

 Salute to VALEDICTORIAN
CANDIDATES &
PLATINUM STUDENTS



CLASS OF

2020



BILLINGS GAZETTE
COMMUNICATIONS

Billings
Partners in Education

EDUCATION
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PARTNERS SALUTE 2020

The Education Foundation and Billings Gazette Communications are proud to honor businesses that support education in our community, and local students who are Valedictorian Candidates and Platinum Students.

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Access Salute to Valedictorians 2020 at www.billingsgazette.com/specialsections

What is Partners in Education?

Partners in Education is a community-wide partnership between schools, businesses, and community members dedicated to ensuring the success of all K-12 students and schools in the Billings area. Partners in Education is a program of the Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools.

What is the goal of Partners in Education?

The goal of Partners in Education is to build mutually benefiting partnerships between schools and businesses that result in school improvement, teaching excellence, student achievement, and appreciation of common community goals.

What kinds of partnerships are there?

There are many ways that organizations and businesses can participate in a partnership with the schools in Billings. Each partnership is unique, depending upon the capacity of the business and the needs of the school. Example activities include:

- Tutoring or mentoring students.
- Providing incentives for students and faculty.
- Speaking at a Career Day or other classroom event.
- Donating in-kind services, materials, or equipment.
- Volunteering as contest judges, field trip chaperones, or pen pals.

What are the benefits of a partnership?

Many schools get additional support through the partnerships such as tutors, mentors, and extracurricular activities for students. Students also get the chance to meet adult mentors in the community and learn about career choices. Likewise, many employees enjoy the opportunity to do something positive for the community and to be given time by their employer to do so.

How do I start a partnership at my school or business?

To learn more about starting a partnership at your school or business, please contact the Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools at 406.281.5149 or foundation@billingssschools.org.

Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools

The Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools believes that all students in Billings Public Schools deserve a rigorous, well-rounded education to prepare them for successful careers. To that end, the Education Foundation has worked diligently since 1988 to enhance the educational opportunities available to students in the district.

The mission of the Education Foundation is to promote excellence in education by providing opportunities and resources to Billings public school students. The Foundation works in cooperation with

the public school system, but operates independently. Through endowments, scholarships, grants, and specific projects, the Foundation provides opportunities and resources for students and educators in Billings Public Schools to promote excellence in education. Major activities include: Classroom Grants, Partners in Education, Reading Rocks, Saturday Live, Special Projects, Backpack Meals and Teen Pantry and scholarships for students and teachers.

To support and learn more about the Education Foundation, visit our website at www.efbbs.org.

Thank you to our sponsors!



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Shyanne Reum Charlo High School	Anastasia Hayes Lavina High School	

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Northern Hotel and Career Center culinary program cooking up student success



The Northern Hotel and Career Center culinary program.

The Northern Hotel has partnered with Billings Public Schools over the past years creating work-based learning experiences for the Career Center's Culinary students at Bernie's and Ten.

This spring marked an exciting transition for the partnership as one student in the Career Center's Culinary program entered into an agreement to continue his education and career as a culinary apprentice with The Northern Hotel. A "signing day" was held to celebrate the student's accomplishment.

Nicole Biondich, Northern Hotel Human Resource Director, is also involved in the partnership and assists Chef Bill Jensen, Career Center culinary educator, in preparing students for opportu-

nities such as the new apprenticeship program, resume writing, professionalism, and what type of skills students need to secure employment at The Northern.

The Northern has an open-door, come-learn-with-us approach to the partnership. Students tour the facility and meet with staff to see first-hand the skills and level of professionalism needed to seek and secure employment in the industry. More importantly, this partnership continues to evolve to meet industry needs and prepare students for future careers by exploring the options to develop special events for student involvement.

"This association with such a qual-

ity facility is vital for me as a teacher to further tailor my curriculum to meet industry standards. What an advantage for me to have Mr. Mike Nelson and his entire staff as advisory members for my program, not to mention their awesome facility. The Northern's partnership is vital in being an educational liaison between my program, my students and the industry," shared Chef Bill Jensen.





PARTNERS IN ACTION

Neighborhood partnership flourishes between Billings Clinic and McKinley Elementary

The partnership between Billings Clinic and their neighborhood school, McKinley Elementary, has been going strong for over 20 years. The Billings Clinic McKinley Task Force meets with McKinley principal Nikki Trahan and counselor Caitlin Hraban on a monthly basis. Representatives from diverse departments in Billings Clinic, such as sports medicine, community relations, human resources and IT, comprise the Billings Clinic team that connects monthly with McKinley Elementary. Billings Clinic provides in-kind and monetary support to the school and students throughout the school year.

Some of the various things Billings Clinic provides are McKinley branded water bottles and T-shirts for each student, soccer nets and playground equipment, as well as multiplication stickers to go on the many stairwells in the school so students can practice math facts on their way to and from the gym, library, classroom, and so on. Each holiday season Billings Clinic hosts Santa's Workshop which includes hot cocoa and a toy for each child, along with a visit from Santa. The student gifts are completely funded by Billings Clinic employee contributions. A unique project completed by Billings Clinic is the Triple T (Time Together Tonight) program which is where different departments in Billings Clinic donate ingredients for families in need to make meals together on the weekends.

In addition, Billings Clinic is there to provide donations



for extra hats, gloves, clothing and personal needs that may arise for a student. Educational presentations from nurses on health risks of tobacco use, hand-washing and other topics are an on-going component of the partnership. Each year students involved in the McKinley Elementary Amazing Shake program interview and practice their soft skills through a competition coordinated in conjunction with McKinley Elementary and Billings Clinic leadership. "Billings Clinic employees have enjoyed our partnership with our neighborhood school so much that we look forward to many more years. We encourage other organizations and companies to help their local school as a Partner in Education," shared Gwen Gatzemeier, Community Relations Specialist and Coordinator of the McKinley School Task Force.



PARTNERS IN ACTION



ST. VINCENT HEALTHCARE partners with schools across our community

St. Vincent Healthcare provides many opportunities across our school district in a variety of ways. For the past four years, St. Vincent Healthcare has provided funding and volunteer support for the Kids in Motion partnership. The focus of Kids in Motion is to provide free bike repair to students performed by trained bike mechanics so kids can get their bikes operational to ride to school, with family and friends, and to build healthy lifestyles. Furthering the focus on active lifestyles, St. Vincent Healthcare provides tennis shoes to students at no cost through the Kohl's Cares Grant so students can participate in school running clubs and other active lifestyle opportunities.

St. Vincent Healthcare has been an active partner and supporter of mental health initiatives in the district including supporting a project at Medicine Crow Middle School this fall to train educators and add support to becoming a Trauma-Informed School, as well as providing educator scholarships for teachers to attend a national conference this August in Billings with leaders in trauma-informed school-based practices. As a longtime partner with Broadwater Elementary School, St. Vincent Healthcare provides volunteers to assist in the classrooms, as well as guest speakers on health topics. Recently, St. Vincent Healthcare

volunteers have been essential in helping the school build a trauma kit and developing procedures if an incident ever arose where it would be needed.

