOTO BY KALISSA EVERETT

Now, a new journey begins and with it comes one of life's biggest questions: What is my purpose?

There's no shortage of advice out there. Thousands of books, articles, and videos offer different paths to discovering your life's purpose. Some people seem to "just know." Others spend years reflecting, praying, asking questions, and exploring possibilities.

The truth is, there is no one-size-fits-all answer and that's okay. But through it all, there's one thing I believe makes a difference: paying attention.

People who live with a strong sense of purpose have usually done one thing well. They paid attention. They noticed what moved them, what brought them joy, what broke their heart, and where their gifts

could meet the needs of the world. As author Uli Chi writes in *The Wise Leader*, "What we pay attention to matters. What we look at and how we 'see' what we look at shapes who we become."

We live in a world full of noise and distraction. But your greatest clarity often comes in the quiet moments when you stop, reflect, and truly see. Your purpose may not come all at once. It may grow over time, through experience, service, relationships, or even failure. Don't be discouraged by the journey. Trust it.

You've probably heard the phrase "Follow your passion." That's part of it, but don't stop there. Pay attention not just to what you love, but also to what the world needs. Purpose often lies where your deep

gladness meets the world's deep need.

So, as you move on, whether to college, a career, the military, or a gap year, take time to notice. Notice what excites you, what challenges you, and where your talents can make a difference. Talk to people who know you well. Stay curious. Stay grounded. Stay open. Your attention shapes your direction.

Class of 2025, we are incredibly proud of you. As you step into this next chapter, I hope you will walk with purpose, confidence, and hope. The world needs your light. So go forward and shine. Shine bright like a diamond.

With heartfelt congratulations and best wishes,

Principal Dr. Gloria Woods-Weeks

Tómate el tiempo para notarlo

Querida clase de 2025,

Con la graduación a la vuelta de la esquina, quiero compartir un mensaje de aliento y reflexión mientras se preparan para la vida después de la graduación. Han trabajado duro para alcanzar este logro y deberían estar orgullosos de lo lejos que han llegado. Ahora comienza un nuevo viaje y con él VIENE una de las preguntas más importantes de la vida: ¿Cuál es mi propósito?

Hay muchísimos consejos disponibles. Miles de libros, artículos y videos ofrecen diferentes caminos para descubrir el propósito de tu vida. Algunas per-

sonas parecen simplemente saberlo. Otras pasan años reflexionando, orando, haciendo preguntas y explorando posibilidades.

La verdad es que no hay una solución universal, y eso está bien.

Pero a pesar de todo, hay algo que creo que marca la diferencia: prestar atención.

Las personas que viven con un fuerte sentido de propósito generalmente han hecho bien una cosa: prestar atención. Se dieron cuenta de lo que las conmovió, de lo que les trajo alegría, de lo que les rompió el corazón y de cómo sus dones podían satisfacer las necesidades del mundo.

Como escribe el autor Uli Chi en *El líder sabio*: "A lo que prestamos atención importa. Lo que observamos y cómo lo vemos moldea en quiénes nos convertimos".

Vivimos en un mundo lleno de ruido y distracciones. Pero tu mayor claridad suele surgir en los momentos de tranquilidad en los que te detienes, reflexionas y ves con claridad. Tu propósito puede no surgir de repente. Puede crecer con el tiempo, a través de la experiencia, el servicio, las relaciones o incluso el fracaso. No te desanimes por el camino. Confía en él.

Probablemente hayas escuchado la frase "Sigue tu pasión". Es parte de ello,

pero no te detengas ahí. Presta atención no solo a lo que amas, sino también a lo que el mundo necesita. El propósito a menudo reside donde tu profunda alegría se encuentra con la profunda necesidad del mundo.

Así que, a medida que avanzas, ya sea hacia la universidad, una carrera, el ejército o un año sabático, tómate un tiempo para observar. Observa qué te emociona, qué te desafía y dónde tus talentos pueden marcar la diferencia. Habla con personas que te conocen bien. Mantén la curiosidad. Mantén los pies en la tierra. Mantén la mente abierta. Tu atención define

tu rumbo.

Generación 2025, estamos increíblemente orgullosos de ustedes. Al comenzar este nuevo capítulo, espero que caminen con propósito, confianza y esperanza. El mundo necesita su luz. Así que adelante y brillen. Brillen como un diamante. Mis sinceras felicitaciones y mis mejores deseos para ustedes,

Directora Dra. Gloria Woods-Weeks

TRADUCIDO POR JOSE OBIL DEL CID, JEFFREY BANEGAS, BRAYDEN MERLOS-CAMPOS, HILTON CARDONA & BANI CABRERA RUIZ

Isabelle Abadie, Delia Aguilar, Sofia Alvarez-Pedraza, Yaderlin Bojoy Aguacuata, Levi Brown, Chandler Cates, Federica Cedeno, Taliyah Cooper, Jaida Cooper Parrish, Violet Davis, Lucinda Dorrance, Isong Eshiet, Kalissa Everett, Oliver George, Aidan Ganter, Conrad Hamel, Diego Hernandez, Genaro Hood, Sadie Irby, Saul Janiak Stein, Nico Jordan, Diego Juarez-Velazquez, Norah Lubeck, Jamri Murphy, Rory O'Connor, Cullen McCallister, Nellie Purdy, Tobias Rangel, Soka Rosette, Tula Winton, Austin Wymore

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Seniors reminisce about their past experiences as graduation approaches.

SADIE
IRBY

Take me back to 2015.

At eight years old I was confident that I knew more about marmosets than anyone east of the Mississippi. Looking back I wasn't exaggerating that much, as I would rot away at my dad's computer scrolling endlessly through any niche animal fact website I could find.

There, a hyper-fixation was born. Not just on marmosets, but bengal cats, okapis, coatis, be-luga whales also piqued my interest. One day I was so transfixed on a black widow spider I fell off my house's porch and gave myself a gnarly black eye.

Programs like PBS kids and National Geographic nursed this obsession and allowed me to educate myself about things that were way more interesting than first grade math. Seeing Donald Trump's order to cut off federal funding for NPR and PBS is disheartening for me now, and I know would be soul-crushing to my 8-year-old self.

PBS shows like Wild Kratts that focus on science education through going on adventures in habitats around the world and spotlighting different animal species inspired me even further. I began to journal every time I assisted an animal. If I picked up a worm and moved it into the grass and off of the searing hot pavement in the middle of July, I would immediately run inside to document it.

Trump called NPR and PBS "radical left monsters that so badly hurt our country," on



social media platforms. Though NPR is left leaning, the substance of the educational station is so much more than political or social ideologies.

But unfortunately, censorship has been a concern for these programs for decades.

In NPR's sake, there have been several efforts to defund educational stations like it, including orders made by

Ronald Reagen during his presidency, one of

Trump's many inspirations.

Without such an influential public radio, that develops stories about anything curious minds can fathom, my fixation deep dives wouldn't be possible.

They are not defunding monsters, they are defunding free and accessible knowledge.

Though my obsession with animals and childhood dreams have faded, my need for having personal autonomy to learn what I want to learn about has not. And though it sounds like an odd connection, NPR is for grown up, eccentric kids that once watched PBS kids.

Despite the current climate and lack of job security due to censorship from fascist politicians, I want to be a journalist. I want my arm shooting up in excitement to ask a question, the way it was in my 2nd grade classroom, to demand answers to the questions people need answered. The questions the people controlling this country want to be kept unanswered.

Education is power, but eccentricism is power, too. Curiosity is power. And freedom is power. Without a free press and accessible educational programs, we wouldn't have any of these things.

TOBY
RANGEL

Take me back to 7th grade, before the pandemic took away school.

I had good friends, played sports that I loved, and looked forward to school every day.

Life felt easy because I didn't have to meet new people or step outside my comfort zone. I already knew everyone I needed to know.

Take me back to the day my parents cancelled our trip to San Francisco in February 2020, while I read the news on my mom's phone while waiting for my sister's ballet class to end.

Take me back to cracking jokes about Covid a few moments before the teachers called the whole grade together to inform us there wouldn't be school for a few weeks.

Like everyone else, my world changed fast. I no longer left the house, spending my birthday on the far side of the driveway, waving to friends as they drove by. I no longer had sports to watch or activities to do.

My days consisted of sitting in my room, watching YouTube, and pretending to do the online assignments my teachers would give me.

At that moment, I thought life was fine. I wasn't all that social to begin with.

But a whole year was too much. When optional in-person school came back, I begged my parents to let me go. They decided to keep me online. Eventually, I stopped doing schoolwork entirely, leading my parents to finally send me back.

When I returned, I talked more than I ever had. I felt like I had been silent for years, and now I could finally speak.

So, maybe don't take me back to 7th grade. Back then, I didn't understand the value of connection. Maybe don't take me back to when Covid started, when I thought I could get by without talking

to people. When I started high school, I slipped back into my social shell. I hesitated to socialize. Because of the pandemic, I recognized what I was feeling. It was the same isolation from before, and I remembered what it did to me.

This time, I got out sooner. Covid taught me that connection isn't optional and it's crucial to being happy. Getting out of the shell made high school enjoyable. In fact, if I hadn't gotten out, I likely would've hated all four years.

So don't actually take me back, because pandemics suck. But if it weren't for the challenges it brought, I might not have known how important it was to come out of my shell in the first place.

But if it weren't for the challenges it brought, I might not have known how important it was to come out of my shell in the first place.



L A N A
M C I L E
V A I N E

Take me back to 2017, so I could tell my 11-year-old self to not stress about the things you cannot control and stop rushing through the life you have.

As a high school freshman, I was ready for college. It was something that I had been thinking about for many years before that point, as soon as I learned what the "Ivory" League was in fifth grade.

