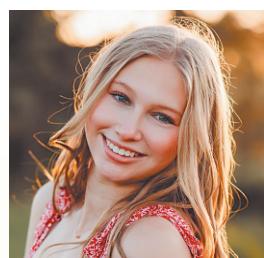
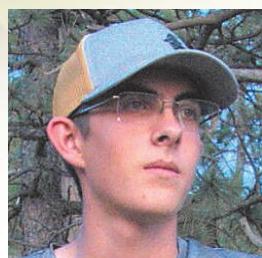
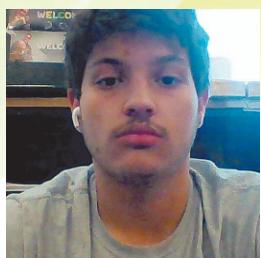
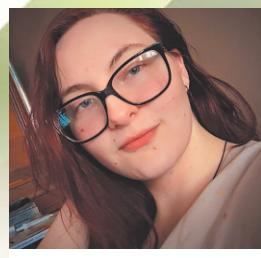
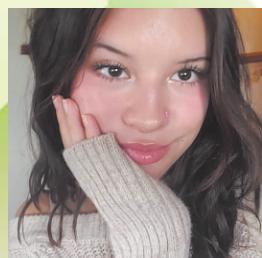


2025 Valleydictorian

SENIOR SEARCH

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



BILLINGS GAZETTE
COMMUNICATIONS



SEE THIS YEAR'S \$5,000 WINNER

FORGING THEIR OWN FUTURE



ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR IS COMING TO AN END.

For our 2025 seniors, this also marks the beginning of a new chapter of life. While some graduates go on to pursue a degree from a traditional college or university, others decide to continue their education through trade school, Industry certification, or apprenticeship. Post grad success can take many forms. For this reason, Valley Credit Union wanted to help students who are not typically eligible for scholarships and financial aid awarded to those attending a 4-year program.

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, Valley Credit Union and The Billings Gazette have featured 15 seniors chosen from local area high schools. These students, nominated by a teacher, counselor, or principal, have shown a clear career path for their future in the form of an industry certification, technical associate degree, city college, trade school, or apprenticeship. As the school year comes to an end, Valley has awarded one \$5,000 grant to a deserving student.

Students shared with us their inspirations, their career goals, and their plans following high school. From

cosmetology school to welding, our featured seniors show much potential in their future endeavors across a wide variety of industries. Valley is honored to play a part in helping financially support a driven student in the field of their choice. The future is very bright for our Class of 2025 graduates!

Valley Credit Union is proud to be involved in many community sponsorships, especially ones supporting Billings' youth. Most recently, Valley Credit Union presented The Hive a contest for local high school entrepreneurs to pitch their business ideas, awarding \$5,000 to 1st place to help get their business going. Valley also continues our commitment to the Billings area kids with a \$15,000 title sponsorship of the Billings All High School graduation celebrations following the graduation ceremonies.

Congratulations to each and every one of our 15 Valleydictorian featured students as you get ready to graduate and embark on your next journey. Thank you to all high school faculty for your nominations and to the graduates for sharing with us your interests, your goals, and your stories.

CONGRATULATIONS VIOLET WALTERS

2025 Valleydictorian \$5000 Winner



Violet Walters poses for a picture with a check for \$5,000 from Valley Credit Union at Skyview High School. Violet was selected from over 50 nominated students and 15 finalists to be named the class of 2025 Valleydictorian. Along with the title she received a \$5,000 check from Valley Credit Union to further her education. Violet plans to attend City College to get a degree in welding in the fall. Also pictured above are Brandon Scala from Valley Credit Union and Jacey Reiter and Logan McKenney from Skyview High School.



Jessica Althoff

High School: Bridger High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan to attend Aveda Institute Montana in the fall to study cosmetology. After completing beauty school, I will start working in a salon nearby. I will gain experience and clients as I work toward owning my own business. My ultimate goal is to purchase my own salon and also make it a boutique where I can sell clothes.

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

My favorite class in school is aiding for the first grade class. I look forward to that class everyday. I love walking into the classroom and seeing all their smiling faces. They are always so excited to learn and I love getting to help and be a part of their growth. Getting hugs everyday and hearing all their crazy stories will always brighten my day.

Who inspires you and why?