A unique program to St. Vincent Healthcare for years has been the Foster Grandparent program. St. Vincent Healthcare is the host provider for our regional Foster Grandparent that sees 40 foster grandparents volunteering on a daily basis in classrooms across our community and region. "Students will not always remember the lessons taught in childhood, but they will remember the people, they will remember them and emulate them, good or bad. This is why it is important to have Foster Grandparents in the school, to provide another positive adult that we want our children to connect with and imitate, not just in their childhood, but in their adult life as well," shared Justin Huck, Broadwater Elementary Principal.

In addition, St. Vincent Healthcare has been a key strategic partner in supporting the growth of medical pathways at the Career Center through financial, in-kind, and volunteer donations. This support has allowed the development of a simulated operating room and patient rooms for lab experiences for students within the high school setting, as well as opportunities for hands-on learning and mentorship at St. Vincent's Hospital.





PARTNERS IN ACTION



PayneWest Insurance volunteers support academics at Big Sky Elementary

Each partnership is unique between our schools and businesses, but the impact made on students is always focused and beneficial.

This is the first school year for a partnership between PayneWest Insurance and Big Sky Elementary. The connection between PayneWest volunteers and students is tremendous.

Currently, 22 PayneWest employees actively volunteer at Big Sky Elementary committing to volunteering two hours a month supporting reading, math, writing, and other academic skills.

“Our experience with PayneWest has been outstanding and is the true definition of Partners in Education. Our students have benefited from the additional time and resources dedicated by volunteers. More importantly, they have established positive relationships with adults from our community. All of our volunteers are seen as part of our Big Sky Family. We are so appreciative and look forward to continuing this valuable partnership for years to come,” said Colby Fitzgerald, Big Sky Elementary Principal.





Snapshots of other partnerships

Advanced Care Hospital of Montana, Legacy Healthcare and St. John's United provide CNA nursing instructors to support the CNA program and opportunities for students to earn their CNA certification while in high school during the regular school day, thus increasing employment pathways in the medical field.

Altana Federal Credit Union provides weekly tutors to students at Boulder. They held a back-to-school supply drive and helped sponsor the House Team coats. Altana hosts the Amazing Shake students in their office and will be a guest reader on their Facebook page. The Altana ice cream van made visits to the school for the Back to School BBQ and the School Carnival.

Big Sky EMS supports the EMT program at the Career Center through donations and discounts for their fall conference registration for all students. They also donate time, equipment, and expertise to the national registry testing of students.

Billings Job Service is a key partner in supporting student career awareness, preparation and readiness at the Billings Career Center. An employee of Billings Job Service has established office hours within the Career Center building to provide career guidance in job searches, resume writing, and interview preparation.

City of Billings Fire Department hosts Career Center EMT students each spring for their 10 required observation hours as part of their EMT training.

Cushing Terrell volunteers spend time with students at Newman Elementary on a regular basis. The volunteers target reading, math and science to support students. Also, Cushing Terrell supports Newman Elementary families in need through holiday food baskets and they provide

holiday cheer each year with Santa and the Cushing Terrell elves making a stop by the school. In the spring, Cushing Terrell hosts a Career Day for the fifth graders to spark interest in careers before heading off to middle school. The day consists of tours and hands-on activities at various locations including the Career Center, Cushing Terrell office and, another partner in education, Altana Federal Credit Union.

ExxonMobil employees serve as mentors for a new STEM Club at Will James Middle School and provide leadership for projects. At Christmastime, an ExxonMobil employee "Santa Claus" spent a morning at Bench Elementary school giving books to each student at the school.

Famous Dave's partners with Beartooth Elementary to provide the Famous Kids lunch each month. This lunch celebration recognizes students' efforts towards improving behavioral skills as well as academic success. Students create cards for veterans who eat free at Famous Dave's, then student leaders hand-deliver those cards on Veteran's Day each year to thank and show appreciation to the brave men and women who serve our country.

First Interstate Bank Downtown employees served teachers breakfast on Teacher Appreciation Day and root beer floats to students on Field Day at Highland Elementary. In addition, they volunteer on a weekly basis in classrooms as well as present Teach Children to Save each year in grades K-3.

Kamgrounds of America supports Ponderosa Elementary every fall by hosting the school's booth at Saturday Live. Also, KOA is a huge part of the school's Amazing Shake program where students take part in mock interviews for actual

positions within the KOA organization.

Mission Ridge assists Arrowhead Elementary kindergarten students with letter recognition and beginning reading skills each week. Each year first grade classrooms join residents at Mission Ridge for the 100th day of school and conduct interviews with the residents about their life and childhood.

Montana State University Billings Baseball Program team members served as pen pals to students at McKinley Elementary this school year.

St. Vincent Healthcare provides funding to assist families with purchasing low-cost bike helmets across Billings Public Schools and is a key partner in the Kids in Motion program, which focuses on providing bike repairs for youth for free.

STEM Yellowstone is a collaboration of business, industry, healthcare, technology, nonprofit and education professionals. The grassroots entity is made up of people who love STEM outreach and they collaborate on regular "STEM Saturday" events so that kids in grades 2-8 throughout Yellowstone County can get hands-on STEM experiences.

Valley Credit Union employees volunteer at many events to support needs at Miles Avenue Elementary including Saturday Live, the Annual Art Walk, and the school carnival. Valley Credit Union also supplies raffle baskets for the carnival and bike helmets to students in need.

Wise Wonders Children's Museum is working with the Billings Career Center's Engineering program to develop new exhibits for youth who visit the interactive STEAM museum. Students in Mr. David Tolton's class are designing and building projects that allow students to explore such topics as electricity.



LIST OF PARTNERS

Partners in Education:

- Altana Federal Credit Union and Boulder Elementary
- Ahslar Lodge and Burlington Elementary
- Avantara – Legacy Healthcare and Central Heights Elementary
- Bella Terra – Legacy Healthcare and Rose Park Elementary
- Billings Clinic and McKinley Elementary
- CLDI and Orchard Elementary
- Cushing Terrell and Newman Elementary
- Denny Menholt Chevrolet and Billings Public Schools
- EBMS and Big Sky Elementary
- ExxonMobil and Bench Elementary and Billings Public Schools
- Famous Dave's and Beartooth and Boulder Elementary
- Farmers Insurance and Sandstone Elementary
- First Interstate Bank Downtown and Highland Elementary
- First Interstate Bank Heights and Bitterroot Elementary
- First Interstate Bank Shiloh and Big Sky Elementary
- First Interstate Bank West and Washington Elementary
- Holland Hart LLC and Broadwater Elementary
- HDR and Central Heights Elementary
- KOA and Ponderosa Elementary
- KTVQ-2 and Billings Public Schools
- Montana Jack's and Boulder Elementary
- PayneWest Insurance and Big Sky Elementary
- Phillips 66 and Orchard Elementary
- Rimrock Mall and Meadowlark Elementary
- RiverStone Health and Orchard Elementary and Riverside Middle School
- Rocky Mountain College and Rose Park and Boulder Elementary
- Roger L. Daniel Insurance and Meadowlark and Poly Drive Elementary
- St. John's Lutheran Ministries/Mission Ridge and Arrowhead Elementary
- St. Vincent Healthcare and Broadwater Elementary
- St. Vincent Healthcare Foster Grandparent Program and Billings Public Schools
- United Way and Billings Public Schools
- Valley Credit Union and Miles Avenue Elementary
- Wendy's of Montana and Washington Elementary
- Wyndstone and Eagle Cliffs Elementary
- YMCA and McKinley Elementary