I have achieved many accomplishments and will walk across a stage with enough cords and stoles to last a lifetime. But I am not convinced that giving up so much of my time was worth the pieces of string that will hang around my neck.

In a few months, I will end up at the same place several of my peers will be, alongside thousands of other students from across North Carolina and the world.

I think I would have treated myself with more grace if I had known that everything would work out the way it is supposed to from the start. Maybe I would have dropped playing for abusive coaches sooner, or picked up one less club if I knew that quality over quantity was more important.

But maybe, I should stop worrying about the things I cannot control. Maybe I can learn to set

my boundaries and eat it too.

Overthinking everything, and forcing myself to become "the best" only stole away energy and precious time. That includes the 89 on a quiz instead of a 100, and the girls who refused to let me eat lunch with them during sophomore year.

Thank goodness I know how to set a boundary or two nowadays, something I most certainly will carry with me to college.

I wrote an essay about "legacy" a while ago, and find it fitting to apply that here. The legacy I will leave behind Riverside will not last forever. If you open a yearbook from five, I promise you will know nothing about the accomplishments of the faces on those pages.

It is difficult to tell ambitious kids that what they are doing will never feel like enough.

What I have found to be the most important constant is perspective.

Going through difficult times will remind you of why you are here, whether that's your family and friends, or reading a good book on a weeknight. While it is certainly important to work hard

and make good decisions, there are certain things that are simply out of your control.

Knowing that my peers and I will be going exactly where we belong reaffirms my belief that life is to be experienced and enjoyed, not rushed or stressed.

G E N A R O
H O U S E

Take me back to 2021, when I walked through the doors on my first day of school at Riverside.

I was met with uncertainty. I didn't know who I'd sit next to during class or whether I'd actually make it on time. Everything felt so big, and I felt so small, especially coming from a private school.

But somewhere between freshman jitters and senior countdowns, I started to figure it all out, or at least most of it.

There were the good days: spirit weeks, pep rallies, and those random moments in class when everyone laughed at something the teacher said (even if we were supposed to be taking notes).

There were also the tougher days: stressful AP exams, late-night homework grinds, and moments of feeling like the finish line was never going to come.

Hell, I even got suspended at one point. But the ups and downs made the high school experience that much

more notable.

High school has a weird way of moving slowly and flying by at the same time. I don't remember every assignment I turned in or every quiz I forgot to study for, but I do remember the people. The friends and teachers who believed

in me even when I didn't, and classmates who made everyday, normal things feel like memories worth keeping for a lifetime.

Riverside wasn't perfect, and neither was I. That's what makes it special.

I've grown a lot here. I've learned how to speak to women, how to ask for help when needed, and how to push through the struggles when I'd rather give up.

My advice for younger people is to

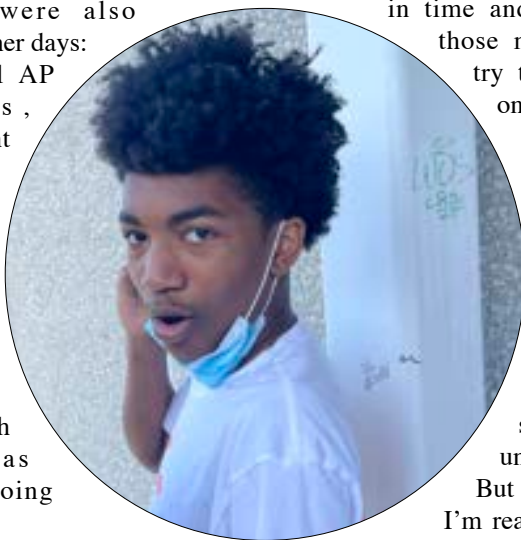
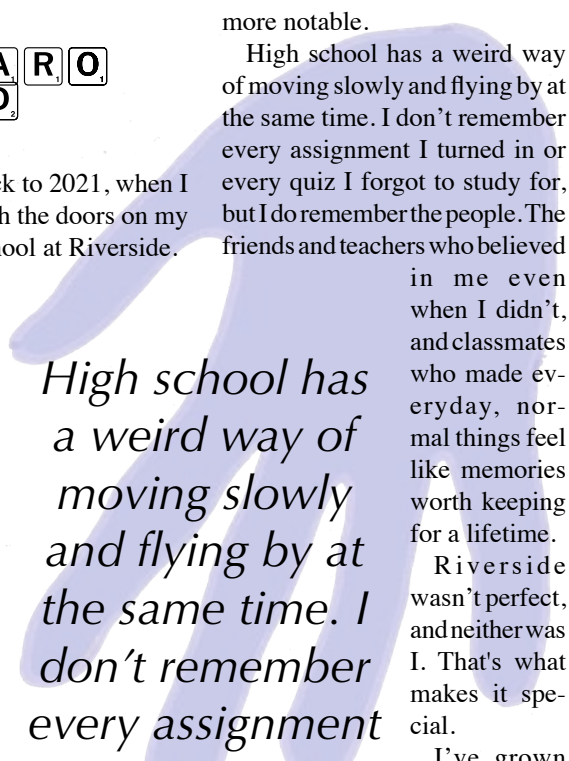
cherish those ups and downs, as they will shape you as you grow as a high schooler.

Instead of wanting to go back in time and change those moments, try to feel it once more.

I'm walking out of these same doors four years later and still facing uncertainty.

But this time I'm ready for it, and I have Riverside to thank for that.

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A U R E L I
D O M E N -
G U E Z

Take me back to 2021, freshman year, when everything wasn't as serious as it is now.

I walked through Riverside's front doors with a heart full of hope and absolutely no idea how the next four years were about to unfold.

I spent my first semester lunch-times in what my friends and I called "The Dungeon," which is the outside area behind the arts hall.

I spent my second semester lunch-times in Mrs. Minnick's classroom. It wasn't as loud as it is now. It was peaceful and quiet with my two best friends, Abby and Diana, by my side.

I took walks with my good friend Desmond. We'd talk about our days and enjoy our time outside of a classroom. To the random side quests my friends and I would go on random side quests, too, where we'd somehow miss half of class time and walk around the entire school to deliver one piece of paper to another teacher that Mrs. Minnick had sent.

And then there was that first soccer season with an incredible team and such an incredible coach.

If I could go back and say something to my freshman year self, I'd definitely say a few things:

Don't try to grow up too fast. You'll live through those typical "high school" experiences soon enough, don't rush them.

The heartbreak you're going through is only a small part of such a beautiful experience that

you'll have at Riverside. Don't make it your whole world.

Your friends are your family. Please prioritize them over some stupid situationship that you'll soon realize is not worth your time.

Please stop talking badly about other people. You really don't know them, and it doesn't make you a better person.

But if something could really take me back, I wouldn't change anything.

I needed those years to become the person I am now.

Now, I see my junior friends going through the same heart-breaks I did, and I can only give them the best

advice I can offer because I know they'll grow the same way I did.

Carla and Ingrid, you have so much ahead of you. Please prioritize yourselves and focus on who and what helps you achieve your goals.

Ailin, I can't wait for our next four years together as roommates. I love you so much, and I hope you don't get sick of me.

Mrs. Minnick, you really will never know how much you've meant to me these past four years. Thank you so much for helping me understand the importance of self-love and healing. Thank you for building a home out of your classroom.

Abby and Diana, you have stuck by me through thick and thin. Your friendship is the best thing that Riverside gave me. I'll miss our trips to The Loop, lunches at Diana's house, football game prep that included covering ourselves in purple paint, and all the time we spent together.

And Riverside, thank you.



Llevarme de regreso al año 2021, cuando mi vida no era tan seria como es ahorita.

Yo camine entre las puertas de Riverside con un corazón lleno de esperanza y sin idea de que iba pasar en los próximos cuatro años.

Pase mis primeros tiempos de amuezo en lo que mis amigos y yo llamamos "La Mazmorra," es el área atrás del pasillo de artes. Pase mis almuerzos del segundo semestre en la clase de mi maestra favorita, Mrs. Minnick. Ahí estuve con mis mejores amigas, Abby y Diana a mi lado.

Caminaba alrededor de toda la escuela con mi amigo Desmond. Donde ablabamos de nuestros días

y disfrutabamos el tiempo afuera de clase. En cuanto a las misiones secundarias aleatorias, mis amigos y yo también participábamos en ellas, donde, de alguna manera, nos perdíamos la mitad de la clase y teníamos que recorrer todo el instituto para entregarle un papel a otro profesor que la señora Minnick había enviado.

Y luego estaba aquella primera temporada de fútbol con un equipo increíble y una entrenadora increíble.

Si pudiera recordar mi primer año de universidad y decirle algo, sin duda le diría algunas cosas: No intentes madurar demasiado rápido, pronto vivirás esas típicas experiencias de la "preparatoria", no te apresures.

El desamor que estás pasando es solo una pequeña parte de la hermosa experiencia que tendrás en Riverside. No lo conviertas en tu mundo. Tus amigos son tu familia.

Por favor, priorícenlos por encima de alguna tontería que pronto descubrirás que no vale la pena.

Por favor, deja de hablar mal de los demás. Realmente no los conoces y eso no te hace mejor persona.

Pero algo podría hacerme retroceder, no cambiaría nada. Necesité esos años para convertirme en la persona que soy ahora.

Ahora, veo a mis amigos más jóvenes pasando por las mismas decepciones que yo, y solo puedo darles el mejor consejo posible porque sé que crecerán como yo.

Carla e Ingrid, tienen mucho por delante.

Por favor, priorícense y céntrense

en quién y qué las ayuda a alcanzar sus metas.

