

Boyack: Stay classy, Central High School

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Central High School senior Hannah Boyack signed off for the last time on Friday.

"Stay classy, Central High School," she said, finishing her final morning announcements in her usual manner.

Boyack embodies the slogan, reaching out with kindness and class to those around her — even when it's hard.

The senior was homeschooled until her freshman year at CHS.

"When I chose to come to public school, I had this feeling that it would probably be a good thing for me," Boyack said. "Although there were parts about high school that I may not have loved, there was a lot of parts that I did. And it taught me to be kind to people in all situations, whether I wanted to or not."

Kindness is a priority value for Boyack, who organized a kindness campaign in November. She and a small group of students put signs all over the school to be kind to each other — even posting thoughtful notes on lockers of

strangers — in efforts to spread a positive spirit around the school.

Boyack is perhaps most well-known around Central for her efforts in theater and music. She has starred in many of Central's productions. When she wasn't on stage, she was heavily involved in set design or other aspects of the plays.

She also has acted in several plays and musicals at Pentacle Theater.

Her favorite thing about theater is getting to know people and other characters by becoming someone else.

"You learn about other people and you're able to sympathize with people and understand people better," Boyack said. "I really like exploring how people work. I like happy people, so when I understand what makes people sad, it helps me understand how I can help them be happier again."

Theater and music are a big part of Boyack's life.

"Of course my big dream would be to perform professionally, but that's not the most important thing to me," Boyack said. "Having a family and doing other things are more important to me."

She said the career she

will focus on is following in her mother's footsteps and teaching music and theater in high school. Hannah's mother, Wendy Boyack, actively helps teacher Jeff Witt with all musical productions, and is a teacher's assistant for the production class.

Hannah will attend Willamette University in fall and study music, with plans to add theater in later.

She said high school — not that it's Central's fault, she noted — hasn't really prepared her for life.

"I would say high school in general is missing some things to prepare you for adulthood," she said. "Like, I have no idea how finance works, or how to 'adult.' High school prepared me to pass classes, but I don't know how high school prepared me for other things."

Boyack's advice to underclassmen would be to be kind, respectful, honest and trustworthy — and try not to procrastinate too much, something that she started doing more and more after her freshman year.

"As a freshman, I was really determined to make sure everything was on time and be the best student I could possibly be," she said. "Un-



COURTESY OF CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL/Itemizer-Observer

Hannah Boyack, right, heads to Willamette University to study music — and later theater — after graduating from Central High School on Friday night.

fortunately, I grew older and lost some of those good habits, partially because there were no penalties for late homework anymore."

During her four-year career at Central, Boyack had four different grading systems, which she said was frustrating.

"I think it's kind of silly," she said. "I think they should figure it out."

In spite of that, she earned high marks, which helped her get a merit scholarship to Willamette University. She has also earned other scholarships, which she said is good be-

cause it is an expensive university.

There are definitely things Boyack will miss about high school, and she said she will surely keep in touch with fellow thespians and some favorite teachers, but she is looking forward to the next step.

Dallas filmmaker ready to graduate, head to LA

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Alicia Scherer has crammed plenty of accomplishment in the three and one-half years she's attended Dallas High School.

"I always heard that the best part of high school is being as active as you could be, so I did everything I could," Scherer said Monday, just days before she will walk in DHS' Class of 2016 graduation ceremony.

She won filmmaking awards at the State Thespian Festival two years in row. She helped start DHS' film club, gay-straight alliance, and Stand for the Silent, an antibullying effort that successfully fought to have a Facebook page that was used to take down cyberbully students.

Scherer is a member of National Honor Society and the school's leadership class for three years. As a senior she served on the superintendent's committee finding ways to provide students with more privacy in locker rooms and bathrooms throughout the district.

For three years she's sang

in choir, but she really found her voice in filmmaking and theater.

She attributes that to a collection of peers, teachers and administrators who encouraged and supported her throughout her various endeavors, particularly drama teachers Blair Cromwell and Aaron Fawcett and DHS Principal Steve Spencer.

"I'll always remember Blair Cromwell. She's helped me get to where I am in so many different ways. I have so much to thank her for," Scherer said. "I've already given her a couple of thank you cards, but I feel like I need to give her 10 more."

At the Dallas Thespians "Hammy" awards this year, Fawcett presented her with "Most Inspirational."

"I remember being inspired by him," Scherer said.

She used her high school experiences in Dallas to build a strong sense of self, something she says she's going to need where she's going.

