

Farewell

Good afternoon Vernonia community, Vernonia staff, my fellow classmates, friends and family. My name is Brook Naron and I am Valedictorian of the Class of 2018. First, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge a student who should be here today. Her name is Ariel Masog, and she would have been Valedictorian. She took her life in the summer of 2016. Even though she's not here physically, I'm sure she's watching over us. Ariel, we miss you and for every milestone we think of you, especially today.

David Niven once said, "You are not here just to fill space or to be a background character in someone else's movie. Consider this: nothing would be the same if you did not exist. Every place you have ever been and everyone you have ever spoken to would be different without you. We are all connected, and we are all affected by the decisions and even the existence of those around us." It's vital for everyone in this room to know that you are important and that the decisions you make will affect those around you.

Life takes you on very unexpected paths, weaving through obstacles and crossing the paths of others. Sometimes the paths stay together and never separate. Sometimes people's paths go their separate ways and don't cross again. While winding and trying to get through the obstacles, you forget to stop and smell the flowers. Occasionally you get turned around and have to go back to square one. Though every twist and turn shapes our character in ways we may not currently understand, they are imperative in how we make life decisions. All of us have been sent on our own paths with our destinations still unknown. But wherever your journey may lead

you, know that you are never alone and you'll always find your way.

Throughout high school you meet people who will stay with you forever, while others teach you what you don't want in life. During these four years there have been teachers around every corner lending a listening ear and a helpful hand to guide us through our troubles, whether it was wise advice or helpful nagging. Senior year is full of college applications, scholarships, job applications, enlisting in the military, and so much more. But there are no set rules that tell you how to make these important decisions, and no one else seems to really know. (Except Mrs. Hyde, she knows everything.) Senior year is more of a learn-as-you-go type of year. You are learning how to take more responsibility and how to adapt to an adult world. You're in this transitional phase in which life can only move forward. With all our experiences and the advice from those who care about us, we will soon be off on our own.

Some of the things that we have survived going through high school are: an Ebola outbreak, a few E.Coli outbreaks, Laurel or Yanny, and The Dress-is it gold and white or blue and black? We've survived Smarter Balance, SATs, Mrs. Riley's biology project and stinky lab, and made it through the screaming in Mr. Ware's class. We went to state in every sport and won state for boys basketball. Vernonia's first girl wrestling team was introduced and we saw the return of Vernonia's choir. Our sports have gone to districts many times along with our coaches winning many Coach of the Year awards.

As a class we've won Airjams our Sophomore year and should have won Junior year but lost by one point. We've participated in blanket protests and definitely pushed our luck

more than we should have. Mr. Underwood, sorry, not sorry. Our class is one of the most determined (with the right incentive) and opinionated classes out there. But, if one thing's for sure, we all have dreams. We all want to be someone and build the foundation for wonderful lives.

That being said, there are some thank yous that are long overdue. Thank you Mrs. Hyde for advice on how to make college and scholarship committees visualize us as good candidates. Thank you Ms. Safier for being our advisor and working your hardest for this class, even when we might not have deserved it. The one thing I'm going to miss about your class is when you say, "Alright, story time," even though it may not be on topic with what we are learning, it's always educational. Thank you Miss Willard for being a teacher that we could talk to and for caring about this class so deeply.

Some personal thank yous I'd like to give are to my best friend, Lizzie, my family, and my art teacher, Kerri Boutwell. Lizzie, we do everything together and you have always been with me, supporting me in everything that I do. Thank you for your friendship. I want to thank my family for pushing me to do my best and keeping me on track. Kerri isn't here today, but she showed me how to look at the world with a different mindset. Kerri showed me how to make my art better and to not expect greatness on the first try. You have to work hard to build your skills and become great with time.

Before I end, I would like to thank everyone who made it here today and for being a part in all of our lives. I'd also like to congratulate every one of my classmates for graduating and starting the next chapter of our lives. Thank you.

Brook Naron ~ Valedictorian



Class Officers

Rebekah Barnes, President
Bethany Stockwell, Vice President
Jaidyn Dennis, Secretary/Treasurer

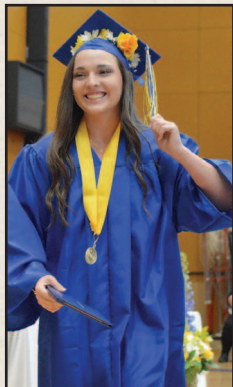


Honor Graduates

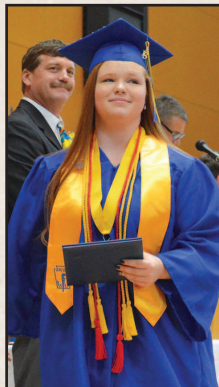
Brook Naron Rebekah Barnes
Lily Buchanan Haley Lindsay
Storm Henson



Isabelle Admire



Courtney Barklow



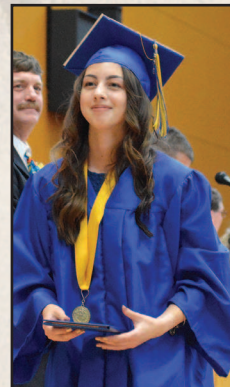
Rebekah Barnes



Nick Bennett



Ty Brown



Alura Byler



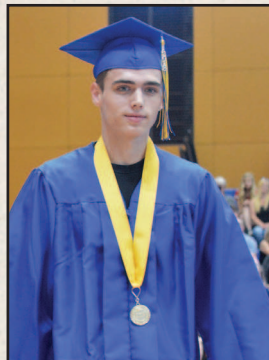
Emma Campos



Adele Cousseau



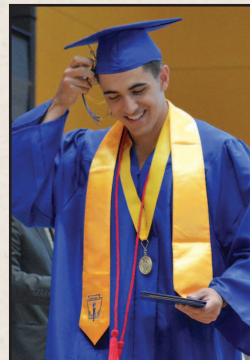
Kyran Coleman, Byravi Nagulendran,
Justine Massengo



Seth Cutright



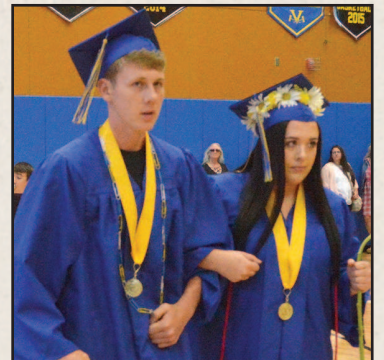
Gaven Everett



Ben Fleck



Sara Ghisianzoni



Adam Hahn, Jaidyn Dennis



Alix Haney



Bo Harmier, Vanessa Wollny, Jia-You Yu



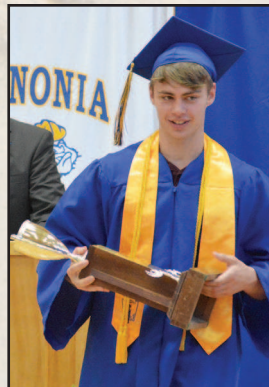
Morgan Harral



Gabe Hart-Roberts



Casey Hathcoat,
MacKenzie Fassold



Storm Henson



Jacob Hylton