Ailin, estoy deseando que lleguen nuestros próximos cuatro años juntas como compañeras de piso. Te quiero mucho y espero que no te canses de mí.

Sra. Minnick, nunca sabré cuánto ha significado para mí estos últimos cuatro años. Muchísimas gracias por ayudarme a comprender la importancia del amor propio y la sanación. Gracias por construir un hogar a partir de su aula.

Abby y Diana, me han apoyado en las buenas y en las malas. Su amistad es lo mejor que me dio Riverside. Extrañaré nuestros viajes a The Loop, los almuerzos en casa de Diana, la preparación para los partidos de fútbol americano, que incluía pintarnos de morado, y todo el tiempo que pasábamos juntas.

Y Riverside, gracias.

No intentes madurar demasiado rápido, pronto vivirás esas típicas experiencias de la "preparatoria", no te apresures.

A I D A N E R
G A N T E R

Take me back to my childhood. It seems in our nature to long for what we have lost, and what is more a universal experience than the loss of childhood?

Those days of careless bliss that we find in such fond recollection. The cool wind heralding the dark clouds brewing over the distant trees, carrying the musty scent of toiled earth. The feeling of damp and dewey grass beneath one's bare feet, in the wake of such a storm. The warm radiance of the waning summer sun, through the haze of grass pollen, in those colorful and faltering hours of daylight.

One moment you're there, in the glorious embraces of youth, and the next, it seems a lifetime ago, more dreams than memory, clouded by idealism and the kawning consumption of time.

That which we have lost is what we covet most dearly: holding to the shreds of our past, our innocence, and ourselves. There is no resolution

to these thoughts, the forlorn dream to return to the bygone days of milk and honey is intoxicatingly impossible, a fix unable to be found, gone, along with those days of careless bliss.

This is what longing can behold, a terrible want of something which has vanished, a hole agape in the souls of those who indulge

this bittersweet dream, never to be filled, as time carries these moments further into memory.

Then to what end does this nectar come to us? To lure our happiness into melancholy, stripping away our present for fantasies of the past? Alas, there can be no justification for the fickle and wandering propensity of the mind. This farcical osmosis

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of our desires into the barren substance of memory comes as would the tempting hand of vice, a common thread, be-setting all who dream of youth.

To what end, then, do we dream? To what end are we graced with the gleaming remembrance

of childhood, if only to see it wither and vanish?

These memories are fireflies in the night, beholden in their brief radiance. Their mystery best left unknown, and their purpose, but a fleeting glimmer of light in the dark.

It is common to find refuge in the tragedy of the past, yet it is wiser still not to be subject to its dominion.

As the saying goes, "You can go back, but no one will be there."

Those who dwell in their memories of youth, are to be entrapped by their venture, finding themselves alone, in an empty world, devoid of any future. A sentiment which I have found myself acutely familiar with, as the final act of, what can be called adolescence, draws to a close.

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ZYN CONTAINERS FOUND AROUND CAMPUS

560

MEALS DELIVERED TO CAMPUS

800M

HOURS SPENT SCROLLING ON INSTAGRAM REELS

600

CHATGPT ESSAYS SUBMITTED

7M

SKIPPED PIRATE BLOCKS

660K

GALLONS OF WATER IN THE ROOFTOP POOL



**I S O N G
E S H I E T**

Take me back to May 24, 2020, when my life would forever change.

We were having the best week celebrating my brother Omar and my aunt Tina's birthday, staying up wayway too late scrolling away, swapping stories with cousins we hadn't seen in years.

There was music, laughter, plates of food everywhere. It felt like a break from all life's difficulties that Covid had thrown at us.

Then I opened my phone. A video of a man - George Floyd - pinned to the ground, crying out.

The air in the room shifted. No more music. No more laughter. Everything was still.

After the news nothing felt right. Why does this happen? How is this allowed to happen? Who do you call when it's the police you're running from?

Immediately after the news my family grieved and continued to stay inside. In a year with so much going on, there was another case of police brutality.

That's when the riots started. My family was split. Some of us wanted to go out and join the protest, fight for justice and what we know is right. But people protesting were putting themselves

in danger. The police killed an innocent man...what's stopping them from killing others who are inciting a riot?

I say all that to say within life there's joy, then grief. No warning. That's what being Black in America can feel like.

But even in the heaviness, there's strength, community, and the will to keep moving forward.

In high school, this can show up in a million different ways: being one of few minorities in a class (over-achieving to be in an AP just to be the only person of color in the room), hearing "jokes" that aren't funny ("Where'd the Black kid go?"), or feeling like you have to work twice as hard to be seen the same.

It means carrying history with you while trying to plan your future. But it also means finding pride in who you are, learning where you come from, and turning pain into purpose.

Be the minority in that classroom and continue to overachieve. Speak out about the "jokes" and disrespect you're receiving. Use your voice to help create a better environment not just for you, but for others too.

After attending Riverside for the last four years I learned school isn't just about textbooks and tests—it's where we start finding our voice. And for me, that voice is shaped by joy, grief, and everything in between.



After attending Riverside for the last four years I learned school isn't just about textbooks and tests—it's where we start finding our voice.

**T A L I Y A H
C O O P E R**

Take me back to 2012...when my biggest concern was watching Dora.

It was 7 a.m. and I was curled up on the couch, a bowl of cereal in my lap—it was almost always fruit loops.

The living room was dim with soft morning light peeking through the curtains.

I remember being so excited to hear the theme song, the sound echoing throughout the house.

Time moved slowly, as if the world paused just for those 22 minutes of pure, unfiltered childhood. All I knew was that everything felt safe, warm, and right. There was no stress, no deadlines, no expectations—just me, my cereal, and Dora.

As I transitioned into a "big kid" and entered middle school, I started to notice a change in my peaceful routine.

Instead of watching Dora, I had to complete my homework before I was even allowed to watch TV.

Gone were the days of simple mornings and fruit loops. Suddenly, there were expectations—grades, responsibilities, deadlines.

My backpack got heavier, both literally and figuratively. I started caring about grades and who I sat with at lunch. The peacefulness of my childhood gave way to the awk-

ward complexity of growing up, and I wasn't sure how to handle it.

Middle school was a strange in-between phase. I wasn't a little kid anymore, but I definitely wasn't a grown up. I was stuck somewhere in the middle—trying to figure out who I was while balancing middle school expectations and friendships that fell apart every week. The change felt like being tossed into the deep end after years of swimming in a kiddie pool.

As I write this, sitting in Mr.C's office with my half eaten sandwich from Starbucks and my laptop sitting on the edge of the desk, I look back on how much I've changed since then.

Growing from that strange in-between phase to

who I am now didn't come without its challenges. Like stepping out of my comfort zone to join *The Pirates' Hook*, a leap of faith. I had no idea it would become more than just an extracurricular. It

became a safe space, a community of people who were just as awkward and passionate and curious as I was.

We bonded over headline debates, our hatred for InDesign, and the thrill of seeing our names in print.

It gave me purpose during the chaos of high school. It reminded me of the way Dora made me feel—like I was on an adventure, learning new things with people who supported me.

I met the people who would be best friends for the entirety of my

Though growing up continuously brings more challenges, I am ready to embrace all of it as it comes with open arms.



high school career, the people who would push me to be great and encourage me to trust and believe in myself. They shaped me more than any other experience I ever could have had during high school.

From our late night debriefs, deep conversations in my car during lunch, to the hour-long advice sessions over FaceTime, my comfort changed from sitting on my couch, watching Dora with a bowl of cereal to sitting in my car with my friends during lunch.

As I embark on this new journey, I look back on all the experiences I had. Ignoring the stress of scholarship deadlines, applying to colleges, re-reading my college essay, the anxiety of waiting to get into my dream school, which are all worthwhile experiences but rather being thankful for who I changed into as a person.

Though growing up continuously brings more challenges, I am ready to embrace all of it as it comes with open arms. Through these challenges life has thrown at me, I have been able to test my limits and push myself to do things I normally wouldn't, coming out more improved as an individual. To me, that is what growing up, is all about.

LUCINDA,
DORCIS,
RANCE

Take me back to the spring of 2016.

I'm nine. The latest update for Minecraft had just come out, and my love for video games was finally starting to take off.

Of all the games I was starting to explore, Minecraft especially caught my attention—not just because of its popularity at the time, but because of its vast world and

the endless ways you can play the game.

My friends and I would spend all day exploring the creek between our homes. We would create pathways, homes, worlds among the dense bamboo that grew. Then we'd come back to the house dirty and tired, only to curl up on the couch with our Kindle Fires and do the exact same thing in our shared Minecraft world.

It was there that I first got a taste of what complete freedom to create feels like, and I was hooked.

The entire world of Minecraft is entirely made up of just large pixels. Small, simple squares of color that come together to make an image, yet when playing it, it never feels small or simple. Every single block, item, and element in the game can be collected, stored in your inventory, placed back down again, or destroyed.

There is no overarching narrative you're bound to, no clear objectives or goals you're forced to complete, and no pre-existing civilization you have to navigate. The only thing you're expected to do is explore and create entirely at your own pace, with no excessive hand-holding from the developers.

I have played Minecraft for over 291 full days (at the moment I'm writing this, that is roughly 4.3% of my entire lived ex-

istence), and never once have I been bored doing so.

Reflecting back on my time in high school, and the many different realms and worlds of Mine-



craft I played through in that time, it reminds me of the impact and control you can have over your

own life. I spent so much of my time at Riverside chasing after what I thought I should have instead of what I wanted. I took every AP I could, signed up for the engineering program simply because I thought that was expected of me, and was so busy I couldn't make time for myself or my hobbies.