I would have to say that my younger self inspires me the most. Since I was little, I wanted to grow up to play with hair and make people feel good about themselves. I was such an outgoing little girl and

went into each day with a sense of wonder, eager to explore new things and experience things with no self-doubt. When I think about how fearless I was, it encourages me to take risks and embrace challenges.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Some things I enjoy outside of school are helping on my family's farm, helping out with the cows, camping, fishing, working with my steer to show in the 4-H fair, skiing, boating, traveling and spending time with family and friends.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I will put the money toward my tuition at cosmetology school. If my cost of school was lower, I could start saving money to buy my own business.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

"The harder you work for something, the greater you'll feel when you achieve it."

If you were stranded on a desert island

and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

I would bring a sleeping bag to keep me warm while I sleep. I would bring an axe so I could chop down wood to make a shelter. Lastly, I would bring some food so I could survive.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose a hamburger. I would start with the bottom bun then add the burger patty. Next, I would put a slice of American cheese and some pickles on the patty. Then, I would put some ketchup and mustard on the top bun and put it on top of the burger.

Any other information you would like to share?

I have been involved in volleyball, basketball, track and field, 4-H, FFA, BPA, pep club, yearbook, student council and National Honor Society during high school. I was the volleyball captain for my senior year. I have served as the president of my class for the past three years, my FFA chapter for the past two years and my pep club group this past year. I have also served as the vice president for my 4-H group.



Tayvin Boeckel

High School: Skyview High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan to attend Laramie Community College in Cheyenne, WY. There I will fulfill my dream of playing college soccer while studying Criminal Justice.

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

Human Anatomy without a question. I now have a better understanding of how intricate and complex our own human body is. I have learned that I am a hands on learner and really have enjoyed the dissection element. It also helps that Mrs. Newell is an amazing teacher.

Who inspires you and why?

My parents!!! They are my biggest cheerleaders. They celebrate my successes with me and pick me up when I am down. My Dad works harder than anyone I know to ensure our family doesn't go without. They have both dedicated so much of their time to allow me to play a sport I deeply love. Most importantly they have shown me what truly matters in life, family.

What are some things you

enjoy outside of school?

I love the game of soccer. Whether it's me playing or watching my younger brothers play. When I am not doing that, you will find me helping train young soccer players or on the side line as an assistant coach. Soccer has helped mold me into the person I am today.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement will allow me to give back to the community and to help others in need. My Aunt is a Nurse Practitioner and I have seen and heard the ways she has touched people's lives and helps guide them through the worst times of their lives. Being able to do the same thing for just one person would make me feel extremely successful.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I would put it all towards my tuition.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

Going into my freshman year of high school I had only one goal for myself. I wanted to make the boys varsity soccer team. My Mom found a

quote and shared it with me before teams were announced and it has stuck with me every day since.

Never be ordinary. Never be mediocre. Set goals. Smash them. Be a stronger version of you. Show people who you are. And Never apologize for being awesome. #BAFL

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

If I could only take three things with me I would take water, food and a tent. All three items would be essential for survival.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I'm a simple guy when it comes to food. My parents would tell you I am an extremely picky eater. I would pick a big slice of pepperoni pizza.

Any other information you would like to share?

When I was 8 years old my family experienced a life altering experience. Even at a young age that situation taught me that life is short. Make the most of it, do what makes you happy and love your "people" unconditionally.



Marissa Coulter

High School: Billings West High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan on doing cosmetology school and getting my esthetics license.

What is your favorite class in school and why?

My favorite class is ceramics. I love making art and being able to use it, or just making art with a function. It's a great way to make gifts for others and help supply my future home with décor and dishes.

Who inspires you and why?

My mom has been through a lot in her life and yet she's still thriving. Through sickness and health she was always there for me and put her children's needs before hers. I love her so much and she's the one person I've always looked up to.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I love fashion and makeup, experimenting with different styles and techniques. I also love cooking, cleaning, painting, drawing, and working out. One of my absolute favorite things to do is

photography. I love taking pictures of people and capturing the beauty of the moment. Not only does taking pictures allow you to look at beautiful things, it also captures memories.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

The thing that would make me feel most successful would be seeing the look of my clients when they look in the mirror after their session. I want to make people feel happier in their skin and feel good about themselves.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I will use the money to afford school and getting my esthetics license.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

I love the saying "take your own advice." As someone that people go to for problems, I often find myself giving out really good advice, but when I'm in that situation, I never think about using that same advice.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what

three things would you bring and why?

