

# Awards recognize academic achievement by Vernonia students

By Schann Nelson

A sizable audience gathered at Vernonia High School, October 23, for the awards ceremony for Vernonia High School students who earned their Certificates of Initial Mastery (CIM). The awards were preceded by a dessert reception, with entertainment provided by VHS student Jake Brock and the VHS choir.

Awards are presented in October for benchmark testing completed during the previous school year. Students first have the opportunity to test for the CIM in their sophomore year. Additional opportunities are offered in the junior and senior years. Benchmarks are progress checks that evaluate student progress at four levels, generally in third, fifth, eighth and tenth grades.

To achieve recognition, students must meet or exceed the state standard and complete work samples in one or more subject areas. The state tests are in three subject areas: English (writing and reading), Mathematics (problem solving, and knowledge and skills), and Science. Students must also complete work samples in writing, speaking, reading, math problem solving, and the arts. Work samples are classroom assignments evaluated with a scoring guide used statewide.

## Standardization is tool for evaluating progress

The system that leads to the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) and the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) was approved in the late 1990s by the state legislature, in an effort to standardize education throughout the state. A common set of educational standards serves as a guide for developing curriculum and classroom practices in order to teach the same materials at the same levels in all Oregon classrooms. The standards also provide a way to evaluate the success of publicly funded education across the state. Additionally, the CIM and CAM are aligned with the Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS) that will be used for admission throughout the Oregon University System beginning in 2005.

## Certificate of Initial Mastery is required

The CIM is designed to

eventually include all subject areas. However, in order to facilitate implementation, subject areas are phased into the CIM over an extended period. Students must achieve high standards, on both state tests and classroom work samples, in all of the required subject areas in order to be awarded a CIM. This year's graduates (Class of 2002) must meet or exceed the state standards in English, Math, Science and the Arts to achieve the CIM. In two years, students in the Class of 2004, will also have to achieve benchmark levels in Social Science.

Required subject areas will continue to increase until the CIM is fully implemented in 2006. At that time, the required subject areas will include English, Math, Science, Arts, World Language, Social Science, Physical and Health Education, Career Related Learning and Technology.

## Certificate of Advanced Mastery is personalized

Unlike the CIM, which requires all students to demonstrate proficiency in all required subjects, the CAM emphasizes personalized learning. The goal of the CAM is to "prepare every student for a successful transition to his or her next step, whether that means further education, military service or the workforce" according to the Oregon Department of Education.

Vernonia High School is in the first year of a four-year phase-in for the CAM. This year's freshman class, which will graduate in 2006, will be the first class offered the opportunity to earn a CAM along with

their high school diploma.

## CIM Awards

The CIM, the highest award for academic achievement currently available at VHS, was presented to seven students. Brandi Abney, Stephanie Hein, Emilee Suess, Ben Brookins, René Ellington, Katherine Traylor and Carrick Flynn have successfully completed all of the requirements.

## Benchmark Awards

One hundred-seven other students received awards for successful performance on both state tests and classroom work samples in one or more subject areas. At the first and second benchmarks students are recognized only if they meet standards in all required subject areas, a change from last year when students were recognized for meeting any benchmark.

## First Benchmark

This year, 24 fourth graders successfully met all requirements – English, Math and Art – at the first benchmark, while in the third grade last year. Those students were Alex Barton, Cody Blum, Andrew Brown, Racheal Brown, Brian Carr, Kaitlyn Carr, Robert Cochran, Cody Cowles, Laura Hein, Nora Hieronimus, Frank Heselton Jr., Kayleigh Johnston,

Devin Layman, Jordan McMahon, Kira Paragon, Brandon Potter, Justin Rainbolt, Dalton Rumbolz, Sabrina Sullaway, McKenzie Taralson, Benjamin Tarrence, Anthony Traverso, Tristin Threet and Ronald Vanderzanden.

## Second Benchmark

Students successfully completing all of the requirements for the second benchmark – English, Math, Art and Science – were David Allen, Tyler Clines, Nicholas Dixon, Joseph Fergusson, Samantha Lee, Tricia Levenseller, Blake Moeller, Alanna Ogden, Tara Ostrander, Caleb Rice, Gavin Roberts, Byron Schorzman and Rebekah Young.

## Third Benchmark

Freshman receiving awards for meeting the third benchmark requirements – Art, English, Math and Science – were Laura Brookins, Jessica Dahl, Cassandra Fogel, Timothy Hein, Johnathan Kintz, Krystal Norby, Jacob Rice, Burdette Robb, Ben Schorzman and Samuel Thornton.

## High School Awards

Sixty students were recognized for academic achievement this year, nearly double the 33 students at the same level last year. Juniors and seniors at VHS received certificates in each subject area for which they met or exceeded requirements.

## Class of 2004

VHS juniors (Class of 2004) will have to meet requirements in Art, English, Math and Science to earn a CIM. The following students have already met one or more benchmark area:

Science, Math and Art – Waylon Buchan.

Science and Math – Justin Baer, Taryn Braseth, and Katy Taylor.

Science and Art – Paul Johnston, Marshall King, Jamie Maller, Alex Moeller, Kendall Nelson and Sammy Purvee.

Art – Carnin Hall, Joey Howley, Julie Johnston, Katelyn McWhirter, Bo Rumbolz, Helena Schafer, Hank Sohler, Jessica Sook and Erin Titus.

Science – Megan Baker, Carressa Brooks, Bryan Dennis, Robbie Fetherston, Fred Fulmer, Holly Hillyer, Melissa Howes, Kortni Hyde, Levi Johnston, Curtis Jundt, Stephanie Lane, Chris Lee, Abby Nelson and Justin Peters.

## Class of 2003

VHS Seniors (Class of 2003) are required to meet state standards in only three subject areas – English, Math and Science. The following students

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