In doing so I exhausted myself; I started to resent the people around me and hate school because they represented what I felt was being taken away from me, not what I was being given.

The longest-running study on human happiness—that followed 724 people since they were teenagers in 1938—found that the most consistent and most attainable source of happiness, regardless of circumstance or any other factors, is our ability to create. Games like Minecraft give me a taste of that

feeling, I can get immersed into a world with the primary objective to simply exist and create.

JAMARI,
MURPHY

Stepping into a first grade classroom in 2013 was like entering a world of wonder and color.

The smile on my teacher's face glistened as I took a slow look around the room. The walls practically glowed with bright posters of the alphabet scattered all around. Cheerful borders framed glittering bulletin boards, covered in art projects made by tiny hands. Cubbies lined one side of the room, each labeled with names carefully written in crayon-colored letters.

I can still feel the nostalgia of my bookbag swinging beside my SpongeBob lunch box, both hanging proudly in my cubby.

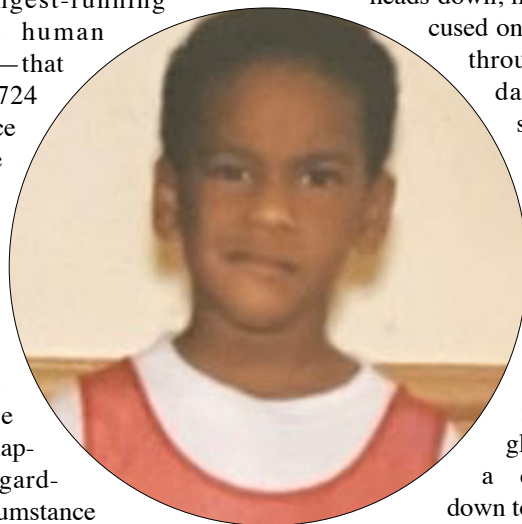
High school, on the other hand, was a world of freedom, but also one of cold hallways and silent stares. The walls were filled with art, the lockers green dented

and dull. Teachers rarely smiled like my first-grade teachers did. Everyone walked fast, earbuds in,

heads down, more focused on getting through the day than soaking it in. No colorful posters, no glitter, no giggles. Just a count-down to 4:15.

High school wasn't bad, just not what I expected from the movies.

High school, on the other hand, was a world of freedom, but also one of cold hallways and silent stares.



Minecraft gave me a taste of that feeling. I can get immersed into a world with the primary objective to simply exist and create.

SENIOR WILLS

I, **Muhammad Ahmad**, give my title as emperor of Riverside High School to Justin Lawrence.

I, **Henry Alamillo**, hereby leave that one balcony next to the front office to Donna- van and Iaian.

I, **James Anderson**, hereby leave Iain Gillespie my stack of hall passes from over the years.

I, **Sebastian Asuncion**, hereby leave 2 of my pens to Noel Lezeda and Henry Alamillo Rosas.

I, **Helena Azevedo Silva**, hereby leave my Hobbit house model to Ben Slade.

I, **Daniel Azevedo**, hereby leave nothing

I, **America Barrera**, hereby leave my purple duck to Allison and also my secret places to her and her friends.

I, **Linus Bartel**, hereby leave my Starburst water flavoring to Charlie Flowe, and my spot as "JV team captain" to Tommy Crowley.

I, **Samaria Blackwell**, hereby leave my nickname to Shia McCain/Lil Blue.

I, **Philip Blum**, hereby leave the track team to Alex Gray.

I, **Diana Braha**, hereby leave.

I, **Beau Brebner**, leave the second toilet in the stadium bathrooms to Ivan.

I, **Mitchell Brennan**, hereby leave my lunch league prowess to whomever inhabitates the Summit Church basketball court next year.

I, **Frederick Brignola**, hereby leave nothing for nobody, y'all gon remember me so ebb keep they jokes 'n everything up, don't let me see y'all sad or lame.

I, **Gates Butler**, hereby leave all the stress headaches, and joy of leading theater tech to AJ Smith.

I, **Miguel Caballero**, hereby leave my goon corner to Paolo and Conrad.

I, **Abby Cho**, hereby leave the Student Body presidency to Elodie Page and Isabelle Abadie.

I, **Bjorn Cole**, hereby leave my humor to Franklin Jose!

I, **Parker Collins**, leave my JV head coaching role to Micah Harris.

I, **Cemeria Conrad**, hereby leave the freshman, sophomores, and rising seniors my success. Keep working hard, you're almost at the finish line.

I, **Taliyah Cooper**, hereby leave my lucky kuromi keychain to Delia Aguilar.

I, **Zachary Davis**, leave my broken car to Ben.

I, **LeRon Childs**, hereby leave Josh Elmenshawi, Chesden Seal, and Alex Roper the right to use my speedflex.

I, **Aureli Dominguez**, hereby leave bothering Mrs. Minnick during lunch to Carla and Ingrid Hernandez.

I, **Robbie Edmonds**, hereby leave my senioritis, and the title of best Rapid, to Axel

Cai-Aveni.

I, **Isong Eshiet**, hereby leave my aura and wandering the halls to my little brother Irem Eshiet.

I, **Tiam Famet**, hereby leave Dre'ma Harris my leadership role over fashion club and my vanilla bean roll-on perfume.

I, **Lio Fister**, hereby leave my favorite pencil (I shipped from China and paid 6 dollars for) to Hazel Baumgart.

I, **Jake Foraker**, leave Ms. Taylor's couch to Parker Donhert and Joseph Carnes.

I, **Maya Gadde**, hereby leave the pole vault pole to Allison Lewek, may she enjoy not having joint custody over it anymore, and I leave my will to live to Izzy Halpern, may she use it wisely.

I, **Nazanin Ghulami**, hereby leave my theatrical legacy to Viridian and other underclassmen thespians.

I, **Peter Gutay**, hereby leave my parking space to the next year of seniors.

I, **Lela Hazelrigg**, hereby leave the library and Tammy the Toshiba to Melanie and Reagan, and my unwanted terrarium cockroaches to Ben.

I, **Elizabeth Healy**, leave the cross country team to Eloise Egger, Shana Gordon, Gwyneth Bernhardt, and Elodie Page.

I, **Maggie Holsapple**, hereby leave all of my remaining patience to anyone who can find it.

I, **Avery Howard**, hereby leave my college spreadsheet to any student who was just as confused as I was.

I, **Sadie Irby**, hereby leave my responsibilities to next year's Pirates' Hook editors!

I, **Ziyad Jenkins**, leave the

Gnome Collection of Andrew Sergison to Ethan Katrincic.

I, **Iziyah John**, hereby leave my pencil to my friend Chris.

I, **Mehret Johnston-Krase**, hereby leave my parking spot and senioritis to my younger sister Eddy Johnston-Krase.

I, **Atticus Kenney**, leave right bench to Joel Goldberg.

I, **Dylan Kirk**, hereby leave my pencil to whatever junior who finds it on the ground.

I, **Sebastian Krutilek**, hereby leave absolutely nothing to anyone because I have nothing to leave.

I, **Henry Lasseigne**, leave my one (1) dirty nickel to Jake Four Acres or however it's spelled.

I, **Benjamin Lee**, hereby leave my collection of 0.7 mm, Pilot G2 premium gel ballpoint pens (with black ink) to Samuel Lee.

I, **Palace Leonard**, hereby leave my Blackness to Henry Kingston and my balancés to Jordan Cooley.

I, **Portia Leonard**, hereby leave my Chorus book to Sarah Martinez

Vega.

I, **Noel Lezada**, hereby leave calculator #19 to Thomas and my old violin strings to Hayden and Yair.

I, **Anthony Lloyd**, hereby leave my success at being a content creator at my school and the memories ive made.

I, **Finn Lueck-Wright**, hereby leave my spot on Mrs. Taylor's couch to Parker.

I, **John Mader**, hereby leave my lunch pass to Ethan Kowalsky so he can enjoy the freedom and delight of off campus lunch.

I, **Janine Rei Mangubat**, hereby leave Sophia Santos my inability to stay a full class period.

I, **Kha'niyah Manning**, hereby leave my humor to the school.

I, **Samaria Blackwell**, hereby leave my nickname to Shia McCain/Lil Blue.

I, **Le-Kai Webb**, hereby leave all of the notes that I have done for Jefferson so he can graduate.



I, **James McDonald**, hereby leave my chewed gum to Harold Jr the third.

I, **Lana McIlvaine**, hereby leave my beautiful parking spot to Keira McIlvaine.

I, **Jamari Murphy**, leave Robert McDonald my lucky socks.

Yo, **Esme Nava-Crespo**, de jo por este medio mis tareas JSJS.

I, **Ailin Ortiz**, hereby leave my Chipotle addiction to Carla Hernandez.

I, **Sam Ostrovsky**, hereby leave my giant laptop to Elio.

I, **Aaliyah Ozaka**, hereby leave everyone and everything behind.

I, **Blayk Parnell**, hereby leave my interesting vocabulary to

Beckett and my recording equipment to Braeden.

I, **Hillary Ponce**, hereby leave my Beloved corp to Justin Lawrence. Love them as I have.

I, **Caleb Pun**, hereby leave the R-Squad Captain Title of the JV XC team to Tommy Crowley.

I, **Toby Rangel**, hereby leave many beautiful days to Noah Wenzlik.

I, **Franklin Rivas**, hereby leave Lucky Lanyard with David.

I, **Calista Robinson**, hereby leave.

I, **Vilma Roldan Lazo**, hereby leave my senior parking spot 159 to the next lucky senior.

I, **Joshua Savage**, hereby leave

my lacrosse ball to Jeremiah Savage and my headgear to Stephanie Diaz-Mendoza.

