

# Class of 2024

Mendota & Ohio





# Top students for Mendota High School Class of 2024

Mendota High School principal Joe Masini has announced that 11 students from the MHS Class of 2024 have been designated as Illinois State Scholars.

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), the state's college access and financial aid agency, presents this recognition of academic achievement to exceptional high school students annually. State Scholars are selected annually based on standardized test scores combined with sixth semester class rank. These exceptional students rank in approximately the top 10 percent of graduates from Illinois high schools.

MHS students achieving the honor include:

- Madelyn Becker, daughter of Patrick and Kelly Becker of Mendota.

Activities and awards: Interact Club (secretary), student council, Spanish Club, math team, Academic Challenge, National Honor Society (president), Spanish



Mendota High School Class of 2024 Illinois State Scholars, front row, left to right, are Jay Sims, Ryleigh Sondgeroth and Bria Frey. Middle row, Ava Jones, Lilly Leifheit and Natalia Salinas. Back row, Madelyn Becker, Grace Wasmer, Logan Dewey, Bridget McGann and Emma Pierce.

See MHS, Page 4

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Congrats to Kamdyn Becket, ReAnna Brant, Trekker Klema, Justin Randolph and the Class of 2024!

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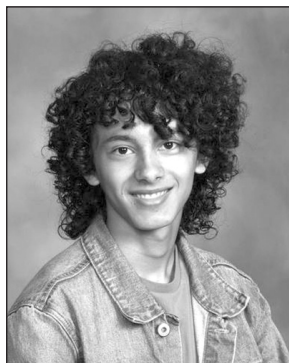
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## Mendota High School Graduates



Ava Arteaga



Eithun Atkins



Owen Aughenbaugh



Connor Bailey



Paul Bailey



Jace Baird



Landon Bauer



Madelyn Becker



Kamdyn Becket



Isaac Belmonte



Ella Betz



Angelica Botello



Reanna Brant



Lillianna Caruso



Kimberly Cedillo



Samuel Christmann



Emerson Clark



Alex Contreras



Kyan Cooper



Estefania Coronel



Adam Davis



Beau Dearing



Logan Dewey



Araceli Diaz

## MHS

Continued from Page 2

Honor Society, Homecoming and Prom committees, volleyball, softball, DAR Award winner, National Rural and Small Town Award, academic all-conference, Lions Honor Banquet, all-conference softball.

Future plans: Attend a four-year university to major in pharmacy.

• Logan Dewey, son of Heather Dewey of Mendota.

Activities and awards: soccer (captain), basketball, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Spanish Club, Academic Challenge, Boys State, honor roll.

Future plans: Undecided on school. Plan to major in nursing to hopefully become a nurse anesthetist.

• Briar Frey, daughter of Kent Fry of Ottawa and the late Tammy Sterling.

Activities and awards: National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Podcast Club (president), Homecoming and Prom committees, SAR Award winner, volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, Spanish Club, Art Club, academic all-conference, Lions Honor Banquet.

Future plans: Attend an in-state school to study finance and psychology to be a financial advisor.

• Ava Jones, daughter of Anthony and Michelle Jones of Mendota.

Activities and awards: volleyball, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Interact Club, Spanish Club, Homecoming and Prom committees, Lions

Honor Banquet, math team, honor roll.

Future plans: Study nursing at the University of Iowa.

• Lilly Leifheit, daughter of Jason and Juli Leifheit of Mendota.

Activities and awards: National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, student council, Homecoming and Prom committees, Spanish Club, math team, volleyball, all-conference volleyball, academic all-conference.

Future plans: Attend a four-year university to study pediatric nursing.

• Bridget McGann, daughter of Patrick and Kimberly McGann of Earlville.

Activities and awards: USA swimming scholastic all-American three times, 2023 Illinois Swimming Breakout Swimmer, U.S.