Thank you to Career Center Industry Partners in Education:

- 360 Office Solutions
- A&E Architects
- A-1 Machining and Fabrication
- Advanced Care Hospital
- A-Line Drafting & Design
- Archie Cochrane Ford
- ASI Industrial
- Berkshire Hathaway Home Services- Floberg Real Estate - Myles Egan
- Beyond the Box Cabinets
- Big Sky EDA
- Billings Clinic
- Billings Clinic Nutrition
- Billings Construction Supply
- Billings Fire/ EMS
- Billings Studio Theatre
- BillingsWorks
- Bonini Construction
- Brewer Dental
- Hannesson Home
- Carpet One
- CAT
- Comfort Heating
- Cushing Terrell
- Denny Menholt Motors
- ExxonMobil
- Ferguson Kitchen, Bath and Lighting
- First Interstate Bank
- Home Builders Association
- Jamie and Dirk Moler
- JMG
- Job Service/iGraduate
- Kenco
- Legacy Healthcare
- Lithia Toyota
- Lowe's
- Mark Rite Lines
- Montana Registered Apprenticeships
- Napa Auto Parts
- NASA HUNCH
- Northwest Farm Credit Services
- One Source Lighting
- Phillips 66
- Pierce Flooring
- Pizza Ranch
- Precision Highway Contractors
- Rimrock Mall
- Saint Vincent Healthcare
- Sign Pro
- Sodexo
- St John's Lutheran Ministries
- Stahly Engineering & Associates
- Staleys
- Stockman Bank
- Swanky Roots
- Taylor Electric
- The Northern Hotel
- The Paint Center
- TruNorth Steel
- Underriner Motors
- Usborne Books & More
- Wise Wonders
- WMK
- Youth Entrepreneur

BNSF RAILWAY EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD



The Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools, in partnership with BNSF Railway, is proud to announce the winners of the BNSF Railway Excellence in Education Award for 2020. The Excellence in Education program recognizes teachers striving to make a positive impact on the education of Bill-

ings Public Schools students. Middle and high school students across the district nominated 265 teachers as Distinguished Educators. All of these outstanding educators were invited to apply for the Excellence in Education Award. From the 30 applications received, two teachers were selected by a panel of

local business and education leaders. As Excellence in Education Award winners, these two teachers will each receive a \$2,500 award to use toward continuing education or classroom projects. This is the third year BNSF Railway has recognized teachers in Billings Public Schools with this award.



Katie Meier - Billings Career Center

Katie Meier is guided by the mission of her alma mater, Gonzaga University, to focus on “educating the people the world needs most.” To Meier this means a lot of things but most importantly preparing well-rounded and flexible students who can think critically and apply themselves for the ever-changing job market and preparing them for jobs that may not even exist today. In addition to being the Medical Careers and EMT instructor at the Billings Career Center, Meier is the lead adviser for the citywide HOSA-Future Health Care Professionals organization and serves on various state and community boards to connect her students

to mentorship and on-the-job experiences. To match her educational philosophy, Meier will be using the BNSF Railway award to purchase a 3D printer and supplies to help build and design Personal Protective Equipment. This gives her students an innovative way to connect to real-world problems and find solutions. Students can also use the 3D printing capabilities to print 3D anatomical models and bring anatomy and physiology lessons to life. Beyond her classroom, HOSA student members lead educational outreach opportunities in elementary schools and can use the printed materials to engage younger students in the medical profession.



Annie Rice - Lewis and Clark Middle School

Annie Rice is at the “heart” of her school as the Lewis and Clark Middle School librarian. Rice knows the Lewis and Clark Middle School library is an essential stopping place for students and staff seeking academic support, emotional rest and recovery, and socialization and information. On any given day, Rice strives to ensure each student, whether meeting with her in a classroom setting or with tears because they have lost a library book, receives the utmost respect and professionalism.

As libraries have evolved to become a place of instruction and high-level classroom collaboration, the needs for interactive technology have changed. Rice will be using the BNSF Railway funds to purchase a wireless, interactive flat-screen TV on wheels that can be used in any area of the library with small and large groups of students. This purchase will impact more than 800 students, 80 staff members, and the entire school community at Lewis and Clark Middle School.



DISTINGUISHED EDUCATORS 2020

BNSF DISTINGUISHED EDUCATORS 2020

The following educators were nominated by Billings Public Schools middle and high school students for the outstanding impact they have made on their education:

