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KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

KPBSD Graduate Inspirations: The Class of 2018

Discover the diversity in the KPBSD Class of 2018!

The hyperlink at the end of each synopsis will take you to a longer story version about each of these KPBSD high school graduates, who are changing our communities and the world. #AKlearns



RACHEL DAVIDSON, CONNECTIONS HOMESCHOOL

How many students graduate twice in three weeks? Rachel Davidson walked across the stage at Connections Homeschool graduation and received her high school diploma on May 24, 2018. Fifteen days earlier, Rachel walked across the stage at Kenai Peninsula College's graduation and received her Associate of Arts degree. Rachel started homeschooling during her freshman year and used a very focused, highly personalized approach to achieve this feat. Using Jumpstart, and her educational allotment, Rachel was able to get a head start on her goal of an associate and bachelor degrees in nursing with a specialty in obstetrics. In early 2018, Rachel became a certified nursing assistant (CNA) and is currently working in the health care industry. <http://bit.ly/2NnKa03>

AMBER BRIDGEMAN, HOMER FLEX SCHOOL

Amber took Jumpstart courses during her senior year at the Kachemak Bay Campus. This self-motivation and commitment to her future inspired the students around her, and guided her on the path to post-secondary education in the health sciences. <http://bit.ly/2z5AQL2>

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS

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ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM
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FOR RELEASE FEBRUARY 20, 2019

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ALEXANDREA MOSELEY, HOMER HIGH SCHOOL

Alexandrea Moseley, or Alex to her teammates, is continuing the Homer High School legacy of female wrestling. She started wrestling on a whim her sophomore year and liked it so much she stuck with it through adversity. Although she did not win many matches the first few years, her persistence and hard work gained traction. She became a student of the sport, went to summer camps and participated in large out-of-state tournaments. The result is a winning record against the boys, a 2017 Alaska State Championship at 126, and a wrestling scholarship to Adrian University in Michigan. <http://bit.ly/2z6BI7V>

ISAIAH TREVINO, KENAI ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Isaiah came to Kenai Alternative looking for a different school environment. The shorter rotation schedule offered him the opportunity to grow and achieve in his classes, and it was not long before he started taking leadership roles within the school community. Isaiah would often speak up at the daily morning meetings to encourage other students to arrive to school on time, and get their grades up. As time grew closer towards graduation, Isaiah developed his post-secondary plans. And in the fall, moved to New Mexico where he works and attends school.

<http://bit.ly/2tVB4iU>

BRITTANY GILMAN, KENAI CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

An excellent example of stellar academics, Brittany is musically gifted, a first chair of sopranos in Chamber Choir, earned All-State choir titles, and was the only Alaska student at Nationals her junior year. Performing at Carnegie Hall and Sydney Opera house with the Honors Performance Series is the highlight of her high school career. Community is important to her family, she involved herself in four to six plays a year with Kenai Performers, Triumvirate Theatre, and Encore Dance Studios, church activities, and she volunteered. Brittany is studying at New York University, majoring in Music Education. She intends to obtain a K-12 certification in Music Education and become a Choir teacher. She says about her choir teachers, "I love them, I do, everyone is so sweet and they teach good family values and they highlight the importance of education and where it can take you."

<http://bit.ly/2MMg5pN>

VERINA UKATISH, NANWALEK SCHOOL

When faced with life challenges, Verina takes those head on and most often with a smile. She is an excellent advocate for herself and a role model for her peers. She worked in many youth and community programs, including the Nanwalek Summer Youth Program, the Kenatize Tribe Workforce Intern Program at their Head Start Program, many Project GRAD sponsored activities including Summer College Institute, Career Institute, and Leadership Institute. Active in Kenai Peninsula Native Youth Leadership Program, she served as the Nanwalek KPNYL Student Advisor Assistant and one of their representatives at the Alaska Federation of Natives Conference in 2016. Verina is planning to take a gap year, and then going to school to become a certified nurse's assistant. She has an entrepreneurial and creative spirit that she hopes to use after graduation by opening a coffee cart in Nanwalek. <http://bit.ly/2z6BF6D>

KRISTIN ELISABETH KLAICH, NIKOLAEVSK SCHOOL

She took a full load of online college classes through the University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA) in the fall, then traveled to Peru for six months to live with a missionary family and help with their three children. In the fall of 2019, Kristin will attend a college full time and graduate in Spring of 2022 with her degree in Early Childhood Education. Her best memory of learning at Nikolaevsk isn't one specific thing, she says, "It's just how everyone is one big family and how we have and had amazing teachers that really care about us students on an academic and personal level. Also, the opportunity I had to aid for Mrs. Parrett, our elementary teacher, both helping and even teaching a little bit of all the elementary grades. This really changed my prospective on teaching and now I actually want to go into this field!" <http://bit.ly/2u39WxX>

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AARON MCCOLLUM, NIKISKI MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL

Aaron enlisted in the Army as a satellite communications specialist, and after his commitment is complete, will enroll in Embry Riddle Aeronautical University to study engineering. He's a three time state champion in Track and Field (triple jump and anchor to the 4×100 and 4×200 relay teams) Aaron's triple jump state championship came on the final jump of his high school career, a 41'1" personal record.