Olympic Trials swimming qualifier, Illinois swimming student-athlete representative, USA Swimming Athlete Advisory Committee board member, Illinois swimming youth camp leader, math tutor, math team, Spanish Club, Illinois State Scholar.

Future plans: Attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison, swim for its college program, study kinesiology and psychology, go into sports psychology.

• Emma Pierce, daughter of Darrell and Sheila Pierce of West Brooklyn.

Activities and awards: volleyball, softball, MHS Honor Banquet, honor roll, Homecoming and Prom committees, principal's office worker, Podcast Club, Art Club, National Honor

Society, Illinois State Scholar.

Future plans: Pursue a career in anesthesiology.

• Natalia Salinas, daughter of Santos and Mayoh Salinas of Mendota.

Activities and awards: tennis, National Honor Society, 4.0 cumulative grade point average, Girls State, Quest-Bridge Scholar, employment at Allure Health Services.

Future plans: Attend the College of the Holy Cross to major in accounting.

• Jay Sims, child of Emmet and Hazel Sims of Compton.

Activities and awards: band, musicals, Scholastic Bowl, Illinois State Scholar, Academic Challenge.

Future plans: Attend Western Illinois University to major in anthropology.

• Ryleigh Sondgeroth,

daughter of Matt and Amber Sondgeroth of Mendota.

Activities and awards: National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, student council president, Spanish Club, volleyball, basketball, softball.

Future plans: Attend St. Ambrose University to pursue nursing.

• Grace Wasmer, daughter of Steve and Alison Wasmer of Mendota.

Activities and awards: volleyball, basketball, track, student council vice president, Interact Club president, Spanish Club, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Academic Challenge.

Future plans: Attend IVCC and then transfer to a four-year college majoring in accounting.

*After such fine academic performances,  
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City Clerk Emily McConville  
City Treasurer Rob Letterly

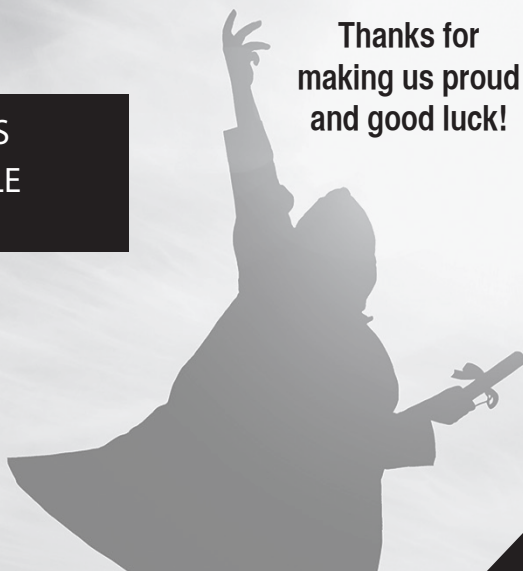
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## Mendota High School Graduates



