

Youth Initiative High School

Kaleidoscope

Good-Bye and Godspeed!

Like punctuation in the paragraphs of our relationships, good-bye is a word we use almost everyday. We say goodbye to our children, our spouses, our friends, the clerk at the grocery store, or even the stranger we run into on the street. But the experience of saying goodbye can run the spectrum between benignly indifferent and agonizingly emotional. The meaning of the word goodbye is flavored by who it is we are saying goodbye to and when we expect to say hello again.

Every spring at Youth Initiative High School we say goodbye; and it isn't one of those goodbyes that you throw around as a conversational pleasantry. We say goodbye to young human beings that we have watched grow into adults, that we have come to know academically and personally, and that we have come to love each individually. We know that our students will come into our lives again, and in our hearts they will never fully leave. But we also know that when they go a part of them, a part of our relationship with them, will be gone forever. They will enter into a world of adulthood, a threshold crossed only one time and in only one direction. All we can do now is trust. Trust ourselves, that we have done what we could to point them down a path of righteousness, and above all trust them to do what is good for themselves and for the world around them.



“The reward of a thing well done is to have done it.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Beau Grams



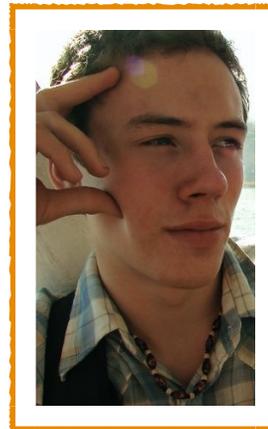
Already an accomplished salesman, stock trader, and entrepreneur, Beau will be attending St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota where he will study business and political science and spend his summer days working as a lifeguard on the secluded and beautiful St. John's beach.



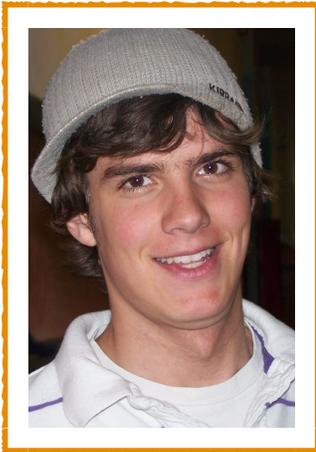
After summer forays into the urban landscapes of Germany and the rural backwaters of Eastern China, Ben will matriculate at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design where he will pursue a career in Graphic Design.

Ben Caldwell

Henry Hundt



Henry plans to attend Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa. Henry plans to study secondary education - a first step on a path that could lead him right back to YIHS - on the other side of the desk.



After a yearlong trip to Mexico as an environmental ambassador and as a part of the 2009 YIHS annual trip to Guatemala, Eamon has become a master of the Spanish language and spent part of his senior year studying Spanish at the UW-LaCrosse campus. Eamon will attend the Naropa University in

Boulder,
Colorado.

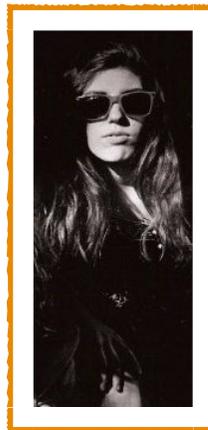
Eamon Karlstad

Nick Gilgenbach



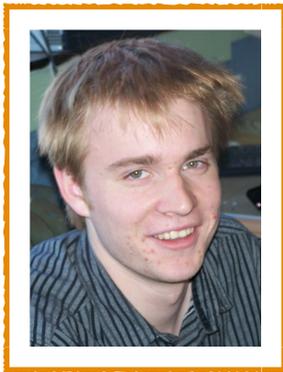
As a part of an independent college tour during his junior year Nick happened upon a small liberal arts college in Memphis, Tennessee. Nick will be attending Rhodes College in the fall and though he is not sure what he will study he is sure he will follow his intellectual curiosity wherever it leads.

Lauren Frentz



A Californian import, Lauren plans to return to her native territory to earn money in preparation for an exploration of the European continent. After her year of travel Lauren intends to matriculate at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California.

