

RHS alumni offer advice for college-bound graduates

Sanaa Griggs
Staff Reporter

Many students are stressing out about the idea of going to college

because they do not know what to expect from it. There are many different majors, minors, and colleges to choose from and it can get confusing and stressful when you are not sure what you want to do yet. Some alumni from past graduation years offered some advice to struggling juniors and seniors who are not sure about their future yet.

Dominik Smith graduated in 2018, and is taking a year-long break off of school.

“The biggest advice I have for seniors is to stay dedicated and stay focused, do not go to college and party all the time. Make sure you make it to all your classes on time and do all your

homework,” Smith said.

Taylor Hughes-Griggs graduated in 2014, and she graduated from Paul Mitchell in 2015 with a major in cosmetology.

“When I was in high school I wished someone gave me advice about college, so this is my advice. Enjoy it and take advantage of every opportunity you have, be safe and mindful of every decision you make,” Hughes-

Griggs said.

Austin Lorentzen graduated in 2018 and currently attends Oakland

University with an undecided major in business.

“You need all the skills you learned in high school for your college courses, and slacking off your senior year will not help,” Lorentzen said.

Dhamon Riley graduated in 2018 and is

majors in exercise science.

“Do not take it lightly, try to prepare yourself for college before you even go,” Riley said.

If you need more advice on going to college, saving money, writing your resume, and any other advice do not be afraid to ask an alumni on how they got through these challenges.

According to www.theodysseyonline.com, “Seriously, paying for college is no easy feat. Money doesn’t grow on trees. Sit down and talk with your parents about how you’re going to pay for college. Track your spending and keep a close eye on your bank account. Save up now so you don’t have to suffer later. And if finances don’t factor into your choice of college or university, re-think your priorities.”



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Although every graduate’s experience is different, alumni still gave advice to the graduating class of 2019.

a student at Olivet college, where he

Students shine light on living with special needs siblings

Caitlin Michael
Editor-in-Chief

Many of us have siblings in our lives and we know that it has its ups and downs. For example, if you have

a little sister, she might steal your perfume or makeup, or if you have an older brother, they might pick on you on most occasions. This is all normal and expected of an older/younger sibling, right? Well, if you are like me and have a special needs sibling, you will know that it is not always like this. Ups and downs are prominent, but pestering or stealing your things may not be the case for some.

My little sister is 12 years old but she cannot walk or talk due to her having a disability called cerebral palsy. Cerebral palsy is a group of permanent movement disorders that appear in early childhood. I feel as if her and I are two separate children instead of actual siblings due to how different we are. Having a special needs sibling is different in more ways than one. For me, I feel overprotective over my little sister and sometimes scared for her future. I feel sometimes overwhelmed, and I find myself wishing I could give her the abilities that I have been blessed with. But not all cases are the same when it comes to having a disabled sibling.

For junior Tim Henk, his sister, Emma Henk, has cerebral palsy like mine, but Emma can walk and talk and do things for herself.

“It is different to have her around because my other siblings and I always go out of the house and do things and she doesn’t get to do those things,” Henk said.

Protectiveness comes a long way for Tim. Being Emma’s older brother, he feels like another guardian for her. He always tries to comfort her when people give her looks when they are in public areas. Although Emma is home-schooled, she still hangs out with her best friend since preschool, Grace. Grace also has cerebral palsy, and the two play Littlest Pet Shop together all of the time.

“She is my little sister and will always be my sister no matter what and with that fact I will always be there for her whenever she needs me,” Henk said.

Sophomore Madyson Marzec has a younger sister, Makayla Marzec, who is cognitively impaired. Being cognitively impaired means she cannot learn things as fast as others can. But regardless of that, Makayla goes to school and does regular day-to-day things. She loves singing and dancing around the house and playing with her Amazon Alexa.

Marzec is protective of Makayla due to her being bullied when she was younger. Marzec used to get fired up over it, making her wish she could have done something about it.

“Life would be boring without Makayla in my life. She’s a cool person to be around and she’s fun,” Marzec said.



Caitlin Michael

Kaylee Michael is a *Disney* fanatic. Her favorite princess is Belle and she loves dancing to “Be Our Guest.”

of Nathan as all I want to do is see him succeed,” Major said.

Nathan goes to a school that accommodates to his needs. He is able to crawl and is currently learning how to walk. Although he can say small words like mom or dad, he cannot form full sentences.

“I don’t like having a disabled sibling because it hurts to see my little brother not be able to do quote-on-quote “normal” things. Even though it has taught me things I wouldn’t know without him, I still wish he were able to do more things than he is able to,” Major said.

Walking and talking is a regular routine for some people. To other people, it may be seen as a privilege to have these abilities. For junior Samantha Harrington, she is one of those people. Harrington has an older brother, Michael Weaklend, with epilepsy and cerebral palsy on his right side. He can walk and talk

but has difficulties with certain movements on his right side. He also goes to school, and since he is older than 18, he goes to college and graduates when he is 25.

“My brother sometimes limits what I can do. Although I don’t mind because I don’t do much myself, it is still like having another younger sibling because I have to constantly check up on him and make sure he’s okay. You have to make sure he’s eating the correct amount of food and make sure he’s not into trouble,” Harrington said.

Harrington has grown to become really observant due to her special needs sibling. She is always on the watch for certain things and has become protective over him.

Weaklend loves to watch shows like *Hannah Montana* and *Jessie* on Disney Channel. He also loves to sing and listen to music around the house.

“Michael has become apart of my routine. I couldn’t imagine him not being the way he is because it has just become apart of my normal,” Harrington said.

Having a special needs sibling, regardless of age or if having multiple siblings, is definitely different than having just regular functioning siblings. You care for them more, and you are always looking out for them even when you are not around them. But it is hard to imagine a life without them in it. Despite the hardships or the impacts they may bring, we do not want them to change. They are not only apart of the family, but they are apart of us. No matter what.

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-Dr. Seuss

“Take pride in how far you’ve come. Have faith in how far you can go. But don’t forget to enjoy the journey.”
“Graduation is not the end; it’s the beginning.”

Your next chapter begins ...

Love,
Mom, Dad & Kaylee

“Kid, you’ll move mountains”
-Dr. Seuss

“So, I say to you, forget about the fast lane. If you really want to fly, just harness your power to your passion. Honor your calling. Everybody has one. Trust your heart and success will come to you.”
-Oprah Winfrey

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