Payton Diaz



Kylie Donovan



Olivia Eddy



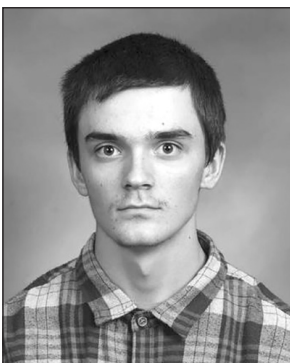
Alexa Escatel



Linnea Escatel



Henry Esparza



Logan Fahr



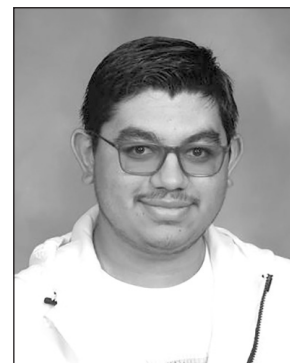
Angela Figueroa



Joshua Figueroa



Mariah Figueroa



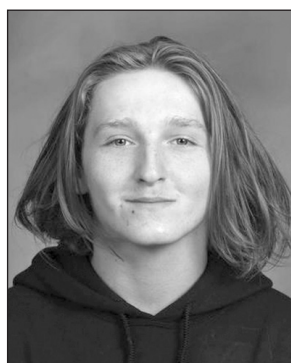
Jose Frausto



Bria Frey



Jasmyrn Garcia



Dean Gilbert



Nevaeh Gonzales



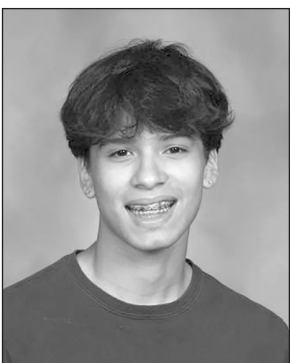
Keith Grim



Janet Guzman



Ashley Hermosillo



Bryan Herrera



Kiara Johnson



Aubree Jones



Ava Jones



Nellie Kerchner



Kaleb Kleckner



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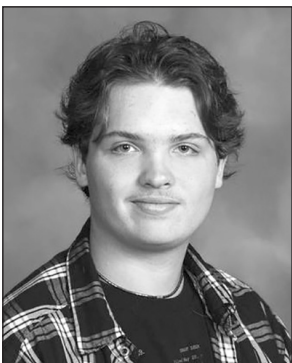
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## Mendota High School Graduates