- Jenna Allie
- Jason Amundsen
- Joshua Anderson
- Brandon Anton
- Melissa Ash
- Ryan Asleson
- Joe Astle
- Linda Auch
- Rebecca Avery
- Bryce Baker
- Beth Bakken
- Stacey Barker
- Judy Barnes
- Amy Barron
- Molly Barta
- Robert Barthule
- Daniel Bartsch
- Craig Beals
- Tiffany Bell
- Lacy Benkley
- Reagan Bennett
- J-Nell Bermes
- Todd Bertsch
- Jennifer Biersdorf
- Sally Bishop
- Michelle Blakely
- Kami Bodine
- Noah Bourn
- Corrie Bowman
- Doug Brakke
- Lindsey Buehler
- Ashley Burns
- Jonathan Bushey
- Staci Byrd
- Jamie Campbell
- Wendy Carlin
- Kourtney Carter
- Donald Casey
- Deisree Caskey
- Jennifer Charlton
- Randy Chase
- Jesse Chipman
- Alina Chirrick
- Roxi Cobb
- Kelly Cook
- Robin Cormier
- Tyler Crofutt
- Casey Crowe
- Kristopher Cummings
- Marissa Cunningham
- Erin Curnow
- Maggie Daly
- Julie Dannenberg
- Kelly Darragh
- Katie Davey
- Darci Davis
- Julie Dawkins
- Nicole DelCamp
- Kelly Deming
- Annie Douglas
- Kelly Duneman
- Vickie Eagle
- James Easton
- Rebecca Egan
- Justin Engle
- Tammy Erlenbusch
- Jodi Ervin
- Aliece Estrada
- Matthew Feeley
- Jennifer Fleek Airne
- Curtis Fox
- Karen Fox
- Melissa Fox
- Linda Frey
- Kimberley Gelfarth
- Teal Gibson
- Darci Giffin
- Brianna Gleason
- John Goodheart
- Alissa Gray
- Kaylee Greeley
- David Green
- Kristi Green
- Shirley Greene
- Lyndi Groshans
- Gail Grossman
- Bryan Grummett
- Ramona Gullet
- Lura Hale
- Torey Hammer
- Zoie Hanley
- Alysha Hanson
- Mitchell Harmon
- Lisa Harrell
- Lisa Hatlestad
- Charine Hague
- Drew Haws
- Tom Heckathorn
- Jessica Heier
- Jennifer Henderson
- Ryan Hennessy
- Jeremy Hernandez
- Kristin Hersel
- Elizabeth Hoefle
- Katelyn Hulsebus
- Jennifer Huppert
- RaeAnn Huskey
- Cameron Icenoggle
- Debby Jangula
- Jamie Jarvis
- Nels Jensen
- Elizabeth Johnson
- Michaela Johnson
- Shaun Jones
- Hunter Jones
- Sean Joyce
- Kristin Kailey
- Mark Kane
- Joshua Keller
- Patrick Kenney
- Karson Kidgell
- Danielle Kieckbusch
- Linda Kimmet
- Tanya Kirschman
- Anica Knispel
- Christina Knotte
- Cassi Kutzler
- Steve Landerdahl
- Kimberly Lane
- Dean Lapke
- Kelly Latham
- Amy Leffler
- Tegan Leffler
- Jeffrey Long
- Valeria Long
- Sarah Lord
- Jenny Lueck
- Stephen Macartney
- Derrick MacAskill
- Clint Mainwaring
- Shea Mangold
- Heather Manske
- Karen Marcotte
- Ross Marquis
- Dustin Martin
- Denise Maurer
- Emily McClure
- Lawrence McMullen
- Juli McNeil
- Amber McQuillian
- Katie Meier
- Kaliope Miller
- Colleen Model
- Erin Mohr
- Jennifer Moller
- Shannon Moore
- Christine Morales
- Sharon Morgan
- Theresa Mountains
- Jeanne Mumford
- Chris Murdock
- Jacob Music
- Jason Nafts
- Melanie Nafts
- Ryan Nafts
- Shanna Nason
- Margaret Nation
- William Neuman
- Brett Nichols
- Courtney Niemeyer
- Steve Nieto
- Jim Noble
- Natasha Norby
- Jana O'Donnell
- Kerra Olson
- Bridgett Paddock
- Angela Paris
- Megan Parish
- Tiffany Parish
- Maribel Parman
- Jodee Patrick
- Paula Pederson
- Celeste Peel
- Jacob Pertuit
- Jennifer Peter
- Debra Peterson
- Amy Pfeifle
- Keenan Pfeifle
- Chelsi Podall
- Bobbi Poser
- Kim Potter
- Jill Powers
- Michael Qualls
- Hannah Rader
- Molly Reas
- Nicole Redmond
- Aimee Reinhardt
- Joel Reitz
- Adam Restad
- Annie Rice
- Crystal Rickett
- Tony Riehl
- Kasidy Rispens
- Becki Risser
- Zach Robbins
- Aaron Roberts
- Sherlene Robison-O'Dea
- Tiffany Rodriguez
- Rachel Romei
- Nikki Salazar
- Leah Samuelson
- Kayla Sanchez
- Jill Sanders
- Martha Sandoval
- Angela Schanz-Roe
- Kristi Schell
- Kristina Scheppele
- Julie Schopp
- Lisa Shulund
- Teri Schulze
- Jessica Sery
- Jennifer Sharkey
- Sandra Shawhan
- Connor Silliker
- Joan Sleeth
- Sarah Spangle
- Tamara Spillum
- Robert Stanton
- Vanessa Stavish
- Nathan Steier
- April Stetler
- Barbara Stevenson
- Kari Stroble
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- Michael Thomas
- Craig Thompson
- Amy Thompson
- Tracey Tounsley
- TJ Umemoto
- Deanne VanZee
- Patricia Venner
- Kyle Vierthalar
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- Laura Walker
- Sarah Walter
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- Janelle Wilson
- Julie Winkler
- Nikki Wohler
- Karry Woodard
- Rafael Zepeda
- Angel Zickefoose
- Alyssa Ziegler
- Katie Zuck

PARTNERS IN ACTION



STEM is a commitment to our future workforce

Whenever conversations in Yellowstone County venture toward real-world STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) experiences, oftentimes an ExxonMobil employee is in the mix.

That's because engineers, machinists and other professionals at the ExxonMobil Billings refinery are fully involved in STEM outreach and activities in various venues. Through active collaboration, ExxonMobil brings likeminded STEM enthusiasts together to build capacity for students who are thirsty for more hands-on activities that are relevant to future workforce opportunities.

Partnering with other businesses, industry representatives, education professionals and nonprofits, ExxonMobil has developed and stewarded STEM Yellowstone, a unique program to engage kids in a hands-on and relevant fashion. Since 2015, that STEM project has provided influential events for more than 2,000 kids with nearly 100 volunteers from around the county.

Subject areas have included health, medicine, coding, computer science, technology, energy, engineering and environmental science. For us, it's not only fun, but it's a workforce development issue.

STEM Yellowstone partners have embraced the notion that work-based learning is in the eyes — and hands — of the beholder. Together, we know that passion can be found any time, any place ... and yes, even outside of school hours.

Students are encouraged to be fearless while business/industry partners are urged to be bold in a new integrated approach to learning and training. The real-world application of math, chemistry, physics, engineering, and computer science has a major impact on feeding local workforce needs.



ExxonMobil

Energy lives here™

Whether it involves connecting high school students to shadowing an engineer or enabling a fourth-grader to better understand biological and chemical processes, a commitment to STEM outreach is aimed to:

- Foster STEM ecosystems that unite all stakeholders across the community to drive talent toward good paying STEM jobs.

- Erase artificial boundaries between “traditional” career/tech education and between formal and informal STEM education in terms of impact assessment, credentialing and professional development to better align education with employer needs.

- Increase diversity and inclusivity in STEM fields (women, minorities, persons with disabilities and in rural areas).





SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATES & PLATINUM STUDENTS



Jana Graham Photography

Carly DeBar

Parents: Michael DeBar and Gregory Peck
Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Big Sky Elementary
Future Plans: I do not know which institution I plan to attend, but I want to go into a pre-medicine program and eventually become a forensic pathologist.
Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: AP chemistry has challenged me and taught me to dive into the science and really understand the full extent of what goes on in our universe. It will be rewarding in my future because it will help me understand how reactions within and outside of the body work.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I have always been a competitive person, so the Platinum Program allowed me to take all of the hardest classes and push myself to be the best version of myself as possible, and I have made many friends through these classes. I also wanted to be able to create a future for myself through my academics, and this program allowed me to do so.

Magnum Opus: I donated isolette covers to the NICU, and these isolette covers go home with the children who use them, so my project will have a lasting impact.

Teacher: Ms. Converse, my fifth-grade teacher,

taught me how to strive to know more about everything I did. She let me do projects on my own time where I got to research a topic of my choice, and it helped me grow my love for learning. I am so thankful for her.

Extracurricular Activities: I participated in soccer for all of my academic career, and it has helped me make some lifelong friends. I have also been in band since I was in fifth grade. Band has enabled me to have a release through music. I have also participated in many volunteer programs, like Reading Rocks and volunteering at St. Vincent Healthcare.



Brystons Studios

Mackenzie Sell

Parents: Corey and Traci Sell
Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary
Future Plans: I will attend a college that is still to be determined. After undergraduate school, I will attend dental school and then orthodontic school. Eventually, I would like to own my own orthodontic or oral surgery practice.
Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: Last year I took AP Physics, and although the content was difficult, it ended up being my favorite

course of my high school career. I enjoyed the challenge.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I always planned to take the most rigorous classes available during high school, and I wanted to do an extra project to strengthen my applications.