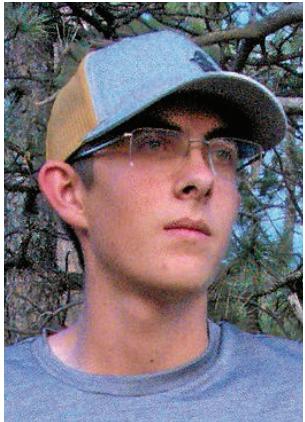
I would bring my cat, Jasper, a bar of soap, and my mom. I would be very lonely without Jasper and he would bring me happiness. He could also help catch food. A bar of soap would be very important to me, as I am someone who loves being clean. Lastly, I'd bring my mom because I'll be lonely without her and she would be able to help me through the time I'm stranded.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose pizza. Pizza has the most variety between the two. I would personally pick a thin crust pizza, with alfredo sauce, mozzarella, basil, tomato, and pepperoni for protein. If available, I'd also put a garlic ranch drizzle as well.

Any other information you would like to share?

I want to make others feel beautiful and comfortable in their body. It's something I've struggled with all of my life and I know how refreshing it is to take a break from the self depreciation and appreciate your body and face. You live in this body your whole life, you shouldn't be ashamed of it. You should love and appreciate everything it does for you and treat it kindly.



Dawson Harms

High School: Lockwood High School

What are your plans after high school?

My current plans involve using the summer to build up some funds and then going to MSU in Bozeman in the fall to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering.

What is your favorite class in school and why?

JROTC is an amazing program that teaches students leadership skills as well as gets them involved with groups that they may not interact with during your normal day to day classes. The program offers many ways to interact with the other cadets. My experience with the marksmanship team has helped grow a sense of comradery as well as friendly competition pushing us to grow to the point where we qualified for the Air Force JROTC service nationals in Aniston, Alabama.

Who inspires you and why?

My inspiration is my grandfather. My grandpa was dealt a bad hand and as a teen his left lung was

flooded with fluid. Now he has a compromised immune system and his heart had to make up for the decreased amount of oxygen intake by pumping blood harder. My grandfather is still kicking strong at 65 and will out hike anyone out hunting. His health issues have not stopped him from doing the things he loves from camping and hunting to 4-wheeling and even snowmobiles. He went to school in Bozeman for architecture and is an integral part of the office where he works. He has inspired me to push forward no matter the obstacle placed in my path and to work hard for the things that I want.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Outside of school I enjoy snowmobiling as well as camping. Snowmobiling has given me a physically demanding hobby to dive into during a time of year when I used to sit at home with not much to do. I have also begun dabbling in 3D printing which has given me a creative outlet as well as the curiosity to look into CAD programs and projects I would not have considered otherwise.

What would make you feel successful

in your career/work after school?

I want to be an invaluable resource to both the people I will work with as well as my employer. I want to be able to make important contributions to my community as well as the team I work with.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I will use the money to help pay for tuition for college so that I can focus on my studies and less so on how to pay for them.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

Flectere Si Nequa Superos, Acheronta movebo "If I cannot bend the heavens, I shall move the underworld"

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

A hunting knife, magnesium fire striker, and some kind of potable desalination tool to help with

Please see DAWSON HARMS, Page L11



Tristin Kaufman

High School: Billings West High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan to go into the City College's cyber security program.

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

Computer programming because I get to learn how to code better and I like to code.

Who inspires you and why?

My mother because she makes it seem like raising two teenagers was easy.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I enjoy playing video games and watching

YouTube videos.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

The thing that would make me feel successful at work is being able to enjoy my job and not worry about when my next meal is.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I will put that money directly into tuition, this will help me to not need to take out large amounts of student loans.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

I always liked Henry Ford's quote of "whether you

think you can, or think you can't, your right."

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

The three things I'd bring would be a large tarp for shelter, rope for fishing, and a pot for water.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I'd choose pizza and get pepperoni, bacon and black olives on it.

Any other information about yourself that you would like to share?

I have tried hard to make sure my grades reflect my intelligence.