Patrick Kouba



Patrick plans to take a gap year in 2010 focusing on travel both domestic and international. After hitting the road for a year Patrick plans to attend Columbia College of Media and Communication Arts in Chicago where he intends to turn his passion for graphic design into a career.

Ashontae's immediate plans include travel to Italy. After a trip to the lands of the ancient Romans Ashontae intends to parlay her adventures into the fulfillment of a lifetime passion by participating in a series of international internships working with horses.



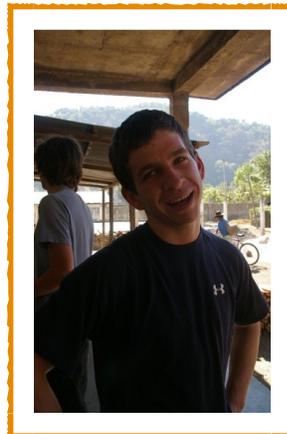
Ashontae Lantro

Eva is planning on taking a year off from academics. After earning money in California Eva plans to travel to India, attending an ashram and then touring India through a series of humanitarian projects. After this adventure Eva plans to attend college at the University of California - Santa Cruz.

Eva Pollard



After a very successful high school career, both academically and athletically, Caleb plans to attend Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina where he will study exercise science and physical therapy, and try-out as a walk-on for the Guilford Quakers baseball squad.

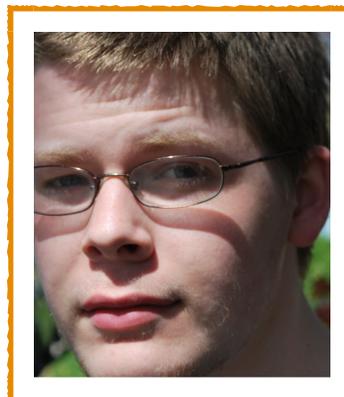


Caleb Whited-Ford

Jamie intends to take a gap year and spend it traveling to exotic locations around the globe including New Zealand, Hawaii, and Mexico. She also plans to return to YIHS to assist Señora Caspars-Agar teach Spanish language.



Ian Martin



After an ambitious senior year filled with Advanced Placement courses and tests including Calculus, English, History, and more, Ian will attend the University of Iowa in Iowa City, and hopes to eventually transfer to Cambridge University in the United Kingdom.

Jamie Lewicki

The Celebration

The Celebration

In the utilitarian and sometimes brusque society in which we live, ritual is often underappreciated or downright scorned as so much superficial pomp. However, after the fresh experience of another Youth Initiative High School graduation ceremony, we can attest to the fact that these rituals are indeed important as the succinctly materialized representations of evolutionary change in the young human being. Being with someone everyday it is nearly impossible to perceive change in the individual. Change, particularly change that is not physical, usually comes in tiny, almost imperceptible increments. The graduation ceremony gathers its power from its depiction of all those tiny incremental changes in one palpable event.

Graduation

The Youth Initiative High School's annual graduation ceremony took place, once again, at the beautiful farm of Ben and Julee Agar. A cool breeze rolled across the sun-drenched ridgetop and an air of joyful solemnity permeated the event. Loved ones sat in white chairs in neat rows beneath the tent or beneath the spring sun on the grassy knoll facing the festivities. Announced by the master of ceremonies, Shawn Lavoie, our graduates rode in style from a secret location atop a tractor-pulled hay wagon. Heads encompassed with the traditional wreath of spring ephemerals, the proud and beaming class of 2009 prepared to receive their diplomas and enter the



“Create for yourself a new, indomitable perception of faithfulness. What is usually called faithfulness passes so quickly. Let this be your faithfulness. You will experience moments.... fleeting moments.... with the other person. The human being will appear to you then as if filled, irradiated with the archetype of his spirit. And then there may be... indeed will be... other moments, long periods of time, when human beings are darkened. But you will learn to say to yourself at such times: "The Spirit makes me strong. I remember the archetype. I saw it once. No illusion, no deception shall rob me of it. Always struggle for the image that you saw. This struggle is faithfulness. Striving thus for faithfulness, we shall be close to one another, as if endowed with the protective powers of angels.”

