

Banning High School commencement starts new chapter for Class of 2014




Photo for the Record Gazette by Tim Hilliard

BHS Graduation

Banning High School Class of 2014 celebrate.



Senior Class President Joselyn Garcia and ASB President Savanna Alcantar

 **Banning High School Graduation 2014**

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Posted on Jun 6, 2014 by **David James Heiss**



Forty percent of Banning High School's Class of 2014 is headed to four-year colleges and universities.

Nearly 200 graduates received diplomas in the May 29 commencement ceremony at the school's football stadium.

"Maybe it hasn't hit you yet, but, after this moment, it will all be over: you may never cross paths with the majority of your classmates again," declared salutatorian Emeizni Mandagi, who heads to UCLA in the fall to study English. "High school, once a huge part of what your life revolved around, will be reduced to a mere memory. Everything in life is temporary — even your memories. Yet, that's what makes a memory so unique ... These memories that we made together for these past few years molded us into the people we are today, and I truly hope that you don't forget them."

Her friend, another senior who graduated among Banning's Top 10 students, Hernan Lopez, heads to California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, to study quantum physics and mechanical engineering.

Privately, he credits physics teacher Mark Kline for introducing him to the world of engineering.

Kline was also Lopez's adviser in the Solar Boat and Jet Propulsion Laboratories (JPL) Invention Challenge competitions (May 17 and 18).

"His dedication to his students outside the classroom was amazing," Lopez said. "His passion clicked with me. Without him, I would've been oblivious to engineering."

Senior Janet Baker was saddened to have to say good-bye to so many classmates that she had grown up with.

"I'll miss my relationships with everyone," said Baker, who will study statistics at California State University, San Bernardino. "Some of them have been the same people I've been with

since kindergarten.” She singled out her best friend, Nyisee Thompson, as someone she will miss in particular.

Daijah Gilchrist, who participated in varsity basketball and color guard, will study sports management at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana. She offered a message to her closest friends: “Follow your dreams, and don’t let anything overcome them.”

Isaiah Stokes heads to the College of the Desert to study accounting.

“I’ll miss mostly my friends, and teachers like Mr. (Alex) Kwon, who pushed us to work harder and develop good study habits.”

T.J. Steck is looking forward to joining the Marines.

“I’ll miss all my friends that I see every day, but I won’t miss getting up early — even though eventually I’ll have to. I’ll miss teachers, like Mr. Kwon, who pushed me to get my grades up and graduate.”

ASB Senior Class Vice President Idalia Orozco, a member of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program who will be the first in her family to attend college, will attend California State University, San Marcos to study sociology or criminal justice.

“I’m going to miss all my teachers and friends,” she said, and singled out AVID teacher Nathan Valdivia, “who helped me out a lot, and was always there.”

Paoho (Jason) Moua, a dual enrollment student, wore a colorful pink and green Hmong sash, decorated in French coins, made by his mother. He will attend California State University, San Bernardino, to study biology.

“I’ll miss a lot of my friends, since we won’t get to see them anymore,” he said. “I won’t miss high school homework though.”

Moua credited physics teacher Mark Kline, math teacher Allison Roberts, and English teacher James Waedekin for inspiring him the most during high school.

Ashley Castillo, an alumni of the high school’s Academy of Business and Technology, will study psychology at California State University, San Bernardino. “I’m going to miss the relationships that we experienced here, and my friends and teachers — especially my video production teacher, Mr. (John) Mendolia, and English teacher, Ms. (Kellie) James. Both of them supported me throughout high school, and have always been there for me.”

Tony Porter, a National Honor Society member who participated in Mount San Jacinto Junior College dual enrollment classes concurrently while attending Banning High School, heads to California State University, Long Beach to study business.

Porter picked Long Beach because “It was a good fit for me, and it’s a school that’s close, but not too close, and it has a good business program.”

Ana Cortez, a member of the Academy of Business and Technology, graduated with a California Seal of Biliteracy, and will join the ranks of thousands looking for a job right out of high school.

“I’ve only been here a couple of months, but I thought the people were nice,” she said.

David Gregg also will hit the streets searching for a job this summer.

“It was a really good experience here. The students and teachers were courteous,” Gregg said. “I will pretty much miss everyone.”

Autumn Alloway, will join the Job Corps.

“I won’t miss having responsibility” that can only come with high school, she said. “But I’ll miss Mr. (Scott) Young,” her art teacher. “He understood my troubles and gave me extra time to do things in class.”

Esteban Garcia-Camacho, an AVID student, will join the Marine Corps after attending Mt. San Jacinto College to increase his starting rank in the military.

“I will miss my friends here,” he said. “They say that friends are a dime a dozen, but the ones you make here, are for life.”