Alexandra Kottre

High School: Billings Senior High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan to study radiology at University of Montana

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

College medical terminology is my favorite because we're always learning something new, and my classmates are amazingly kind.

Who inspires you and why?

My mom inspires me because she's always working so hard and reaching for higher achievements. Not only that, but she never gives up on her education.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Outside of school I like going kayaking, hiking, and camping; as well as almost any thing to do with art: including painting, drawing, and sculpting.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

After school, my goal has always been to help people, whether it be physically helping them or mentally helping them.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

The money will allow me to reach even higher with my goals, by helping me pay for schooling.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you

that you would like to share?

Today is a new day, yesterday's mistakes are in the past, so make the most of the future.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

If I was deserted on an island I would bring tools to build a shelter, water filtration for clean drinking water, and a tarp for warmth and to protect me from the elements.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would get a hamburger with two burger patties, a fried egg, bacon, cheese, lettuce, ketchup, mustard, and BBQ sauce.



Russell Lang

High School: Roundup High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan on attending MSU Billings City College. I will be pursuing an associate degree in diesel technologies. This will help me achieve my dreams of becoming a heavy-duty diesel mechanic. I am also going to further my certifications by working towards a CDL to help make myself more marketable. Once I get my feet on the ground during college I would like to start interning with a diesel repair shop in the Billings area to receive more hands-on learning experience.

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

Agricultural Mechanics 2. This class is a welding class that counts as a college credit through MSU Billings. It challenges my skills on a daily basis to make me a better welder. We don't just stick to one form of welding every week we are learning something new and growing our skills.

Who inspires you and why?

Henry Ford inspires me because he was an innovator who valued the middle-class man over profit. He grew up in a small town with nothing to his name. With his determination and work ethic,

he created one of the largest car companies in the world and revolutionized the industry altogether. His contributions to me are admirable and show no matter how far you get in life you should always care about others.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Hunting, fishing, and trap shooting. I have been an active member of FFA and 4-H so I love traveling to competitions and events and seeing old friends. I also enjoy restoring vintage tractors and jeeps. It's cool to bring old run-down machinery and give it a new life.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

The satisfaction of my work's customers. Being a mechanic I will be working on many different people's equipment. Their satisfaction with my work will bring success to me. At the end of the day, when I leave work the one thing I want to leave is a happy customer who is pleased with the job I did.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

With this money, I will be able to afford the housing and tool fees that are required for

my degree. The less I have to worry about my finances, the more I can worry about learning my skills and getting right to work.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

My personal motto is "Make the best better."

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

I would bring a fishing pole, a tent, and a 24-pack of Red Bull. I would see this as a much-needed vacation and would take advantage of the tropical sun and fishing. I would have food, shelter and caffeine I would need nothing else to thrive.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose hamburgers. On my burger, there would be a nice beef patty seasoned with Kinders wood fire garlic seasoning and some prime rib rub. There would be a thick melted slice of cheddar cheese on top with lettuce, and bread and butter pickles. All of this would be in the middle of two toasted pretzel buns with mayo on one side and ketchup on the other.

please everyone.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

I would choose a machete, a lighter to start fires, and a flare gun to signal for help if a boat or plane passed by. I would not bring water, as I could use the fire to desalinate ocean water. For food, I could hunt, and if there are coconuts, I could use the machete to open them.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

This is a tough question because I love both foods, but I'd probably go with a cheeseburger. I'd have it on a kosher bun with a juicy patty, melted pepper jack cheese, a fried egg, lettuce, and crispy bacon. The burger would be grilled to perfection and well-seasoned, making it the ultimate choice.

Any other information about yourself that you would like to share?

I live on a family-owned beef cattle ranch in the middle of nowhere, and I love staying busy while socializing with others. I would also describe myself as a hard worker who never gives up on my goals.



Trey Meredith

High School: Melstone High School

What are your plans after high school?

To attend MSU Billings City College this fall to pursue a degree in process plant technology. My goal is to eventually work at one of the refineries in or around Billings.

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

Personal finance and weightlifting. I enjoy personal finance because it's practical and teaches valuable skills for being financially responsible. As for weightlifting, I like it because it's fun to challenge myself, stay in shape, and do it all within the school setting.

Who inspires you and why?