I, **Olivia Schonwalder**, hereby leave the pirateswim Instagram account to Georgi and Evelyn.

I, **Cole Schweitz**, hereby leave my football equipment to Taylen Lea.

I, **Elijah Schwitzer**, hereby dismiss myself from Riverside High School.

I, **McKenzie Sneed**, hereby leave.

I, **Kenan Soffera**, hereby leave my purple suits to the Gentile Family.

I, **Aubree Spreitzer**, hereby leave my best RHS swim cap to Aubrey Mitchell.

I, **Terrence Stokley**, hereby leave my varsity Jersey #5 to Jeremiah Savage, and my size xl Pregame shooting shirt to Darryn Johnson.

I, **Subi Tallmadge**, hereby leave my confusion in the midfield to Izzy Allison-Pleasants.

I, **Deja Thompson**, hereby

leave my blank ink RSVP pens to Samoya Manhertz and Savana Clarke.

I, **Connor Tyrell**, hereby leave my spikes collection to Cole sease

I, **Geymer Velasquez Monzon**, hereby leave my lucky pencil to Michael.

I, **Nelson Villalobos**, hereby leave the drawings on the desk for anyone

I, **Ross Virdin**, hereby leave my jersey number to Sam Simpson.

I, **Kiki Void**, hereby leave my chorus legacy to Delia Aguliar.

I, **Monster Man Mike**, hereby leave the closet in the weight room to Aidan Cone.

I, **Le-Kai Webb**, hereby leave all of the notes that I have done for Jefferson so he can graduate.

I, **Kayleigh Wimbish**, hereby leave my good pens to Alena Sky.

I, **Ayla Wolfson**, hereby leave carrying the alto 1's/soprano 2's to Nailah and Réa, and my sister to Tia and Mars.

I, **X'Andria Worthy**, hereby leave my lucky cheer liner to Nailah Bolden and my lucky track shoe lace to Saniya Thurman.

I, **Cemeria Conrad**, hereby leave the freshman, sophomores, and rising seniors my success.

SEEK AND FIND

TRY TO FIND THE 5 ITEMS RELATED TO GRADUATION AND RIVERSIDE

• ART BY TULA WINTON

ANSWERS: EYE PATCH, BARREL, BOW, DIPLOMA AND HOOK



Oh, The P

North Carolina State

Helena Azevedo Silva
Philip Blum
Tai Cox
John Feller
Lio Fister
Thilo Fullenkamp
Eisley Jantz
Benjamin Lee
John Mader
Janine Mangubat
Connor O'Neill
Samuel Ostrovsky
Joshua Savage
Peter Soloe
Rafi Sommerville
Bryton Williamson-Green
Diana Braha
Maya Hopkins
James Anderson
Christian Noel
Lezada
Jadon Green



UNC Wilmington

Linus Bartel
Kenan Soffera
Savannah Lewis
Kharmina Mitre

Sarah Lawrence

Maggie Holsapple

Smith

Jane Berghausen

Western Carolina

Willow Angerer
Anaira Rabmal

University of South Carolina

Phoebe Gainey

Carnegie Mellon

Chloe Mihaly

Union

Cole Lewek

Clemson

Elizabeth Healy

Vermont

Henry Dooda

Cornell

Kate Bakelaar

Appalachian State

Ryan Jenkins
Samuel Johnson
Jonah Morgan
Sadie Irby
Molly Buhrmann
Genaro Hood

Dartmouth

Mitchell Brennan

UNC Chapel Hill

Will Cardwell
Lucian Daniels
Oliver Daniels
Lucinda Dorrance
Lana McIlvaine
Jordan Oakley
Toby Rangel
David Ritchey
Calista Robinson
Olivia Schonwalder
Emmy Smart
Lincoln Smith
Aubree Spreitzer
Quinn Pruet

North Carolina A&T

Ellis Hunter
Isong Eshiet
Tiam Famet
Joshua Evans
Ariel Mbah
Kwi'Ahrra Void

Dickinson

Cole Newman

Furman

Caleb Pun

Meredith College

Vera Azevedo
Silva
Vilma Roldan
Lazo
Maria Mullaney

Virginia Tech

Elijah Foster
Cullen McAllister

UNC Asheville

Avery Howard

UNC Greensboro

Anthony Aguilar
Rowan Gibney
Amaya Clegg
Liam Hogarth
Anuluwaposimi Shoyoye

Duke

Andy Aguilar
Fuentes
Kushal Hiremath
Damian McCabe
Benson Phan
Jaime Yahir Erazo
Nazanin Ghulami

Louisiana State

Marcello Luftig

Washington & Lee

Issac Arrowood

UNC Charlotte

Daniel Azevedo
Silva
Gates Butler
Johannes Ebbert
Jacob Foraker
Maya Gadde
Hans Gildore
Atticus Kenney
Corey Moore
Miller Stockburger
Connor Tyrrell
Landon Whittington
Aureli Dominguez
Josie Bortz
Ailin Ortiz
Taliyah Cooper
Blayk Parnell
Kaylee Smith
Casey Dwyer
Jordin Chavis
Sara Reina



East Carolina

Dane Golebesky
Oscar Trask
Tam DeLong
Parker Collins
Chaunesty Atwater

Elon

Iris Blanton-Parke
Logan Kingsley
Lucy Morris
Andrew Pipeling
Theo Lambert
Riley Hale
Christopher Hexter

Michigan

Ella Cohen
Abby Cho

William & Mary

Lila Phillips

Northwestern

Zachary Davis

Guilford College

LeRon Divers-Childs

NYU

Jack Gilmour

Missouri Valley College

Cole Schweitz

Princeton

Vivian Brennan

Coastal Carolina

Lela Hazelrigg

RIT

Robbie Edmonds

Wingate

Samaria Blackwell
Jamari Murphy

Hampton

Meheret
Johnston-Krase



Balances Pirates Will Go!

Universal Technical Inst.
Franklin Rivas-Prudencio

Workforce
Geymer Velásquez
Finn Lueck-Wright
Dylan Kirk
Tanaysha Thompson
Taleeya Thompson
Nelson Villalobos
David Vicente Juarez
Emeli Clarita Lopez
Orozco
X'Vaughndreisha Smith
Esmeralda Nava Crespo
Logan Kelly

University of Tennessee
Ziyad Jenkins

Clark Atlanta University
Cameron Smith

Galen College of Nursing
Kayleigh Wimbish

University of Florida
Ross Virdin

University of New Orleans
JB DeRiso

Elizabeth City State
Kris Ani Hunt

University of Southern Maine
Mariana Molina

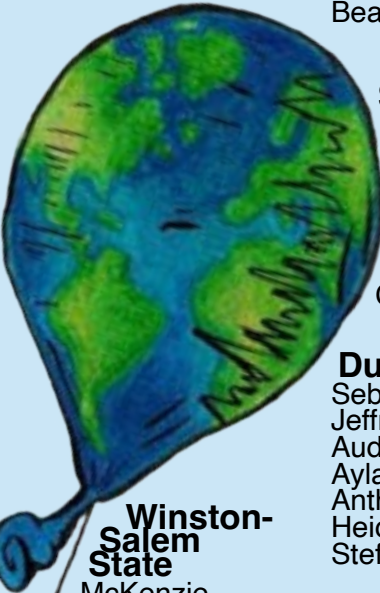
High Point University
Maya Harris

Vance-Granville Community College
Jesse Stephenson

NCCU
Caheim Allen
Okwudiri Ezilee
Caleb Miller

Long Island University
Frederick Brignola

Wake Tech Community College
Kiara Gonzales
Donna Soriano
Sandoval



Winston-Salem State
McKenzie Sneed

Howard
Subi Tallmadge

UT Austin
Henry Hoff

Gap Year
Yaderlin Bojoy
Aguacuata
Palace Leonard
Elijah Schwitzer
Conrad Caballero-Barron
Terrence Stokley
Iziyah John
Danny Maynard
La-Kei Webb
Nadia White
Kha'Niyah Manning

Military
Chase Murray (Navy)
Sebastian Krutilek (Coast Guard)

X'Andria Worthy (Marines)
Christian Marshall (Army)
Tyler Webster (Air Force)
Hillary Ponce Fernandez (Army)
Fernando Forrester
James McDonald

St. Norbert College
Joshua Russell

Roanoke College
Beau Brebner

San Diego State
Zoe Cordell

College of Charleston
Grayson Knotts

Durham Tech
Sebastian Asuncion
Jeffrey Nero
Audrey Cunningham
Ayla Wolfson
Anthony Lloyd
Heidy Arias
Stefanie Pena



Dominguez
Henry Alamillo
Rosas
Portia Leonard
Cemeria Conrad
Muhammad Ahmad
Aaliyah Ozaka
America Barrera
Daijah Williams
Kyonesti Walker
Taquan Bethea-Spells
Nathaneil Morris



• GRAPHICS BY TULA WINTON

Undecided
Inass Adam
Bjorn Cole
Khaniel McIntosh
Deja Thompson



SHOUT OUTS

Muhammad Ahmad: Shout out to Ms. Brooks for helping us succeed.

Henry Alamillo Rosas: Ms. Allman, you're the man!

Caheim Allen: Mr. Hayes, Major Bond.

Helena Azevedo Silva: Shout out to Ms. Chestnut, for letting me lurk in her classroom and talk to her about every show I've ever watched.

Daniel Azevedo Silva: Shout out to Mr. Dibble for being a great teacher.

Linus Bartel: Shout out to Mrs. Simpson and Mr. Stallings for being goated teachers even when I didn't do my work.

Cemeria Conrad: shout out to new new aka Ms. Newman she's more like a friend then a teacher.