-Rudolf Steiner

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2009

adult world. The ceremony commenced with a beautiful rendition of Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah* sung by the entire student body. This was followed by the keynote speech given by

Matthew Voz who was chosen by the senior class to address the group. Mr. Voz's speech focused on the sometimes difficult but always productive relationship between teacher and pupils, inspired by the Aristotelian maxim that "the roots of education are bitter but the fruit is sweet".

The commencement speech was followed by the theme of gratitude. As we said goodbye to our graduates we also said goodbye to many of their parents. Several of our families graduated their youngest child and so we did not just bid farewell to our graduates but also to siblings and parents and friends. The parent community at YIHS is responsible for so much more than just paying tuition; they volunteer their time, talent, and passion to make this school run, to make this school not just a school but a second family. Parents were asked to stand to be recognized and given a rose by faculty and staff members as a small token of the school's appreciation for all that they have done.

No parent has done more for the school since its very first day than Dawn Hundt whose contributions to the school are highlighted later in this issue. She was presented a tiny couch as a symbol of her advocacy for the students of this school for 13 formative years.

Then perhaps the most important speeches took place, those of the students themselves. Student speeches are always the most entertaining, most enlightening, and most satisfying part of the graduation. This is when the students are able to show their stuff, to reflect on their four years at the school, how they've changed and how they've stayed the same. This year was no exception. Student speeches ran the spectrum from the hilarious to the poignant to the proud, all of them tinged with the bittersweetness of simultaneously saying goodbye and welcoming a boundless future.

Finally the diplomas were presented to each student and the ceremony came to a close with a moment of silence, just as the dozens of student meetings these students had participated in over their four years at the school. The celebration was capped off by a delicious potluck dinner provided by the junior parents. Laughter, conversation, and warm embraces ensued as YIHS said goodbye to another senior class.



Eva shares a moment with her proud father



Eva and Eamon take in one last speech from their teacher, Mr. Voz



Jamie and Caleb share a quiet moment of reflection during the ceremony

Hannah Murray-King



After joining this graduating class in her senior year of high school, Hannah quickly became a fixture in the school culture. An extremely talented artist Hannah plans to work over the summer and then move to Chicago to attend the American Academy of Art.



Eva Pitsch

After receiving the Annual Youth Initiative High School Masonic Scholarship for her excellent record of academic and community achievement, Eva plans to pursue her love of the arts and humanities at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa.

Taking a Bow:

Closing the Year with a production of Cyrano de Bergerac

The Youth Initiative spring play is a wildly rich tradition, and this year's play, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, brought it to a whole new level. Technically challenging and poetically rich, *Cyrano* called for a large cast, sword fighting, and tremendous ensemble focus. Under the direction of Jane Lofton Kouba, the technical direction of Matt Shortridge, and the costume design of Micaela O'Herlihy, the students told this tragic-comical tale exquisitely.

Cyrano de Bergerac tells the familiar story of unrequited love with wonderfully humorous twists. Cyrano is a man with "panache", and a notably pronounced nose. He is a fiery poet who is quick to fight those who make fun of his "deformity" and to recite love poems for Roxanna with whom he is deeply enamored. Christian, a beautiful and verbally incapable soldier in Cyrano's troupe, is also in love with Roxanna. Through letters and whispers Cyrano feeds Christian the words to woo her. And until his death, Cyrano keeps the secret of his love from Roxanna.

The technical design of the show was awe-inspiring. The players performed on a dynamically raked thrust-stage, which was backed by two towers, one of which was lined with a corrugated sheet metal balcony. The backdrop was a series of windows which seconded as a shadow screen used throughout the play to show action off-stage. The lighting was created with limited equipment brought to life by an inspiring lighting design created collaboratively with the student technical team.