My parents taught me the importance of hard work, respect, and the reality that life isn't always fair. Watching my dad work on the ranch motivates me to strive to be like him every day. I'm constantly learning new things whenever I'm with my parents and working alongside them.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I enjoy sports, spending time with friends and family, and participating in a few extracurricular

activities. Throughout high school, I've been involved in three sports: football, basketball, and track. I'm also active in BPA, currently serving as the chapter president, and I am the student body president. Additionally, I have been a member of the honor society for four years.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

Graduating college debt-free, working hard to find a job that I enjoy and offers growth opportunities, and continuing to advance in my career. Ultimately, I want to be financially stable, hopefully providing for a future family.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I would use the money to help pay for college, with the goal of graduating debt-free. I would be incredibly grateful and appreciative to receive this scholarship.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

Be honest, respectful, kind, and always work hard at whatever you do. I also believe in staying true to your morals, being yourself, and not worrying about what others think, because you can't



LouAnn Peters

High School: Lavina High School

What are your plans after high school?

I plan to attend college to obtain an Associates degree of Applied Science in Radiologic Technology.

What is your favorite class in school and why?
Physics is my favorite class because the lessons are always challenging. I feel like I'm learning something new everyday. My teacher, Mrs. Carpenter does a great job explaining concepts and engaging the whole class.

Who inspires you and why?

My sister Danielle. She and I share a close bond, being only seventeen months apart in age. From the time we were little, we've been best friends, supporting each other through all of our ups and downs.

When Danielle was just 14 years old, she was diagnosed with severe scoliosis. At fifteen, she underwent her first spinal fusion surgery. At sixteen, Danielle faced another challenge—a second spinal fusion surgery. Danielle's bravery is something I deeply admire. She has taught me

that even when life gets hard, we can find the strength to persevere. She inspires me to face challenges with courage and to never give up. Danielle's story is another reminder that bravery can shine through the toughest of times, and I aspire to be as resilient as Danielle is.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Spend time with family and friends, play volleyball and go hunting and fishing with my dad.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

I want to have a mindset of continuous learning and personal growth. I believe that every challenge and setback is an opportunity to improve, and I am determined to turn these moments into stepping stones for success. Growth, both professionally and personally, is key for me to feel success in my career. Additionally, I aspire to leave a positive and lasting impact on the lives of others. My goal is to create a welcoming and supportive environment for patients, ensuring that their time in the hospital feels as comfortable and stress-free as possible. Leaving a sense of safety and happiness for anyone I am around.

Ultimately, success for me is a balance of personal happiness and making a difference in the lives of others. As long as I am growing, helping people feel safe and valued, and finding joy in my work, I will consider my career truly successful.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I would use it to lift some of the financial burden of pursuing my education, allowing me to focus more on my studies. As I will be funding my education myself, I anticipate needing to balance a full-time job alongside being a full-time student.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

"A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him." - David Brinkley

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

I would bring a water purifier like a LifeStraw, a knife, and my friend Reese. The knife would serve many purposes, such as gathering food, building

Please see LOUANN PETERS, Page L11



Riley Peterson

High School: Billings Senior High School

What are your plans after high school?

I have always wanted to go into some sort of field that includes vehicles ever since I was really young as I have always liked cars and really anything based around them. I got my first car and had worked on it day in and day out no matter what it was, I was really enjoying just working on it. That is when I realized that I wanted to become an automotive technician. One day I was hoping to open a car repair shop of my own.

What is your favorite class in school and why?
It has to be my engines class. This is because it gets me to be more familiar with the parts, and actions that make up the engine itself. I enjoy pulling motors apart and putting them back together after diagnosing the issues that may be presented.

Who inspires you and why?

My biggest inspiration has to be my father as he is a shop supervisor, and he has always been around

cars and working on them, and he has always been a great help to make me feel more confident with what I am doing surrounding them. He was really the reason I became interested in cars and the mechanics they have in the first place.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I enjoy hanging out with friends, working on my cars, doing little things here and there to them. I also enjoy helping my friends with their cars and the issues they may be facing.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

If I made it to the point in my life to open my own auto shop, that is when I will feel like my time and effort was successful through schooling.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I will take it and put it towards the program I choose to help me get to where I want. This will also help me achieve my goals to go to a tech school.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

It is never really how expensive the car or object it may be, but more the story that it holds in itself.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

I would bring a knife, rope, and a fire starter. I believe that with these 3 items I would be able to survive for as long as needed. The knife for cutting trees, vines, hunting, and more. The rope for building shelter, making tools, and even entertainment. Then I would have the fire starter to cook the food I hunt, and make the water drinkable by boiling it down.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose hamburgers. I would have it with, cheddar cheese, BBQ sauce, fried onions, pickles, lettuce, and jalapenos, all on a nice brioche bun.