Magnum Opus: I started a nonprofit company, Sensory Smiles. Sensory Smiles assembles kits containing sensory tools, which I deliver to health care professionals in the community. These kits are intended to help children with

special needs feel more relaxed in high-stress situations.

Teacher: I have had so many wonderful teachers who have shaped me into the individual I am today, therefore, I am not able to pick just one. A few of the most influential teachers I have had include Ms. Wardrip, Mrs. Fleek Airne, Mr. Umemoto, Mr. Haws, and Mrs. Stockton.

Extracurricular Activities: I am the senior class president, a senior advocate, a member of National Honors Society, and HOSA.

PLATINUM STUDENTS



Alsa Photography

Jesse Dimich-Louvet

Parents: Thierry Louvet and Nancy Dimich
Middle School: École Jeannine Manuel (Paris)
Elementary School: Highland Elementary
Future Plans: I will be studying media and communications as well as sports management and will run cross country for Temple University.
Teacher: Mr. Gage, my senior year AP government teacher, has cultivated my new-found passion for politics. When I first entered his class I did not consider myself a fan of politics but

through our fascinating conversations about the Democratic primary race, I have become more and more interested and hope to one day be president of the United States.

Motivation for Platinum Program: Coming from a rigorous international school in France, I wanted to continue challenging myself with the belief that if you surround yourself with the best, you will eventually become part of that group. My brother Max was a valedictorian and

my sister took only honors and AP classes as well. They inspired me.

Magnum Opus: I wanted to use the power of sports to unite the community of Billings to walk or run around Daylis Stadium to raise funds and awareness for homeless high school students in School District 2. This transpired into Laps 4 Life. When I see people still wearing the bracelets from the race, I know it has gotten my peers to think about the problem.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



PLATINUM STUDENTS



Lily Frye

Parents: Bret and Star Frye

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Washington Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend Eastern Washington to study biotechnology.

Teacher: Mrs. Tiezen, my first- and third-

grade teacher, was the first teacher that made me believe I was smart.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I thought that it would be fun to participate in my community. I also had planned on taking all honors classes already, so the community

work didn't seem like that much more of a burden.

Magnum Opus: It's the foster care system in Yellowstone County. I wanted to particularly look at what happened to our foster population when they age out of the system.



Amanda Guilland

Parents: Linda Guilland

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary

Future Plans: I am attending Montana State University in Bozeman. I am not sure what I want to study yet, but I believe I will be pursuing a STEM degree.

Teacher: Mrs. Reitz was my sixth grade teacher at Poly Drive Elementary in 2013 and I still keep in contact with her. Mrs. Reitz is one of the kindest

people that I have ever met. She is also one of the most caring teachers that I have ever had. She is so full of love and hope and she has taught me so much. I hope to be like her when I grow up.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I have always challenged myself in school, so I did not hesitate to sign up for the Platinum Program when I first learned about it. When I started high school, I had already decided to take all Honors and AP classes because I had taken all

possible Honors classes in middle school, so it just felt natural to me.

Magnum Opus: I am "making" vinyl records. I use silicone rubber to make a mold of a record and then I can use resin or liquid plastic to remake it, allowing me to make records with cool colors or decorations. My mom inspired my project because she has a record collection from when she was younger and I have always thought it was awesome.

Laurie Houde



Cameron Leo

Parents: Mike and Elizabeth Leo

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend University of Portland to study engineering and business.

Teacher: Mr. Bartsch because he makes the classroom fun, interactive, and is constantly making jokes.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I took all AP classes because that's what all my friends

were doing, so naturally I did a project around something I cared about to complete the program.

Magnum Opus: Working to bring a bike share program to Billings.



SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

PLATINUM STUDENTS



Jadyn Malone

Parent: Tara Cook

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Broadwater Elementary, Highland Elementary

Future Plans: I will be studying mechanical engineering and physics at Montana State University. I also plan on spending a sig-

nificant amount of time in South Korea and learning Korean.

Teacher: Mrs. Fleek Airne has been my English teacher for two years of high school. She has helped me refine my writing skills in the classroom, but outside of school she has helped me immensely from just cheering me on to suggestions for my Platinum Project.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I have always had large dreams and been very competitive. This program gave me an outlet for both of these and encouraged me to achieve academic success.

Magnum Opus: I focused my project on deep touch pressure stimulation and how it affects the brain.



Emma Martinsen

Parents: Samuel and Georgie Martinsen

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Saipan Community School, Highland Elementary

Future Plans: Eventually I want to become a lawyer, but as of right now I will most likely go to a military prep school and then

to the U.S. Naval Academy.

Teacher: Mrs. Pfeifle is not only an excellent teacher but you can tell that she cares about her students and she's willing to help them.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I have always wanted to challenge myself academ-

ically, and this pushed me to continue to do that.

Magnum Opus: My topic is dealing with Agent Orange, a chemical that was used in the Vietnam War. My dad was stationed on Okinawa after the war and most likely came in contact with it and was affected by it.

Clark Marten



Virginia Montague

Parents: Chris Montague and Paige Darden Montague

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Highland Elementary

Future Plans: I am choosing between Middlebury College and the Honors College at the University of Georgia. My plan is to major in environmental studies and sustainability with a minor in biology.

Teacher: Craig Beals was my junior year chem-

istry teacher and is my AP chemistry teacher. He has been one of the most encouraging and supportive teachers I have ever had, always convincing me that I can do it. He helped me find my love of science through his "change-the-world" themed science project, which then led to a lab internship.

Motivation for Platinum Program: Motivation for my participation in the Platinum Program came from students before me. My fam-

ily has close friends whose kids participated in the Platinum Program and found it extremely rewarding. I had looked up to these kids and wanted to be like them in high school and doing the Platinum Program would be a way for me to positively indulge myself.

Magnum Opus: I learned the art of apiculture. I became an urban beekeeper and maintained two beehives in my backyard throughout my junior and senior year.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



PLATINUM STUDENTS



Drake Pannell

Parents: John and Stacie Pannell
Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Broadwater Elementary School
Future Plans: I plan to attend Montana State University where I would like to start taking classes in both computer science and music technology majors.

Teacher: Mr. Lindell's Algebra 1 class at Lewis and Clark Middle School, if I had to name one class I learned the most in. He was an outstanding teacher and made concepts easy to understand. He also had consistent methods of teaching, which I consider to be the most important characteristic of a teacher.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I

wanted to complete a project that had nothing to do with my schoolwork while I was in high school and I figured that the Platinum Program would give me a little more incentive than I would otherwise have.
Magnum Opus: Creating a website for the local nonprofit pregnancy clinic LaVie Billings, as a first foray into the world of freelance web development.



Jaelynn Roesler

Parents: Jason and Davilyn Roesler
Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Boulder Elementary
Future Plans: Attend Montana State University to study biological engineering.
Teacher: Mrs. Nason, when I was in sixth grade, made a great impact. I thought she

was the coolest person in the world. She was a super fun teacher who made learning both memorable and enjoyable. She was super kind and I was never afraid to ask her questions.
Motivation for Platinum Program: It seemed like an exciting challenge that I wanted to try.