Starting this fall, she's attending Relativity School, an arts school in Los Angeles, to



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Alicia Scherer graduates from Dallas High School on Saturday and heads to Relativity School in Los Angeles to pursue a career behind the camera.

pursue a bachelor's of fine arts degree in film and digital content.

Her dream is to find a career behind the camera.

Scherer acknowledges how intimidating her move to Los

Angeles from Dallas will be, but also how necessary.

"I think if I want to get into the film industry, I need to be where it is," she said.

Scherer said she will need to stay grounded in a life phi-

losophy nurtured in Dallas. "The grass is greener where you water it. You have to learn that the grass doesn't have to be greener on the other side, you just have to take care of your own grass,"

she said. "It's realizing what you have to bring to the table and not forgetting about it."

Spencer said Scherer has shown extraordinary leadership for the last three years.

He said she was proactive in taking on the cyberbullying problem at the school in her sophomore year.

"She has been an advocate for students with administrators in resolving issues in incidents of cyberbullying," he said.

He said he isn't surprised Scherer is pursuing a career in filmmaking. Spencer saw her talent for it early on and wrote a letter of recommendation for her application to Relativity School.

"I wrote something to the effect of, 'She will make you look smart for selecting her,'" Spencer said, then added, "She makes good decisions and makes the best of the opportunity."

On verge of taking an exciting and frightening leap of her own, Scherer said being scared is OK. It's what you do next that matters.

"If you are afraid to jump, then you probably should jump," she said.

Hallock one of 28 to graduate from Perrydale

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

PERRYDALE — Hannah Hallock, Associated Student Body president for two years in a row at Perrydale High School, finds herself grateful and a little nervous as she prepares to graduate on Saturday.

She will attend Western Oregon University in the fall, studying pre-med, with plans to transfer to Oregon Health & Sciences University. Her goal is to become a pediatrician.

But going from Perrydale to Western — while smaller than other universities — will be quite a new environment.

"Being at this small school, I know everybody," Hallock said. "Now going to a university, I'm going to have to really branch out and make a lot of new friends, so I'm a little nervous for that part."

She's excited about her next step, and feels that Perrydale has helped her with that, from kindergarten through 12th grade.

"It's such a tiny school



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Hannah Hallock is eager to study pre-med at Western Oregon University in fall, hoping to transfer to Oregon Health & Sciences University to one day be a pediatrician.

you really get a lot of one-on-one help from teachers," Hallock said. "So if you have any questions, it's really easy to get help."

Only about six seniors

from the Class of 2016 have gone through all 13 years of school with Hallock. She said she will miss all of her fellow students.

"Going to this small

school, you really have a really close relationship with all the students," she said. "Having only 28 kids in my class, I have a really good bond with each and every

one of them. Having memories with all of them is probably the part I'll miss the most, for sure."

Hallock has been active in leadership and sports throughout her four years at Perrydale High School. She has played volleyball, basketball, softball, and added track to her schedule this year.

"I really enjoy being part of a team and getting to lead the group of students I know have the same passion as I," Hallock said.

The leadership students try and get others involved in school activities, Hallock said.

"We really try to push for school spirit — showing up to games to support the teams, or helping us fundraise for families during the holiday season," she said. "We really try to push for student interaction."

Her advice to all students is to get involved in activities outside the classroom, and take your freshman year seriously.

"Many of my friends have realized that they didn't maybe put their full effort

into freshman year, and now they realize it's affecting them," Hallock said. "But overall, I would say just enjoy your time, because it goes by so, so fast."

She plans to live on campus at WOU, and to slow things down a bit, wanting to adjust to college life before taking on too many extracurricular activities.

Hallock knows life after Perrydale will be "a bit of a challenge," but feels prepared and ready to step away from home — but not too far away.

"Western is affordable and it's close to home, but still far enough away that I can kind of be off on my own," she said.

Hallock credits her confidence and readiness to Perrydale schools.

"I've been extremely privileged to go to this amazing school where I get to have many relationships with students, teachers and staff," she said. "I believe going to Perrydale has had a great influence on who I am today, and I wouldn't have it any other way. It's been a great, great year overall."

Congratulations Class of 2016 graduates

For photos of Central, Dallas and Perrydale high school, as well as Western Oregon University, see the June 15 *Itemizer-Observer*. For photo galleries from graduation events, go to www.polkio.com.

For graduation times and schedules, see Page 6A.