Craig Prangley

High School: Roundup High School

What are your plans after high school?

I want to attend Highlands College in Butte, Montana and study diesel mechanics.

What is your favorite class in school and why?

AG Mechanics is my favorite class. I enjoy trying to solve problems and every time I approach a new project I see it as a challenge and a new opportunity to learn something I have not experienced before. I have been enrolled in AG mechanics classes all four years in high school and I have been a member of FFA during all four years of high school. Last year, I qualified for state FFA and competed in the AG Mechanics competition.

Who inspires you and why?

I am inspired by my dad because of his work ethic and ability to fix all kinds of farm and ag equipment. I am also inspired by my AG teacher because she gives a lot of autonomy in the shop to work on our own projects and challenges us to be innovative in our practices. This year we

were able to build our own go carts and my team successfully built an engine that won our school's small engine competition.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Although football is affiliated with the school, I started on our varsity football team and I was the defensive MVP for the varsity team this year. I have always enjoyed athletics including football and wrestling. I am currently in the middle of wrestling and I have a good chance at qualifying for the state wrestling tournament. Outside of school, I like to hunt and fish, ride my motorcycle and work on car engines and farm equipment.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

I believe I would be successful if I completed a two year applied sciences degree in diesel mechanics. I am interested in working in Ag business and I believe a two year applied science degree would be a great place for me to start.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

If I won the \$5,000 grant, I would use it to attend

Highlands College in Butte, Montana. This would help me pay for diesel mechanics program.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

Don't sweat the small stuff, because it's all small stuff!

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

Funyuns, Mountain Dew, and my swim trunks!

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

Pizza, I would want pepperoni and mushrooms on my pizza.

Any other information about yourself that you would like to share?

I really enjoy serving others. I volunteer with the high school guidance counselor to help mentor younger students to convince them to stay in school, make positive choices, and be future leaders in our school.



Madison Sattler

High School: Billings Senior High School

What are your plans after high school?

After I graduate in June, I'm hopefully gonna be starting a prep course to become a CNA. And I'll work as a CNA while in college. Then in August 2025 I'll start college at MSUB City College in Billings, Montana for surgical tech then from there, I hope to become a surgical technician!

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

My favorite class in school would have to be computer programming because of the fact I can break things down at my own pace. And it challenges my brain in a different way that it normally wouldn't be challenged.

Who inspires you and why?

My grandfather, who passed away in January 2024, has always been my biggest inspiration and

my biggest reason to keep going because of the fact he never gave up and he always had a strong mindset and that go-go energy and I hope to be like him!

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

Outside of school I don't really have a lot of time to enjoy things, but when I do reading is definitely one of my go to things to do when I'm wanting to relax, and I really enjoy it!

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

Success itself would make me feel successful. And being able to say that I did it when I'm done.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

It would definitely help me with the cost of school itself, which would take some stress off of my plate when having to pay bills and everything else outside of school. But mainly school!

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

Don't let fear decide your future.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

A water bottle, a bag of trail mix and a lighter because you obviously need food and water to survive and the lighter would help me start a fire so that I wouldn't get cold at night.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose a hamburger 100% and I would put cheese, pickles, onions, ketchup, and mustard and lettuce on it.

Any other information you would like to share?

I'm a very outgoing and confident person!!



Aidon Songstad

High School: Joliet High School

What are your plans after high school?

My future plans after high school are to attend Montana tech/highlands, for their pre-apprentice lineman program and then join the work force as a lineman.

What is your favorite classes in school and why?
My favorite class in school is welding. I really enjoy welding class because I get to use skills that I have learned and put them to use and make something that I can take pride in because I'm the one doing it and I find a lot of peace in welding.

Who inspires you and why?