LeRon Divers-Childs: Shout out to Ms. Mckoy for letting me chill in her office.

James Anderson: Shoutout to Mr. B. for being the BEST language teacher.

Heidy Arias: Mrs. Duncan

Sebastian Asuncion: Shout out to Mr. Stallings

for being the best engineering teacher to me.

America Barrera: Shout out to Dr. Ramirez, for always supporting me even though he no longer works here.

Molly Buhrmann: Shout out to Mr. Hayes for helping me realize my worth.

Taliyah Cooper: Shout out to Ms. Brady for helping me fall in love with English again.

Robbie Edmonds: Shoutout to Mrs. Boliek for always pushing me further.

Okwudiri Ezilee: Shout out to Ms. Davis and Mr Boumeridja for being amazing teachers.

Samaria Blackwell: The librarians+Dr Ericson for being such a MOOD!

Philip Blum: Shout out to Mr.

Norman for being the most consistent.

Frederick Brignola: Shout out Mr. Hayes the goat for real I still hate a new world...

Diana Braha: Shout out to Dr. Okun, you've been a real one.

Conrad Caballero-Barron: Shoutout to Dr. Okun for dapping me up at Carowinds.

Bjorn Cole: Shout out to Ms. Perez for always letting me be peculiar !

Lucian Daniels: Shout out to Mr. Norman for being funny.

Aureli Dominguez: Shout out to Coach Cade, Coach B and Mr.C for being GOATS. Shout out to Mr.Swanson for inspiring me to seek a career in the sports industry. AND a big shoutout to Mrs.Minnick for being my school mom for four years.

Vivian Brennan: Shout out to Dr. Okun for being everywhere at all times.

Gates Butler: Shout out to Mr. Holly for always supporting me and dealing with everyone else's problems.

Abby Cho: Shout out to Mrs.

Minnick.

Parker Collins: Thank you Ms. Minnick!

Zachary Davis: Mr Norman.

Isong Eshiet: I wanna give a big shoutout to Ms. Chestnut, Ms. Brady, Mr. C., and Ms. Minnick for always supporting my school habits.

Tiam Famet: Shout out to Mr. Varela for letting me talk his head off.

John Feller: Shout out to Mr. Tokonitz for always putting up with my crap.

Lio Fister: Shout out to Ms. Brady, for always putting up with my crap

Jake Foraker: Ms. Taylor for always writing me passes whenever I showed up late after lunch.

Fernando Forrester: Shout out to coach Crutchfield for being the best coach at Riverside.

Maya Gadde: Shout out to Mr. Tokonitz for hosting space on his counter for our mini kitchen.

Nazanin Ghulami: Shout out to Ms. Simpson, for tolerating my talkative table.

Peter Gutay: Shout out to Mrs. Farley, and Mrs. Allman, and Mr. Oakley.

Maya Harris: Shout out to Ms. Stevens, for having the coolest hair of all RHS teachers.

Elizabeth Healy: Shout out to Dr. Okun for being at everywhere all the time!

Fidelia - Norayan Larios - Arevalo : shout out to Ms. Fitzgerald for being THE BEST ARTTEACHER AT RHS EVER.

Lela Hazelrigg: Shout

out to Dr. Gold and Ms. Wine for being the absolute best media coordinators in the entire district and giving me unwavering support throughout all 4 years of high school at the same time.

Kushal Hiremath: Shout out to Dr. Okun for standing out in the street no matter the weather to direct traffic after school.

Maggie Holsapple: Shout out Mr. Smith for being my NYT mini crossword competitor.

Avery Howard: Shout out to Ms. Fitz for bringing joy to my school days!

Kris'Ani (krissy) Hunt: "Shout out Mr. Nguyen for always making me laugh if I'm having a bad day [and] shout out Ms. Brady for always giving me words for affirmation!"

Ellis Hunter: Shout out to Ms. Boliek for always putting so much effort into everything she does.

Sadie Irby: Shout out to Mr. C, for always pushing me out of my comfort zone and quite literally helping me grow into the person I am today!

Ziyad Jenkins: Smiff!

Iziyah John: Shout out to: Dr. Moore, Dequan, Chris, Coach Mayshack, and Ms. Simpson.

Meheret Johnston-Krase: Shout out to Ms. Minnick for letting me NOT skip in her class and Ms. Webley for always being there for everyone.

Dylan Kirk: Shout out to Mr. Hayes for being a cool teacher, he made learning fun.





Theo Lambert:

Shout out to all the administrators for helping make this school run.

James McDonald: Shout out to Ms. Carson for being the best teacher at Riverside.

Lana McIlvaine: Shout out to Ms. Atlas for being the best counselor ever!

Khaniel McIntosh: Shout out to Coach Hurdle for being such a cool teacher.

Stefanie Pena Dominguez: Shout out to Ms. Perez for being the best first period teacher and being cool at 9am.

Mariana Molina: Shout out Mr. Kemp for being Mr. Kemp.

Jamari Murphy: Dr. Woods-Weeks, Vice Principal Ms. McKoy and Dr. Okun, Mr. Hayes, Ms. Simpson, Coach Strick, and Ms. Perez for their support.

Ailin Ortiz: Shout to Coach Cade for being a great teacher and coach.

Samuel Ostrovsky: Shout out to Ms. Brady for being the number 1 horse fan.

Aaliyah Ozaka: Shout out to Ms. McKoy for giving me the tough love all throughout the years.

Blayk Parnell: Coach Whitfield.

Lila Phillips: Dr. Okun
Hillary Ponce Fernandez: Sgt. McPherson for always making me laugh.

Caleb Pun: Shout out to Mr. Dibble for letting me out of his class 5 minutes early that one time.

utes early that one time.

Toby Rangel: Shout out to Mr. Stallings for having a story for every assignment.

Franklin Rivas-Prudencio: Shout out Ms. Perez for keeping me on track every day and letting me stay in third period when I had a pass (best teacher ever).

Calista Robinson: Shout out to Ms. Brady for helping Ziyad find his yogurt.

Wilma Roldan Lazo: Shout out to Ms. Moore (Orchestra), Mr. Nguyen, Mr. C (Newspaper), Mr. B (French) Ms. Minnick, Ms. Luck, Coach Hurdle, Dr. Okun, Ms. Mckoy, Ms. Ericson, and Ms. Brady for being the best people at RHS and encouraging students to be the best version of themselves.

Joshua Savage: Shout out to Mr. Norman for, most of the time, making me laugh.

Olivia Schonwalder: Shout out to Mr. Headen for always saying hi to me with a sunny smile in the hallway!

Cole Schweitz: Shout out to Ms. Samuels for always keeping my head on straight.

Elijah Schwitzer: Shout out to Ms. Bailey and Mr. Jernigan for their hospitality.

Cameron Smith: Shout out to Ms. Chestnut, Ms. Minnick, and Ms. Webley for always allowing me to vent.

Kaylee Smith:

Shout out to Ms. Prater for being the best and my fav.

McKenzie Sneed: Shout out to Ms. Boliek & best friend Mr. Hayes & Ms. Newman for being special teachers in my life.

Kenan Soffera: Shout out to Mrs. Allman and Mr. Stallings. They're both so nice to students.

Donna Soriano Sandoval: Shout out to Ms. Luck for always being there for her students and encouraging them to study and have a bright future and reminding us how important we are in life!

Aubree Spreitzer: Shout out to Mr. Stallings for being the best teacher ever!!

Jesse Stephenson: Shout out to Mrs. Prater for making English class enjoyable/entertaining.

Terrence Stokley: Shout out to Mr. Hayes for always looking out for me.

Subi Tallmadge: Shout out to Mr. Nevola, for his putting up with me the past 4 years.

Deja Thompson: Shout out to Ms. Brady, Ms. Wine and Ms. Moore for making the two LONG years I spent at Riverside smooth sailing. I will forever cherish them.

Geymer Velásquez: Shout out to all the teachers of the school.

Nelson Villalobos: Shout out to Janathan Villalobos, for always leaving his plates empty.

Kwi'Ahrra Void: Shout out to Brian Strickland, Jill Boliek, Gabrielle Minnick, and McKenzie Chestnut for making high school tolerable ifykyk.

Mike Wazowski: Shout out to Ms. Ball for always being there for me when I needed her.

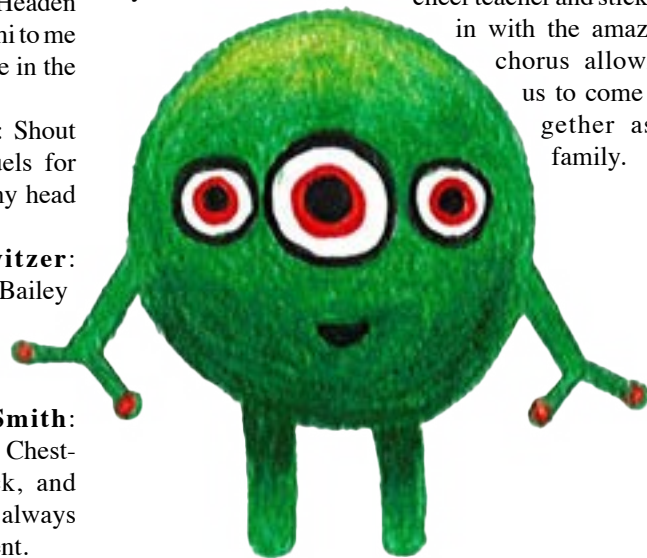
La-Kei Webb: Shout out to Mr. Hayes and Ms. Perez for helping me get through high school and guiding me the best way.

Nadia White: Shout out to Ms. Wagner for always being so welcoming no matter the situation.

Kayleigh Wimbish: Shout out to Ms. Flowers for being SO amazing.