Magnum Opus: My topic was putting the Femme in STEM. My goal was to show young girls that women can be scientists too. To do this, I went to Wright, Wyoming, and taught a classroom of girls about famous female scientists and did a few hands-on experiments with them to get them excited about STEM.



Quinn Sanderson

Parents: Michael and Sara Sanderson
Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School
Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary
Future Plans: I will be attending Montana State University in the fall and plan on studying economics and English.
Teacher: My English/student council adviser, Mrs. Fleek Airne, has made the greatest

impact on my education. She has always pushed me to do the best in whatever I am doing, both in English and as Student Body Secretary, along with teaching me how to bounce back from the challenges that I face.
Motivation for Platinum Program: I like to push myself in my classes, but also because I was determined to finish my project. I had

a desire to do my project before entering the Platinum Program and this program has helped to provide structure for that ambition.
Magnum Opus: I worked on understanding the writing process, along with learning about creative ideation and outlining, which lead to me writing a full rough draft of a novel.

Red Willow Photography



SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

PLATINUM STUDENTS



Emily Tschetter

Parents: Marc and Melissa Tschetter

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Boulder Elementary

Future Plans: I will be attending University of Montana and majoring in journalism with a pre-law focus.

Teacher: My history teacher in eighth grade, Mr. Jensen, was a great positive influence in my

relatively tumultuous middle school years. He made the classroom environment a safe space for nerds like me, plus he was a wonderful musical inspiration due to his incredible drumming skills.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I am somewhat mathematically challenged, so I knew I probably would not be in the running for

valedictorian, but I wanted to participate in a program that would be similar proof of my academic rigor and reflect on the growth I experienced during high school.

Magnum Opus: I created a playable, quality cello from a white body with my cello teacher that I can use for the rest of my life in my musical studies.



Laura Zimmer

Parents: Tom and Erin Zimmer

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, California, to major in economics with a sequence in data science while running track.

Teacher: Amy Pfeifle because she is dedicated to not only teaching students to excel in mathematics, but in any subject. She has taught me how to work hard while helping me rediscover my love for math.

Motivation for Platinum Program: When both my older brothers did not complete it, I

knew I had to.

Magnum Opus: I created a pen pal system between the AP Spanish 4 classes at Senior High and high school students in Madrid, Spain. From there, I compiled data to show foreign language teaches the effectiveness pen pals have on improving students writing in a fun and engaging way.

Miranda Murdock Photography

VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATES



Madisynn Weber

Parents: Jerry and Holly Weber

Middle School: Eileen Johnson Middle School (Lockwood)

Elementary School: Tensleep Elementary, Basin Elementary

Future Plans: I plan on attending Montana State University to study biology and ecology: Conservation sciences with a primary focus in biochemistry and then later transferring to a different college once I am sure of what I want to do career-wise.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: For me, the most challenging class I have taken was AP chemistry because there is so much information that you are expected to learn over the course of a single year. The most difficult aspect of this class was definitely just knowing when to apply certain equations. However, I have always been passionate about chemistry.

Teacher: The one teacher I have always been able to rely on was my freshman and sophomore English teacher, Mrs. Bradley. Through

my four years of high school, Mrs. Bradley has been my definition of a "school mom," who not only acts as a teacher, but also as a counselor and a friend. If there is one teacher that I would run to for advice, it would be her.

Extracurricular Activities: Teen Council, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Montana, volleyball, track, National Honors Society, Senior Advocates, German Club, volunteering at the Audubon Center, Books and Movies Club, STEM Society, and Science Fair.

Tracy Grice

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATES



Simonne Clay

Parents: Chris and Bryn Clay

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend Montana State University and earn a degree in biochemistry with a minor in genetics. While there I will participate in research and go on to graduate school before becoming a research geneticist. I hope to have lots of adventures along the way.

Most challenging or rewarding class: My most challenging and rewarding class has been AP chemistry. While the material takes time and hard work to learn, you can do amazing things with it, such as calculate the number of molecules in a substance or turn a penny gold.

Teacher: Mrs. Beatty, my sixth grade teacher at Poly Drive Elementary, made a positive impact in my education because of her commit-

ment to her students and engaging teaching style. Mrs. Beatty's compassion and support made me enjoy school and want to succeed.

Extracurricular activities: I participate in HOSA Future Health Professionals at Billings Career Center, where I also serve as president of Montana State HOSA. I am an Executive Council member for Senior High STEM Society, an avid equestrian, and a bookworm.



Parker Kraske

Parents: Greg and Ilja Kraske

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Highland Elementary, Ralph Witters Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend Montana State University pursuing a career in chemical engineering in order to better the state that I live in and utilize the resources of our beautiful state to make it even better.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: My

AP chemistry class this year is most certainly both very challenging and very rewarding. Knowledge from this class is helping to propel me into my future career and what I want to do as a high school graduate. Despite its difficulty however, I have great support from my teacher Mr. Beals, who does an exceptional job like so many of my other teachers.

Teacher: Many teachers have helped me to become smarter and better educated. How-

ever, my first grade teacher, Sonja Holm of Thermopolis, Wyoming, taught me the most important lesson of all, to be kind. No other teacher since has needed to instill the value of kindness in me due to her wonderful teaching.

Extracurricular Activities: Tennis, STEM club, academic team, speech and debate, student government, Montana Boys' State, National Honors Society.

Clark Marten Photography



Andrew Bough

Parents: Jason and Laura Bough

Middle School: Lewis & Clark Middle School

Elementary School: Poly Drive Elementary

Future Plans: I will attend Rice University to pursue a degree in chemical engineering with a minor in computer science.

Most challenging or rewarding class: My calculus BC class I am taking this year has been both my most challenging and rewarding class

since it is an independent study. It is a difficult class in itself, but having to motivate myself to learn it well and take the time has been a struggle to say the least. Overall, it's taught me some great skills to keep pushing forward in life.

Teacher: Keely Staub from Castle Rock Middle School is easily the greatest teacher I ever had. When I first walked into that classroom in sixth grade, I knew I was in for something special.

She was a great teacher and coach, but more importantly an amazing friend. I am so grateful for being able to know such a wonderful teacher and person.

Extracurricular Activities: Tennis, Senior STEM Society, Academic Team, Boy Scouts earning my Eagle Scout and moving into the local Venture Crew, Senior Advocates and National Honor Society.

Clark Marten Photography



SKYVIEW HIGH SCHOOL

VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATES & PLATINUM STUDENTS



Jackson Ladd

Parents: Matt and Maureen Ladd

Middle School: Castle Rock Middle School

Elementary School: Alkali Creek Elementary

Future Plans: Mechanical engineering at MSU Bozeman and then serve four years in the Air Force after graduating from the ROTC program. After that, I hope to work somewhere where I can be an innovator.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: Chemistry with Mr. Michels. His teaching

methods challenge his students, but are very memorable and ensure that students know all of the content of the class. Although not an AP class, the chemistry he taught I will surely use in college.

Motivation for Platinum Program: It sounded like a great way to express myself and my interests through a project that utilizes the skills and content a rigorous honors curriculum develops.