My older brother Zayne and my mom Kelly inspire me. My mom and brother inspire me so much in my life and everything I do. My mom is a very hard working single mother that has not only raised me but my three other siblings. She has done so much for me throughout my time in high school. My brother is also very hard working and is the most humble person I know and has taught me so much

and has helped me become the person I am today.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I really enjoy fly fishing and tying flies for fishing. I also really enjoy showing pigs. I have shown pigs for 11 years for 4-H and FFA. It takes a lot of hard work but it pays off in the end and is very rewarding.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

What would make me feel successful in my career would be working my way up from an apprentice to a foreman or a project manager.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

If I won the grant I would use it to help pay for most of my schooling. That would put me ahead of most people that don't go to school for it and I would learn so much more than if I just went straight into the workforce.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

No matter how low you get the only way to go is up.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

If I was stranded on a desert island I would bring my fishing rod because I would be able to catch fish. I would bring a lighter to start a fire to cook the fish I catch. And I would also bring a book on how to get off a desert island so that I could not only find out how to but also to entertain myself.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose hamburgers with bacon, ham, cheese, catchup, mustard, onions and a fried egg.

Any other information you would like to share?

I'm very involved in extra curricular activity like basketball, track and FFA. And for FFA I am serving my second term as chapter sentinel. I also really enjoy being outdoors with my friends and family.



Violet Walters

High School: Skyview High School

What are your plans after high school?

Attend City College here at MSU Billings to get an associates degree in welding and business management. During this time I plan on getting into an internship to gain more hands-on skills and knowledge of the field I plan on working in. After I graduate, I plan on working for a company for a couple of years just to broaden my experience and strengthen my skills before I open my own company and become an independent contractor.

What is your favorite class in school and why?

Building and construction classes. They open an unlimited world of creativity and allow me to work at my own pace and free will. I think that I have learned the most from these classes, and I've also come home with some pretty cool projects. I believe that I have learned so many important life skills in these classes that a lot of people miss out on. I have learned everything from how to fix small household things, to putting together playhouses for little children. These classes have also allowed me to go beyond the curriculum, and create whatever comes upon my mind. I wouldn't be in the position I am today if it wasn't for them.

Who inspires you and why?

My teachers and past coaches have always inspired me because they are ultimately the reason why I am here today. They have taught me everything that I know and they are all so very knowledgeable. For example, my freshman basketball coach always pushed me to be my best both on the court and in the classroom. He always lifted my head when it was down, and helped me through some pretty tough times. He was always full of enthusiasm and was very good spirited. He was the best coach I ever had and it is all the things that he has done for me that inspires me to be the best version of myself. Not just him, but all of teachers and advisors have helped get me through a multitude of challenges and helped me become the person I am today, and I am very thankful for them.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I like to spend time outside and go hiking, fishing, and just enjoy what nature has to give us. I also like hanging out with my friends. Whether it's shopping, going to the movies, or just sitting at the house I value all the time I get to spend with them. I also like to play video games and read books. My favorite book is "Between Shades of Gray." I really honestly enjoy just every opportunity I can

get to experience new things and being able to live everyday to its absolute fullest.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

Knowing that I am a valuable member of whatever team I become a part of. Achieving significant goals, and knowing that whoever I work with that I am making a positive impact and influencing others to be good leaders. On a more personal level, being able to independently provide for myself would also make me feel successful.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

To help pay for my further education at City College. My ultimate goal is to finish college with the least amount of debt possible.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

There is something that my mom used to tell me that didn't have very much meaning to me at the time. One of my biggest struggles is trying to save people who don't want to be saved. I was so stuck on their problems, that I would forget to focus on my own. So my mom would always tell me the

Please see **VIOLET WALTERS**, Page L11



Anthony Williams

High School: Skyview High School

What are your plans after high school?

I will be attending Blackburn college in Carlinville, IL

What is your favorite classes in school and why?

I really enjoy US. government because of the real life application and all around information. Also, the passion my teacher, Mr. Polkow, has makes class very interesting and engaging.

Who inspires you and why?

My grandfather is one of my biggest inspirations. He is patient and kind and has taught me endless life lessons. From how to fix things, to tricks of hunting and fishing as well has how to be an upstanding man.

What are some things you enjoy outside of school?

I mainly enjoy playing baseball. I currently play for the Royals and the new Skyview High baseball team. I also enjoy goose hunting and fishing, spending time with my family and if there's still a little spare time I like to play a little Xbox.