The overall design theme, that students and teachers co-created through pizza-party design meetings, was "steam punk". What Micaela described as "futuristic Prince-like junk." The costumes were sharply styled, giving each of the characters a distinct edge: a touch gritty, a touch glam.

Jane led the spring drama art class and was joined by Matt for the two week end-of-the-year intensive. All together 32 students were involved with the production. "This cast was a delight to work with. They have my respect and admiration for their diligence, creativity and problem solving skills. Plus, they did learn all those lines!" said Jane at the end of the thrilling and inspiring play process.



A Special Thank You

The End of An Era

This year we say goodbye to Henry Hundt, one of fourteen beloved seniors in the 2009 graduating class. Among many other notable distinctions, Henry also has the distinction of being the youngest child in the Hundt family. The Hundts have been involved with the Youth Initiative High School since its establishment in 1996. The Hundts were one of the founding families of YIHS and instrumental in its initial inspiration and organization. Their eldest son, Jacob was a member of the first graduating class of 1999 and is now the Faculty Chair and Program Director at YIHS.

Since 1996, four members of the Hundt family (Jacob, Julia, Silas, and Henry) have graduated from this school and in those intervening years Dawn Hundt has been a fixture of this institution. For 13 years Dawn has given her wealth, her time, and her love to dozens of students, faculty, and fellow parents. Dawn has been a member or chairperson of every committee at YIHS, except facilities. She has been a motivating force for such projects as the kitchen renovation, the Waveland mission, Gays Mills flood relief, numerous theme weeks, Garlic Mustard eradication efforts and too many more to list. Dawn has been a member of countless Care Groups sharing her compassion and wisdom with struggling students, and sharing in their hardships and successes. She has opened her home to faculty, students, and anyone who needs a loving, supportive place to lay their head. She has given more than this school could ever repay, but Dawn knows what Ralph Waldo Emerson knew: that "the reward of a thing well done is to have done it." So, from every student who has walked the hall of this school, from every teacher who has held a classroom, from every volunteer who has worked in our name toward a noble end; thank you, Dawn, thank you.



One of the many projects coordinated and led by Dawn Hundt was the restoration of the stained glass window in St. Joseph's steeple. Like all Dawn's work this project was characterized by passion, talent, and teamwork; fittingly it also became the logo of our school.

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This year marks the end of the long and dedicated tenure of the chair of our Math department and our Personnel

Missing Maureen

Committee, Maureen O'Connor. Maureen has been a fixture of the school, instrumental in the hiring and review of teachers, a well loved teacher of math and the 10th grade Probability and Statistics Main Lesson Block, and a Core Faculty member for many years. Maureen looks forward to travel and spending time with her other family. The YIHS family will sorely miss her.

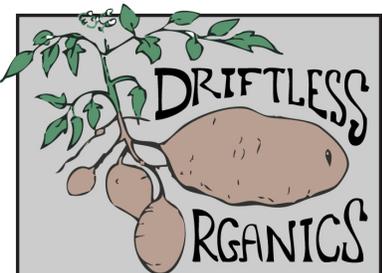


Dear YIHS Community,

This year marks the first year of a very important and adventurous step in the growth of the Youth Initiative High School. As the school has matured as an institution it has formalized its policy, democratized its leadership structure, and continued to empower students and parents as active participants in their own education. Youth Initiative High School has also made a priority of hiring dedicated, qualified teachers and dedicating time and money to developing those teachers. For the first time ever YIHS had three full time salaried teachers on its staff; Jacob Hundt, and new additions Shawn Lavoie and Matthew Voz. The consistent presence in the school of these teachers, along with Administrator Liz Cox, has bolstered and professionalized the faculty culture at the school. As part of our dedication to offering the highest quality and most comprehensive education to our students it is part of the faculty's mission to continue our education as teachers. To this end we are sending three members of our staff (Liz Cox, Jacob Hundt, & Shawn Lavoie) to anthroposophical training programs and seminars across the country this summer. We need your help to fund this important faculty development. Please consider making a tax deductible donation to the Youth Initiative High School. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Matthew J. Voz
Asst. Development Director

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