Magnum Opus: I built an electric guitar be-

cause of my interest and background in music. When I was a little kid, I thought being a guitar player was the coolest thing ever, so this project would force me to actually learn how to play.

Teacher: Mr. Joyce has made the greatest positive impact on my education through his calculus class.

Extracurricular Activities: Soccer, tennis, Academic Team, Jazz Band, BPA, and Student Council.



Olivia DeBoer

Parents: Laurence DeBoer and Lisa Malody

Middle school: Castle Rock Middle School

Elementary school: Independent Elementary

Future Plans: I'm not quite sure where I'm going to go to college yet, just that I'm going out of state. I'm going ambitious first so I can narrow down later and am planning on a double major in biology and chemistry with a minor in Spanish.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: AP

world history was a little bit of a shock to me. Before that point I had never taken a class entirely designed to a test so it took a little time to get used to; however, I was able to leave the class having passed the AP exam.

Motivation for Platinum Program: It was an opportunity to showcase some nonacademic interests of mine which I consider to be very important.

Magnum Opus: A history of tap dance.

Teacher: While I have only vague memories of elementary school, I do remember quite clearly my fourth grade teacher Mrs. Vossler. Discussions of science and Bill Nye were perpetually around in that room, which really helped spark an interest in the sciences for me.

Extracurricular Activities: Key Club, Science Bowl, Academic Team, Business Professionals of America, Dance, National Honor Society, volunteering at St. Vincent Healthcare, and music.

Ric Zimmerman

PLATINUM STUDENTS



Amanda King

Parents: Lance and Nancy King

Middle School: Castle Rock Middle School

Elementary School: Bench Elementary, Eagle Cliffs Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend MSUB to study Health and Human Performance as well as continue my golf career as a member of the Yellow-jacket Team. My goal is to continue my education to become a Physical Therapist.

Teacher: Mrs. Westrope, my kindergarten and first grade teacher, taught me at the beginning of my education and has remained a constant supporter throughout the rest. While many of my teachers suggested to take the easier route through high school, she has encouraged me to push my limits as much as possible.

Motivation for Platinum Program: Being enrolled in all Honors/AP classes, the Platinum

Program gave me extra motivation to excel in school. Once I began my project, I thoroughly enjoyed what I was doing and it gave me something to look forward to at the end of my senior year.

Magnum Opus: Reduce single use plastic straws in restaurants and businesses around my community. This topic is very important to me and I have enjoyed bringing awareness to others.

Nancy King

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATE



Bradley Irwin

Parents: Jim and Jill Irwin

Middle School: Old Turnpike School (Tewksbury, New Jersey), St. Francis Middle School

Elementary School: West Texas Elementary School (Sinnott, Texas)

Future Plans: I plan to study music education and clarinet performance at Colorado State University, University of Montana, Northwestern University, or Vanderbilt University. My ultimate goal for my career is to conduct a major symphony orchestra.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: The most rewarding class I have taken is dual credit comparative government. It has provided me with an extensive knowledge of other countries' governmental systems. Through this class, I now have a deeper understanding of the current issues affecting the United States and many other countries.

Teacher: Codie Wahrman, my band director, has had an incredible influence on my life. He was the person who first inspired me to pursue a degree in music and has helped me through many auditions.

He has also provided many opportunities for me to participate in ensembles at school, in the community, and nationally.

Extracurricular Activities: I participate in the Billings Youth Orchestra, the Billings Community Band, the Tri-County Honor Band, the school musical, concert and pep bands, and Model United Nations. I accompanied my school choir on the piano earning an outstanding accompanist award at a competition in Denver. I was also the principal clarinetist in the All-State Orchestra.



VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATES & PLATINUM STUDENTS

WEST HIGH SCHOOL



Ashton Berg

Parents: Ross Berg and Colleen Henriksen

Middle School: Elder Grove Middle School

Elementary School: Elder Grove Elementary School

Future Plans: After high school, I plan to pursue a degree in psychology with the hopes of continuing on to medical school to become a psychiatrist. While I have not yet decided where I will be attending, I am looking forward to all of the great opportunities I have in front of me.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: AP calculus is definitely a challenge, as you are delving into topics you have never learned (or

even heard of before). Even though it is difficult, it is also the most rewarding when something finally just clicks.

Motivation for Platinum Program: The part of the Platinum Program that drew me in was the chance to extend my learning beyond the classroom. The help of mentors also allowed me to actualize one of the goals I had been dreaming of for years.

Magnum Opus: For my project, I developed a business plan for a nonprofit. This included website design, product planning, and organizing shipping details. The nonprofit is called

Knots of Pride, and all of the proceeds are dedicated to helping LGBTQ+ homeless youth find the resources they need.

Teacher: Madame Schuman was my French teacher for three years, but beyond that, she has been one of my biggest motivators and supporters in my pursuit of higher education. French Club meetings in her classroom after school never failed to lift my spirits.

Extracurricular Activities: French Club, Business Professionals of America, Youth Leadership Billings, Forward Montana Internship, part-time job, and National Honor Society.

Red Willow Photography



Hunter Lucas

Parents: Matthew and Maureen Lucas

Middle School: Will James Middle School

Elementary School: Arrowhead Elementary

Future Plans: I hope to attend college and play lacrosse as I explore my varied interests.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: Honors Chemistry my sophomore year was the most challenging. I had never before really had to study

for tests and so I had a rude awakening when I received my first few grades. I had to take my studying and classwork seriously for the very first time and I enjoyed the challenge.

Motivation for Platinum Program: The challenge of taking as many rigorous courses as possible and keeping me focused on my education.

Magnum Opus: A research project into the stock

market and the numerous factors that effect it.

Teacher: I had the wonderful opportunity to take all of Mr. Duff Gray's programming classes and enjoyed his hands-on approach to learning that lead to a better understanding of the material.

Extracurricular Activities: Lacrosse, golf, snowboarding, drone racing, volunteer at Billings Clinic, BPA, Academic team, and Chess Club.

Clark Marten Photography



WEST HIGH SCHOOL

PLATINUM STUDENTS



Lily Lieuallen

Parents: Ross and Jennifer Lieuallen

Middle School: Will James Middle School

Elementary School: N/A

Future Plans: I plan to attend Rocky Mountain College, majoring in chemistry with a possible minor in music.

Teacher: Mr. Edward was my junior year English teacher and he was my favorite because he is so genuine. He made everyone

feel valued and listened to, a quality lost to some teachers. He made his class a safe place and it was always a comfort and a good time to be in his class. I will not forget it.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I always like to push myself and this seemed like the perfect opportunity. I was planning already on taking all honors/AP classes, why not be in a little program thing and do a project?

Magnum Opus: I have always had a heart for music; it was always a part of me. However, I had never been trained classically in music. I took the opportunity given to me by the Platinum Program and I taught myself how to play the piano, focusing more on the playing than hardcore music theory. I learned the notes and symbols from my mother's old music books.



Miles Hobart

Parents: John and Barbara Hobart

Middle School: Will James Middle School, Fruita School

Elementary School: Holy Family Fruita, Wheatridge Elementary

Future Plans: I've already signed up for the Navy to (if things go according to plan) be a nuclear engineer, and after that I either will

go to college or if offered, go into the space program.