<http://bit.ly/2KHA9w1>

OLIVIA DELGADO, NINILCHIK SCHOOL

During her valedictorian speech, Olivia talked about how it is important to move forward and learn from our mistakes, and that people tend to learn more from trying something and failing than not trying at all. She was a quiet leader; she led more by example than by her words. She always had a kind word when she met up with the younger kids in the elementary. Olivia has dreams of becoming a nurse—a field where caring and kindness is important as knowing how to perform your job with excellence. She will be attending Kenai Peninsula College before transitioning to the UAA pre-nursing program. <http://bit.ly/2lPR5f4>

SUZANNE LABELLE, PORT GRAHAM SCHOOL

Suzanne is compassionate and curious, traits that will serve her well in the future. When opportunities come Suzanne's way, she rarely lets them go by without grabbing on. She participated in numerous extracurricular leadership skills programs including a Chugach School District Voyage to Excellence camp where she rode 300 miles on bike in California. She was also the very first high school cross-country athlete to represent Port Graham School. When she thinks about being the first in her village to do this she states, "I felt really accomplished in being the first cross country athlete in Port Graham. I want other students to put themselves out there and participate in new experiences." She is attending the University of Alaska Anchorage to pursue a nursing degree, and understands that nursing is one of the most competitive fields to get into, but also one of the most highly needed—especially in Alaska. Someday she hopes to use her degree in pediatrics or another specialization. <http://bit.ly/2Msq6bv>

JOSH SHULER, RIVER CITY ACADEMY

Josh earned high school credit as a middle schooler, and as a high school student continued the trend earning college credits through JumpStart at Kenai Peninsula College (KPC). He graduated with 16 college credits through KPC and boasts a perfect 4.0 GPA (without the benefit of any AP bumps). Josh tailored his graduation plan to meet his own interests including completing Principles of Engineering and Construction at Soldotna High School. A committed athlete, Josh competed for Soldotna High School in Cross Country Running, Nordic Skiing, and Track and Field. Josh possesses a heart and mind for service to others, and the community benefited from his thousands of hours of volunteer work at Solid Rock Bible Camp. He volunteered through many projects at RCA, including math tutoring, local school carnivals, fund-raisers and dinner theaters. Josh received a scholarship to attend California Baptist University where he is majoring in Civil Engineering. <http://bit.ly/2tRmHfA>

HELEANA BACKUS, SEWARD HIGH SCHOOL

A member of the Seward High School Debate, Drama, and Forensics Team, Student Council, and the National Honor Society, she said, "The most pivotal points in my development as a thinker and human being have happened in the English classroom." Her passion for literature prompted her to apply for and be elected as the Student Representative on the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District's English-Language Arts Curriculum Review Committee. "I push myself towards [my] goals with this constantly in mind: conformity can no longer be taught under the guise of public education. I am actively helping to integrate this idea into the classroom with the ELA curriculum committee, but I want to take that further. I strive to bring the vision that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has for personalizing education to every school." <http://bit.ly/2KwWwoG>

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JODE SPARKS, SOLDOTNA HIGH SCHOOL

“Community is not a location—rather, it is the result of a group of people caring about the same thing and caring about each other,” said Jode Sparks. A former United States Senate Page, and Soldotna Chamber of Commerce Student Ambassador, Jode was involved in many activities promoting good things for our community and good things for our state. In the Soldotna Unified Track team, he participated alongside special education students in track and field events. In the Alaska Youth for Environmental Action—a diverse group of high school students from across the state—Jode worked with young people to advocate, and speak up in the political system. This led him to his future studies; he is attending the University of Chicago, pursuing degrees in Public Policy and Environmental Studies. <http://bit.ly/2KIR69v>

DESMOND MOON, TEBUGHNA SCHOOL

“I believe we all should lead by a higher standard. I enjoy guitar, video games, hobbies, hanging with friends, and working on building things. In the future, I see myself independent, self-sufficient, employed in construction, and married with a wife and three children.” My advice to younger students: “Stay positive. Do not slack off along the way. Listen to your teachers. Be respectful.” <http://bit.ly/2KLAfzR>

DAVID SANAROV, VOZNESENKA SCHOOL

“I had the fortunate pleasure of attending a Close Up trip to Washington D.C. and New York City with David as one of the students,” said Principal Michael Wojciak. “Being such a kind, polite, and thoughtful student his participation made the trip an even greater experience. He is a student that I will never forget, mostly for his humility and overwhelmingly positive personality. His career will take him in the direction of his family’s commercial fishing business, where he will eventually become a boat owner, permit holder, and captain.” <http://bit.ly/2KLAj2z>

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