Ayla Wolfson: Shout out to Mrs. Boliek for trusting me enough to call me her TA and being a huge supporter of me for the past four years!

X'Andria Worthy: Shout out to Jill Boliek for being the amazing best cheer teacher and sticking in with the amazing chorus allowing us to come together as a family.





Senior Quotes

Inass Adam: You never fail until you stop trying.

Anthony Aguilar: Keep on swimming, even when there are sharks.

Muhammad Ahmad: This too shall pass

Henry Alamillo Rosas: Don't fear failure, fear not trying. Failure is part of the process and indicates advancement. What kills you is a lack of intention, not a lack of successes.

Caheim Allen: When rain and dirt left me in the mud, I never let up.

James Anderson: "Why should I change? He's the one who sucks."

- Michael Bolton

Heidy Arias:

"Levántate si tropiezas que el camino no te espera no te rindas ni te agüites, dios ayuda al que supera."

- Hermanos Espinoza

Sebastian Asuncion: I'm done with this place.

Helena Azevedo Silva: "If you can't beat the odds, change the game."

- Six of Crows by Leigh Bardugo
America Barrera: A woman is like a tea bag - you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Linus Bartel: "Hey

guys, do you sometimes wonder, 'what kind of tree does cheese grow on?'"

- Richard Watterson
Samaria Blackwell: "I wasn't intimidated...I was inspired."

Yaderlin Bojoy Aguacuata: "In my kaleidoscope are pressed butterflies, reminding me I only have one life..."

- "Chasing That Feeling" by TXT
Josie Bortz: "Enjoy the butterflies."

- Daniel Ricciardo
Diana Braha: Bless up.

Mitchell Brennan: "Life moves pretty fast. If you

don't stop and look around once and a while, you could miss it."

- Ferris Bueller
Frederick Brignola: Ball up top.

Molly Buhrmann: "Take a gamble that love exists, and do a loving act."

- Sister Calderon, Red Dead Redemption 2
Gates Butler: "There is no moral, the wolf eats you one day and until then the forest is beautiful."

- Brennan Lee Mulligan
Conrad Cabalero-Barron: High school was easy because I didn't do anything.

Abby Cho: "The greatest thing about

tomorrow is I will be better than I am today."

- Tiger Woods
Bjorn Cole: I wouldn't have passed without God!!

Parker Collins: Shooters gonna shoot.

Cemeria Conrad: Not all goodbyes are bad. example: goodbye school."

- Cemeria Conrad
Taliyah Cooper: "My crew, we out!"

- Taliyah Cooper
Zachary Davis: Bot lobbies.

Tam DeLong: "Must one person's triumph be another's humiliation?"

- Dilbert
JB DeRiso: "The rain on my car is a baptism, the new me, Ice Man, Power Lloyd, my assault on the world begins now."

- Lloyd Dobler
LeRon Divers-Childs: At the end of the day, the day gon' end.

Aureli Dominguez: "Duro poco, pero no importa, valió la pena."

- Eugenio Derbez
Robbie Edmonds: "But I'm not dead yet, so I guess I'll be alright."

Jaime Yahir Erazo: Na.

Isong Eshiet: "That's life."

Okwudiri Ezilee: The fear of GOD is the beginning of wisdom.

Tiam Famet: "I believe that life is a prize, but to live doesn't mean you're alive."

- Nicki Minaj
John Feller: "Be a goldfish."

- Ted Lasso
Lio Fister: "I'm John

Quiñones and this is what would you do?"

- WWYD
Jake Foraker: "I'm just here so I won't get fined."

- Marshawn Lynch
Fernando Forrester: "We goin' be alright."

- Kendrick Lamar
Maya Gadde: "Do you have a plan? I don't even have a plan"

- Phoebe Buffay
Nazanin Ghulami: "He said to be cool but, I'm already coolest."

- Lana Del Ray
Rowan Gibney: "Okay so"

Kiara Gonzales:

"We're not friends. We're not enemies. We're just strangers with some memories."

- Frank Ocean
Peter Gutay: "It's not the end of the tunnels that matters but how you carve the tunnel."

- TeoGames
Maya Harris: "For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone."

- Audrey Hepburn
Elizabeth Healy: "To give anything less than

Keep on swimming, even when there are sharks.



your best, is to sacrifice the gift." -Steve Prefontaine

Kushal Hiremath: "Strength grows in the steps no one sees." - ChatGPT

Maggie Holsapple: "I want to be strong, I want to laugh along, I want to belong to the living." - Joni Mitchell

Maya Hopkins: "Tow Mater, average intelligence."

Avery Howard: "Everything changes but I'll keep forever, these days I will remember." - Tyrone Wells

Ellis Hunter: Bad grades are temporary, but late nights are forever.

Eisley Jantz: "Live for the moments you can't put into words."

Ryan Jenkins: "Whatever you do in this life, it's not legendary unless your friends are there to see it." - Barney Stinson

Iziyah John: "Don't allow what's impacting your life dictate how you present yourself to others." - Myself

Meheret Johnston-Krase: "Am I wrong for putting me first?" - Yeat

Dylan Kirk: "Taxes here I come."

Sebastian Krutilek: "Tralalero tralala." - Tralalero Tralala

Theo Lambert: "I won't be back."

Henry Lasseigne: "PLAY BLOOD-BORNE!!!!!!!!!"

Benjamin Lee: "One must imagine Sisyphus happy." - Albert Camus

Portia Leonard: "Were Soarin, Flyin. There's not a star in heaven that we can't

reach."

Christian Noel Lezada: "How many times have you noticed that it's the little quiet moments in the midst of life that seem to give the rest extra special meaning?" - Fred Rogers

Anthony Lloyd: "Your journeys and goals should be something you truly want to do. Don't give up on them."

Emeli Clarita Lopez Orozco: "No."

Finn Lu-eck-Wright: "I need a nap."

John Mader: I bloomed in the cracks they said I'd fall through.

Janine Reiman-gubat: 1:50 Moon River by Frank Ocean

Kha'Niyah Manning: "Everyone has an addiction, mine happens to be success." - Drake

Danny Maynard: "Bad things happen. No matter what you do, there's never gonna be a time when everything's perfect. But that don't mean you quit tryin'!" -Applejack (My Little Pony)"

James McDonald: "There are no speed limits on sidewalks."

Lana McIlvaine: I am nothing but I must be everything. - Karl Marx

Khaniel McIntosh: Let your faith be bigger than your fears.

Mariana Molina:

They say cheaters never win, but look at me graduating.

Jamari Murphy: I keep my head up, I keep fighting. Even when my soul tired. - Nba Youngboy

Chase Murray: "Stupid is as stupid does." - Forrest Gump

Esmeralda Nava Crepo: Camino al exito.

Ailin Ortiz : "I ain't a kid no more, we'll never be those kids again." - Frank Ocean.

Samuel Ostrovsky: "Our quote of the day is..." -Dr. Woods-Weeks **Aaliyah Ozaka:** The lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? **Blayk Parnell:** If there's a will, there's a way, and if there's quizlet there's an A.

Stefanie Pena Dominguez: God did it.

Hillary Ponce Fernandez: Take time slow because one day you will miss today.

Caleb Pun: "You may be a man, you may be a leprechaun, but only one thing's for sure, you're in the wrong basement. I'm gonna see if you bleed green." - Charlie Kelly, It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia

Toby Rangel: "In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity." - Albert Einstein **Franklin Ri-**

vas-Prudencio: My work isn't done, but I sure am.

Calista Robinson: I lost the game.

Vilma Roldan Lazo: "Always kick rocks on your Math tests." - Mr Crowl

Joshua Savage: "Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." - Alfred Lord Tennyson

Olivia Schonwalder: "Stay hard." -David Goggins

Elijah Schwitzer: Hasta la vista baby. " -Arnold Schwarzenegger

Cameron Smith: The best revenge is your paper \$\$.

Kaylee Smith: Don't let your situation or environment determine your destiny.

X'Vaughndreisha Smith: "James McDonald ftw."

McKenzie Sneed: "I was in the hallways roaming, but I still got my diploma, I GOT MY DIPLOMAA." -Rod Wave

Kenan Soffera: "It's my assault on the commonplace." -Neal Caffery (White Collar)"

Donna Soriano Sandoval: "It's not about where you come from, it's about where you're going." - Eugenio Derbez

Aubree Spreitzer: "She believed she could, so she did." - RS Grey

Jesse Stephenson: "No rain, no flowers." -Unknown

Terrence Stokley: "This is probably the last time I will ever use $y=mx+b$, MARK MY WORDS."

Subi Tallmadge: "I'm too tired to think of any more mean things to say." -D.W.

Taleeya Thompson: Ye

Deja Thompson: "All this just to do it all over again! RELEASE ME!"

David Vicente Juarez: "Veni, vidi, vici." - Julius Caesar

Nelson Villalobos: The One Piece Is Real

Ross Virdin: Work hard, play hard.

Kwi'Ahrra Void: "Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory." - Dr. Seuss

Mike Wazowski: "OW OW OW THAT HURTS." - me

La-Kei Webb: "It doesn't matter how many times you feel trapped, there's always a way out." -Joaquin

Nadia White: "This time next year, I'll be living so good, won't remember your name, I swear." - SZA

Bryton Williamson-Green: "Show of hands, what year were you born?" - James Murray

Kayleigh Wimbish: "I'm not really funny."

I'm just mean and people think I'm joking."

Ayla Wolfson: "Ain't that just the way?" - Greg (Over the Garden Wall)

X'Andria Worthy: If you believe in yourself anything is possible.

"Duro poco, pero no importa, valió la pena."
- Eugenio Derbez

"Tow Mater, average intelligence."