Teacher: Jon Bushey, who initially sparked my interest in geology and was instrumental in helping plan out my platinum project.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I was taking accelerated classes already and I thought that one more thing to do couldn't do

me any harm.

Magnum Opus: It is a study about cobbles that I sampled from the Yellowstone River bank where I do chemical analysis with the cooperation of Stanley Mertzman at Franklin Marshall College and thin sections using a petrographic microscope (which are currently incomplete due to global pandemic).



Caden Moore

Parents: Mike and Gina Moore

Middle School: Will James Middle School

Elementary School: Arrowhead Elementary

Future Plans: I will be attending MIT in the fall and studying aeronautical engineering in the aerospace program. I would love to work for NASA or Lockheed Martin.

Teacher: I am fortunate to have had so many amazing teachers, but one really stands out — Duff Gray, my programming

teacher. Mr. Gray and I share excitement for all things mechanical and computer related. It is very easy to talk with him and receive insight into various topics.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I was motivated to be in the Platinum Program in order to challenge myself academically and intellectually. I had decided to take all of the honors courses possible at West and thought it would be great to join

the Platinum Program. It gave me the opportunity to work on a project that I am interested in.

Magnum Opus: The progression of the work I have done on the reconstruction of a 1956 Cessna 180 Skywagon and its complete restoration and recertification from start to finish. My project is largely inspired by my love of aviation. When completed, I cannot wait to fly it down the runway.

Monica Forsberg



PLATINUM STUDENTS



Tyler Vannatta

Parents: Jeremy and Haley Vannatta

Middle School: Elysian Middle School

Elementary School: Meadowlark Elementary School

Future Plans: I will be attending either the United States Air Force Academy or the University of Colorado Boulder.

Teacher: Charlene Ingram was my middle school math teacher and helped me stay on an accelerated track even when my school tried to keep me in a traditional class that was below my level of capability.

Motivation for Platinum Program: The Platinum Program sets me apart from kids

who just get good grades, as someone who is involved in their community and wants to make it better.

Magnum Opus: The reputation I've made for myself in just a few short years in a time where youth often have to be their own trailblazers for being seen as fully capable adults.



Lindsey Weber

Parents: Donald and Carol Weber

Middle School: Canyon Creek Middle School

Elementary School: Elysian Elementary, Canyon Creek Elementary

Future Plans: I plan to attend Rocky Mountain College following my senior year. As of right now I am hoping to enroll in the 3+3 program where I will study for three years as a political science major then transition to do three years at University of Montana Law program. As for

the type of law, I am considering either civil justice or immigration law.

Teacher: My teacher Mr. Stanton has had the most positive impact for me. I took his genocide class completely oblivious to what it was. In this class we learn about genocides in the past and present and why they happen. We learned about injustices happening all over. Mr. Stanton and this class helped me realize what the world is about and how I can help.

Motivation for Platinum Program: I chose my project based on problems I saw firsthand and kids leaving high school without any personal finance knowledge. What motivated me was knowing that I can help others to be prepared for the real world, especially those who do not have anyone to show them the way.

Magnum Opus: My Magnum Opus was exploring the means for personal finance to be a required class for juniors or seniors.

VALEDICTORIAN CANDIDATE



Tessa Paulsen

Parents: Scott and Sarah Paulsen

Middle School: Will James Middle School

Elementary School: Central Heights Elementary

Future Plans: I am attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, this the fall and plan to major in chemical engineering, although we'll see how that works out when I actually start classes.

Most Challenging or Rewarding Class: It's a tie between AP physics and honors chemistry. Both challenged the way I learned and processed new information and taught me that while being naturally smart helps, it really comes down to how hard you work and how much effort you are willing to put into a class.

Teacher: Although all of my teachers have impacted my education, I think the one that

takes the prize was my junior year English teacher, Mr. Edward. He helped me to focus my previously vague writing and allowed me to understand the way I write and how to take that way and apply it to basic essay writing with minimal stress.

Extracurricular Activities: Piano, cross-country, voice, Science Bowl and Science Olympiad, and my church youth group.

Ashley Williams



PARTNERS IN ACTION

Phillips 66 and Orchard Elementary

Phillips 66 and Orchard Elementary have been Partners in Education for over 15 years, and each year the partnership continues to grow and evolve. Since 2013, Phillips 66 has provided volunteers dedicated to specific classrooms. Each volunteer is paired with a teacher for the school year and spends approximately one hour each week assisting with things like one-on-one reading, math assignments, etc.

The benefit of this program extends beyond helping a child learning their multiplication tables; it also gives them a positive adult role model that cares enough to come back week after week. The volunteers get a lot out of the program as well. The volunteer time is a nice break from the day to go and spend some time with people that are really excited to see you. As an added bonus, Phillips 66 donates \$1,000 to the school for every 40 hours volunteered. To date, this has equated to \$22,000 in donations.

The Women's Network at Phillips 66 has sponsored an annual STEM day at Orchard every fall since 2016. Two classrooms are selected each year by the principal, based on attendance. Each classroom is visited by members of the Women's Network to work on a fun STEM activity such as building mini robots, learning how a refinery works through the use of candy, making slime, and more. The winning classrooms are then allowed to tour a refinery fire truck and try on bunker gear used by first responders. STEM day is a great way to motivate kids to attend school and keep them excited about STEM activities.

The New Hire Network has sponsored an annual reading day at Orchard each spring since 2016. Two classrooms are selected each year by the principal, based on attendance, and each winning classroom is visited by members of the New Hire Network. The kids in each classroom are gifted with an age-appropriate book and the volunteers spend time reading with the students. The volunteers love seeing how excited the kids are to read a book of their very own!

For the first time at the end of the



2018/2019 school year, the Women's Network sponsored a STEM club at Orchard. The club was after school once a week for four weeks and was open to fourth and fifth grade students. Each week the students were provided an after-school snack and a fun STEM activity. Students were also given a STEM club t-shirt. The activities included building a bridge out of popsicle sticks and then testing the strength by spanning two chairs and adding weights. The team that built the strongest bridge

won candy bars. The second challenge was completing an egg drop challenge. Each team had to build protection around a raw egg using miscellaneous materials such as cotton balls, plastic sacks, straws, etc and then the egg was dropped from the top of a ladder. Other challenges include building a tower out of straws that had to meet a minimum height requirement and had to hold a tennis ball for a given amount of time without breaking, and constructing a cork launcher out of popsicle sticks and

rubber bands, and then testing to see who could launch the cork the furthest.

For the last three years, Phillips 66 has provided judges for the fourth and fifth grade science fair. Judges listen to the students present their projects and complete score sheets. This gives each student a chance to practice their public speaking skills in a small, friendly environment, plus a chance to show off their hard work. The volunteers love seeing the creativity behind some of the experiments.

SALUTE TO EDUCATION

Congratulations

to all
VALEDICTORIAN
candidates,
PLATINUM
students
and **2020**
GRADUATES!



BILLINGS GAZETTE
COMMUNICATIONS



FEARLESSLY READY

CREATE COLLABORATE

QUESTION INVESTIGATE

WONDER

INNOVATE

The experts of anything all started as curious beginners.
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