



The High School View

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Tales from college life: alums counsel the wannabes

By Liam McCarthy

Senior year of high school is often spent worrying about what college life will entail. Now most student worries—minus the threat of head lice—have been assuaged, thanks to an assembly for seniors last week with regional high school alumni/ae who are now in college.

Besides a few minor setbacks, the college experience has generally been a positive one and the alums provided helpful insight into what their hard schoolwork and effort to complete college applications will lead to.

Choosing the right school was the first topic discussed. "If it feels right, then it probably is right," said Emily Mercier, a freshman at Smith. "It's about going with a gut feeling."

For Taylor Pierce, a junior at Ithaca College, fitting in was natural. While sitting in on a class during one of his visits, students started talking to him right away. He said, "I already felt settled in and I was actually a student in the class."

Choosing the college where one feels the most comfortable is crucial. "If you're looking at schools that are far away, I'd recommend visiting the school at least twice," said Gregg Leonard, a sophomore



PHOTO BY MAGGIE HOWARD

Regional high school alumni/ae line the stage in the Performing Arts Center and share information and stories about their college experiences to help this year's outgoing seniors prepare for life after high school.

at the University of North Carolina, who visited his school four times before making the final decision.

Going to school away from home and traveling far can be challenging. Part of the transition from high school to college is overcoming the feeling of being homesick. Some students can only go home for holidays. "I missed the Island more than I thought I would," said Max Nunes, a freshman at George Washington University.

Once accepted into college, moving in with a roommate often

becomes the next concern. It was hit or miss for students; they either easily became friends or quickly learned they had to adapt to each other's living habits. "I met my roommate at orientation," said Taylor. "I have been rooming with him ever since then."

Max said, "My roommate is totally different than me. He hates everything about politics and Hillary Clinton." Max provided advice for dealing with the differences between roommates. "If they're bothering you or there is a problem, then you should always

be honest with each other."

Sometimes communication is not always effective. "My roommate refuses to lock the door to our room, so we've had stuff stolen," said Emily.

For many students sports were the outlet that provided them with most of their friends. Andrew McHugh, a freshman at Tufts University who plays tennis, said, "Spending two to three hours with the same kids every day definitely helped to meet a group of friends."

"It was difficult to plan all my classes between 8:30 am and 12:30 pm before I had lacrosse practice," said Laura Jernegan, a freshman at American University.

However, some have mixed feelings about their sports experience. "I would go to my classes and then I have football practice for three hours," said Matt Costello, a freshman at Ithaca College. "Then I would eat and do homework before going to sleep. But there was pretty much no time for myself, besides on the weekends."

For those with other interests, there are plenty of clubs that offer possibilities for extracurricular involvement. "We have three hours

of classes and the rest of the day to do our work," said Bethany Pennington, 2009 regional high school valedictorian, and a freshman at Wheaton College.

The tension that students feel from college is often caused by financial issues. "I went to the school that offered me the most money," said Sam Larsen, a freshman at American University.

Balancing a social life and partying on top of academics can often be detrimental. "I definitely slowed down [the partying] when I realized I wasn't doing as good as I wanted to," said Taylor.

Where most students can't afford to slow down their pace is in their schoolwork. Some have become accustomed to writing 10-page papers as a common part of their workload. "I wrote about 70 pages in my last week for finals before break," said Jane Alexander a sophomore at Boston College. To help prevent work overload, some students use a website called ratemyprofessors.com, a site which enables students to view other students' comments about different professors, how they grade, and the amount of work assigned at the college they attend.

Every school offers at least a slightly different experience. Bethany said, "It's important to pick the school where you feel you will fit in the best."

Theater student exchanges school for film

By Olivia Cameron and Kristen Parece

Regional high school junior Mariah Mackenzie will be working out-of-state next year as an intern at Ithaca College. She will be working on a film project with Devin Colter, a 2007 graduate from the high school, who is now attending Ithaca College. She will be involved in the technical aspect of his senior film project. During her internship, Mariah hopes to learn more about the world of film-making and editing.

Mariah has been involved in many different aspects of theater, such as stage management and performing as part of the student Improv troupe, the IMPers. "I decided to take up this opportunity to further enhance my knowledge of film making," she said. "I have been dealing with the stage since third grade, but have had very little chance to explore film," said Mariah.

This February Mariah will be performing in the Massachusetts High School Drama Guild (MHS-



PHOTO BY TAYLOR SMITH

Mariah Mackenzie examines Yorick's skull in the theater room.

DG), an organization that promotes and strengthens theatrical arts for middle and secondary school students and teachers. She will also be performing this summer at the Fringe Festival in Scotland along with other theater students.

Mariah is currently the assistant director of this year's musical production, Rent. "Mariah is really lucky that she already knows what she wants to do and she is getting a chance to really experience it," said junior Rykerr Maynard.

Mariah often takes the leadership position as stage manager in theater productions. Students working with her recognize and admire her work ethic. "Mariah is very dependable," said sophomore Emma HallBilsback. "You can ask her to do something and she'll do it. She's an honorable person."

As a career, Mariah is considering going into the technical aspect of theater, specifically stage-managing. "A stage manager is perfect for working in film," said Kate Murray, drama director at the high school. "They can see the minute details while having a sense of the large picture."

Mariah feels that her internship in film will give her a greater understanding of theater. She said, "I believe the more knowledge that I can gain, whether it be on the stage, off the stage, or with a whole new medium, the better."

Chess team opens season with win



PHOTO BY TAYLOR SMITH

The regional high school chess team opened its 2010 season by crushing Wareham High School, 4-1, last week in a match on the Vineyard. In the second match, the schools tied 2 1/2 - 2 1/2. Vineyard players Vinny DeGregorio and Shane Donovan finished the day undefeated, with each player winning two games. The other Vineyard players competing were team captain and club president Grant Meacham (above right), Mike Kendall, and Lily Bick. Also on the regional high school's team is board one player Lee Faraca (above left), a seventh grader from the West Tisbury School.

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