Senior

“I hope to remember this and cherish it forever.”

BY SOFIA ALVAREZ-PEDRAZA

Carla Castillo Tlaczani will be the first generation graduate in her family.

“I love making my family and the people I care about proud and give them a reason to be proud and honestly nothing else can compare to this achievement,” she said.

Castillo Tlaczani is currently a media assistant during first period.

“I enjoy helping students with tech issues, shelving books and organizing them,” she said.

“I will miss her sweet presence in the library,” said media coordinator Jenna Wine. “She made it brighter and I felt confident that our library was in good hands due to her.”

“Graduating feels a little scary because I know my life is going to be completely different from what I’m used to,” she said. “But also I’m really excited to open a new chapter in my life and I know it’s not going to be the only one.”

Castillo Tlaczani plans to attend

• PHOTO BY SAUL JANIAC STEIN



Senior Carla Castillo Tlaczani works as a media assistant during first period. She plans on attending Durham Technical community college and will then transfer to a four year college.

Durham Technical Community College, then transfer to a four-year college.

“My plans for the future may seem simple but I feel like there’s more to it than that,” she said. “[I want] to get my bachelor’s degree for pediatric nurse. I love being with kids, it’s almost like having

a mini person around.”

Castillo Tlaczani said her time at Riverside wasn’t perfect, but she’s enjoyed it overall.

“I have so many fond memories with friends, teachers, and even with random people,” she said. “I hope to remember this and cherish it forever.” There are two

teachers that made her high school experience better.

“Throughout my high school career only two teachers stand out, Mr. Kemp and Coach Headen,” she said. “They both made me feel confident and comfortable in what I do when I’m in doubt. Their words and cheers make me feel motivated and help me become a better version of myself bit by bit. I’m beyond grateful to be in their classes and have them as my teachers.”

Castillo Tlaczani is currently a TA for science teacher Daniel Kemp’s fourth period.

“I will miss how helpful and caring she was as my TA,” Kemp said. “She made a huge impact on how effective I am as a teacher and how much students in that class are engaged.”

Kemp is confident she will achieve whatever she wants after graduating.

“She is relentless in her pursuit of her life goals,” said Kemp. “Her passion is a joy to see.”

“Espero recordar esto y atesorarlo por siempre.”

POR SOFIA ALVAREZ-PEDRAZA

Carla Castillo Tlaczani será la primera generación de su familia en graduarse.

“Me encanta enorgullecer a mi familia y a mis seres queridos, y darles una razón para estarlo; sinceramente, nada se compara con este logro”, dijo.

Castillo Tlaczani actualmente es asistente de medios durante el primer periodo.

“Disfruto ser asistente del centro de medios, ayudando a los estudiantes con problemas técnicos con sus aparatos, acomodando libros y organizándolos”, dijo.

“Extrañaré su dulce presencia en la biblioteca”, dijo la coordinadora de medios, Jenna Wine. “Alegaba el ambiente y me sentía segura de que nuestra biblioteca estaba en buenas

manos gracias a ella”.

“Graduarme me da un poco de miedo porque sé que mi vida será completamente diferente a la que estoy acostumbrada”, dijo. “Pero también estoy muy emocionada de abrir un nuevo capítulo en mi vida y sé que no será el único”.

Castillo Tlaczani planea asistir a Durham Technical Community College y luego transferirse a una universidad de cuatro años.

“Mis planes para el futuro pueden parecer simples, pero siento que son más que eso”, dijo. “Quiero obtener mi licenciatura en enfermería pediátrica. Me encanta estar con niños; es casi como tener una persona en miniatura cerca”.

Castillo Tlaczani dijo que su tiempo en Riverside no fue perfecto, pero que en general lo ha disfrutado.

“Tengo muchísimos buenos recuerdos con amigos, maestros e incluso con gente desconocida”, dijo. “Espero recordar esto y atesorarlo para siempre”. Hay dos maestros que hicieron que su experiencia en la preparatoria fuera mejor.

“A lo largo de mi carrera en la preparatoria, solo dos maestros sobresalen: el Sr. Kemp y el entrenador Headen”, dijo. “Ambos me hicieron sentir segura y cómoda con lo que hacía cuando tenía dudas. Sus palabras y ánimos me motivaron y me ayudan a convertirme en una mejor versión de mí misma

poco a poco. Estoy sumamente agradecida de estar en sus clases y tenerlos como maestros”.

Castillo Tlaczani actualmente es asistente de cátedra del maestro de ciencias Daniel Kemp en el cuarto periodo.

“Extrañaré lo servicial y atenta que fue como mi asistente TA”, dijo Kemp. “Tuvo un gran impacto en mi eficacia como docente y en el nivel de participación de los estudiantes de esa clase”.

Kemp confía en que ella logrará todo lo que se proponga después de graduarse.

“Es incansable en la búsqueda de sus metas”, dijo Kemp. “Es un placer ver su pasión”.

Spotlights

"It encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone."

BY CONRAD HAMEL

Avery Howard's quiet leadership has been heard and felt by Riverside students and teachers alike.

Howard was the "rock of her table group," said environmental science teacher Mckenzee Chestnut.

"Avery wasn't someone who would volunteer her opinion or butt into conversations," said Chestnut, "but this never prevented her from excelling in her classes and speaking up when it was necessary."

Howard wasn't only a prime example of a star student by doing her own work with fidelity. She also helped others excel in class.

"She would give people tips on how to argue a certain stance," said Chestnut.

Outside of school, Howard takes part in a multitude of activities.



Senior Avery Howard is a member of multiple clubs and student organizations. She will attend UNC-Asheville in the fall.

She is a member of Junior classical league, Battle of the Books and Latin Club. Howard

also works as an assistant to the director for the Young People's Performing Company (YPPC).

YPPC offers summer camps and after school acting classes. What started as being a summer counselor turned into much more after camps started to wind down for the summer.

After Howard reached back out to the acting club via email, she ended up receiving an offer to continue working.

"My mother made me reach out in the first place" said Howard "I wasn't very confident in the beginning but it encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone."

Howard now works as a YPPC co-director and an extra set of hands to make sure that everything runs smoothly from initial read through all the way to the final production.

Howard plans to attend college at UNC Asheville and major in mathematics with a concentration in statistics.

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• PHOTO BY SAUL JANIÁK STEIN

Senior Jordan Chavis has made the UNC Charlotte dance team. She hopes to become a physical therapist.

"I hope that dance continues to play some role in my life."

BY SOKA ROSETTE

Jordin Chavis has been dancing since she was three, so she already had an interest before coming to Riverside.

Additionally, she had already met Ms. Duncan beforehand, since Duncan had taught at her dance studio when she was seven or eight. So when she found out that Duncan taught dance at Riverside as well, it seemed to make sense that she should take her class.

"She naturally pushes herself to be the best dancer she can be," said Kristin Duncan, Riverside's dance director. "As a dancer, Jordin is powerful with spunk, clarity, and passion."

"[Dance] is really fun," Chavis said. "It can be stressful when you get close to show dates, since there's a lot more rehearsal time and making sure you have all of your costumes and all the things you need for shows, but overall, I have a lot of fun in class."

Right now, however, Chavis isn't sad to be graduating. In fact, she said she's excited.

All her dedication to dance has paid off, as she made the UNC Charlotte Dance Team, the Charlotte Gold Dusters, as an incoming freshman.

"I'm really honored to be accepted," said Chavis.

Both Chavis and Duncan considered this to be a great accomplishment, since dance teams often act as spirit ambassadors for their university and travel the country to compete.

But Chavis' goals beyond high school don't stop with just the sport. She aims to become a physical therapist and hopes that learning more about the movement of the body and anatomy from the perspective of physical therapy can apply to dance and help her teach at a dance studio one day.

"Jordin is fun and witty," said Duncan. "I will miss her dancing effortlessly across the dance floor with such grace...and our dance life story times in class."

"I hope that I continue with it and that [dance] continues to play some role in my life," Chavis said.



• PHOTO BY SAUL JANIÁK STEIN

Senior Paya Arevalo is a student artist interested in many different mediums. She is hoping to dive into tattoo artistry after graduation.

"I'm ready to experiment after high school—to really get my hands dirty."

BY FEDERICA CEDENO

Senior Paya Arevalo—known affectionately by her friends as "Payazzita"—is a hidden gem in Riverside High School's creative community.

Quiet by nature, Arevalo found her voice through art, using it as a powerful form of self-expression. Her talent caught the public eye when her work was proudly displayed at Southpoint Mall in Durham, turning heads and showcasing the depth of her creativity.

"She's always shown her ambition towards art," said art teacher Maegan Fitzgerald, Arevalo's longtime art teacher and mentor.

In the classroom, Areva-

lo stands out not only for her talent but for her willingness to support her peers. Whether offering feedback, helping set up materials, or simply sharing ideas, she's become a quiet leader in the studio space.

Mrs. Fitz notes that her presence often inspires others to step outside their comfort zones and push their own creative boundaries.

Under Fitz's guidance, Arevalo has both technical skills and her own unique style.

"If it wasn't for Mrs. Fitz, I wouldn't have learned all the techniques, all the underground basics," Arevalo said.

She believes her greatest

achievement is the personal growth she's made through art. Always eager to try new mediums, she hopes to dive into tattoo artistry after graduation and is already starting to learn over the summer.

Arevalo's also excited to explore printmaking and pottery. She envisions creating a line of original prints that reflect her identity and experiences, with hopes of one day selling her work online or at local art markets.

"It's not just about making something pretty—it's about telling a story people can connect with.

"I'm ready to experiment after high school—to really get my hands dirty," she says with a smile.



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