What would make you feel successful in your career/work after school?

I would feel most successful in my career if it is something that is fulfilling and makes me happy. Of course, making enough money to pay the bills is important too.

If you win the \$5,000 grant, how will you use the money to help you reach your goals?

I would use the grant money to help cover the expenses and tuition of college. As well as pay for travel. I come from a family with six children so any help I can get is greatly appreciated.

Do you have a personal motto or inspirational

saying that motivates you that you would like to share?

"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble". James 4:6

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

I would bring a satellite phone so I could call for help. And some food and water to keep me full while I wait for my rescue.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

I would choose a hamburger with lettuce, cheese, bacon, tomato, pickles, ketchup and a side of fries.

Any other information you would like to share?

I would like to share that keeping God at the center of my crazy schedule of school and athletics has been very crucial to being successful.

CONTINUED

Dawson Harms

access to clean drinking water. The hunting knife would be multipurpose in the way that you could use the reflective surface of the knife to try to flag down passing boats and you could lash it to a stick and use it for spearfishing to help gather food. The magnesium striker would help cook food and could be used to start a signal fire. and the desalination tool would give you access to clean water on demand.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

Between pizza and hamburgers I would easily decide on hamburgers. My toppings of choice would include barbecue sauce, onions, and American cheese. Although alternatively I might opt for lettuce, ketchup, mustard, and American cheese.

LouAnn Peters

shelter, and protecting ourselves. It would also help in collecting wood to start a fire with. I would bring my friend Reese because I think we have great teamwork skills that would help us survive. Together, we could pool our knowledge, support each other through challenges, and make the experience more bearable.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

My pizza would be a barbecue Hawaiian pizza. I chose a barbecue Hawaiian pizza because I couldn't decide between a Hawaiian pizza and a barbecue chicken pizza.

Any other information about yourself that you would like to share?

While in high school I have participated in many extracurriculars. These include varsity volleyball, varsity basketball, president of Student Council, president of Business Professionals of America, class president and national honor society all while maintaining a 3.8 GPA.

Violet Walters

only person that you can save at the end of the day is yourself. I can help my friends and I can give them advice. I can be the best friend that I know I can be, but I need to surround myself with good people who are going to help me rather than drag me down. You are the only person who is going to get yourself where you really want to be.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could only bring three things, what three things would you bring and why?

1. A tent, to keep myself out of potentially harsh weather conditions. It also provides a place to sleep and be comfortable.
2. A machete, not just for my personal protection, but also to use for materials and potential food.
3. A cast-iron pan. They only get better with use and they are basically impossible to break.

If you had to choose between hamburgers or pizza, which would you choose and what would be on it?

Hamburgers. I would put on two slices of colby jack cheese, fried onion straws, lettuce, extra-crispy bacon, and fry sauce.

Any other information about yourself that you would like to share?

I maintain excellent grades and a 4.0 GPA. I also have been working since I was 14, and I now work 40 hours or more a week. I am responsible for the majority of my financial needs and necessities. Aside from the not so exciting stuff, I love to just laugh and make other people around me feel good. I love talking to people and being social. I love reaching out in the community and helping in any way that I can.

CONGRATS SENIORS



VALLEY CREDIT UNION IS THRILLED TO CELEBRATE OUR 15 FEATURED VALLEYDICTORIAN STUDENTS AND \$5,000 GRANT RECIPIENT AS THEY START THEIR NEXT CHAPTER OF LIFE.

Valley Credit Union congratulates our featured seniors on all their achievements and successes that have brought them to where they are today. With lots of drive and motivation, these students show so much potential in their respective career paths following graduation. Graduates, thank you for sharing your many ambitions with us and for letting us showcase your inspiring futures throughout the year. We look forward to seeing all of the great things you will accomplish. Congratulations Class of 2025!



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NOMINATED SENIORS

Jessica Althoff

Tayvin Boeckel

Marissa Coulter

Dawson Harms

Tristin Kaufman

Alexandra Kottre

Russell Lang

Trey Meredith

LouAnn Peters

Riley Peterson

Craig Prangley

Madison Sattler

Aidon Songstad

Violet Walters

Anthony Williams

\$5,000 GRANT RECIPIENT

Violet Walters



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