Trekker Klema



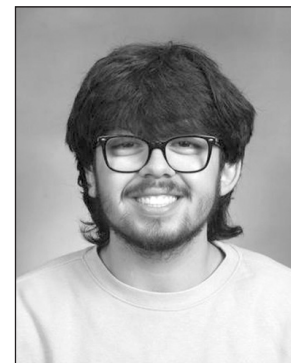
Mason Koch



Landon Lee



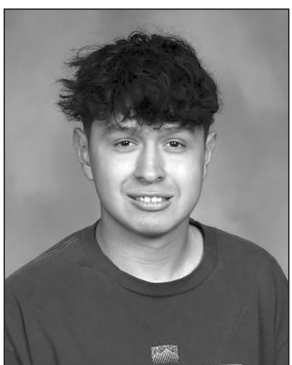
Lilly Leifheit



Sylvester Lemos



Perla Lopez



Fredy Mandujano



Bridget McGann



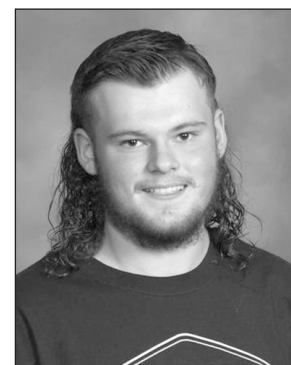
Arman Miranda



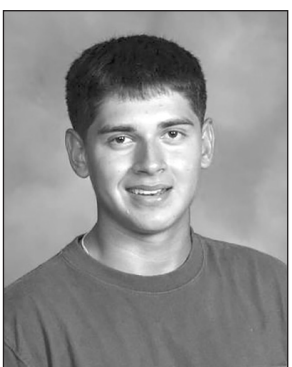
Carlos Mora



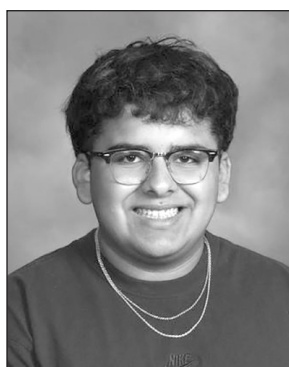
Julian Muller



Zach Mullins



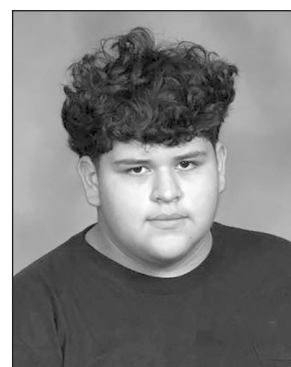
Izaiah Nanez



Cruz Orozco



Xzavior Orozco



Jose Payan



Brian Perez



Jason Perez



Emma Pierce



Ana Ramirez



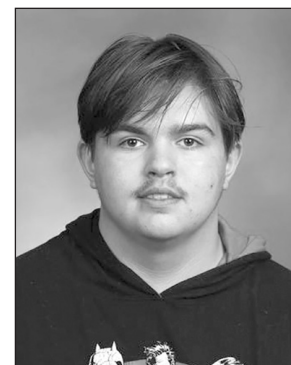
Justin Randolph



Karly Reel



Hannah Rich



Jacob Roldan





# Congrats

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# 2024!

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# CONGRATS

*to the Class of*

# 2024

*We wish you all the best!*



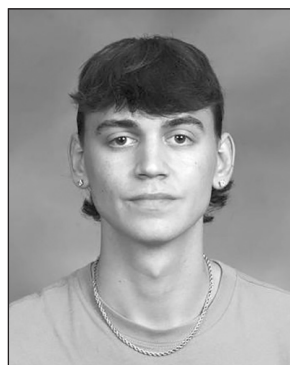
## Mendota High School Graduates



Natalia Salinas



Diego Sandoval



Luca Seibert



Dagen Setchell



Haden Shakespeare



Savanna Shamblin



Alysa Sharp



Jay Sims



Ryleigh Sondgeroth



Peter Stavropoulos



Ryan Stevenson



Cale Strouss



Valerie Valdes



Naoemi Valencia-Reyes



Elise Verkaeren



Grace Wasmer



Johnathan Wheeler



Logan Wujek

### NOT PICTURED

Anthony Arteaga  
Kenny Bugarin  
Vanessa Gomez-Rico  
Javier Monica  
Noah Orozco  
Roxana Ramirez  
Dimitri Rodriguez  
Morgan Smith  
Jessica Terrazas  
Bianka Valdez  
Ysabelle Wear

# Class of 2024



## Tips to set up an ideal home study space

Study skills are integral to academic success. Such abilities help students learn more efficiently and effectively, which can lead to better grades on assignments and tests. Developing strong study habits can prepare students for future success in life, as dedication to studying can be mirrored in habits related to job performance.

The desire to study is one component of being involved in the task. However, setting up an environment conducive to studying is another part of this important equation. Students looking to study longer and better may want to re-evaluate study environments at home. Here are some ways to implement positive changes.

- Isolate from interruptions. The first step to picking up a study location is to select a spot away from the hustle and bustle of the household. While a separate room or home office can be helpful, an out-of-the-way nook or similar spot can be just as effective. By dedicating a study spot, you can train your brain to recognize this is a study area and you may immediately become more focused.

- Keep only pertinent materials nearby. It may



be tempting to check your phone or watch videos or television if those devices are close to the study area. Make it stark and outfitted with only what's necessary for the study session.

- Focus on good lighting. To avoid eye strain and avoid difficulty focusing, make sure the study area has adequate lighting. Lighting behind you will help illuminate the pages of textbooks and additional reading materials. Avoid using computers in dimly lit rooms, as that may aggravate eye strain.

- Aim for ergonomics and comfort. You'll want to be comfortable while studying, but not so much that you're falling asleep. Choose a chair that is supportive and keeps you seated in a neutral position.

- Store supplies nearby.

Having to constantly get up and grab supplies increases the risk of distractions adversely affecting your study time. A zippered pouch or a tote bag that contains all of your study materials can be kept within reach.

- Keep a clock in view. A clock should not deter you from studying. Setting deadlines and time constraints on study time can encourage focus. Break down study sessions into chunks of time that are manageable to you.

- Utilize noise effectively. Some people need absolute quiet to study. Others appreciate some white noise or music to sharpen their focus. Identify what works for you and incorporate that into your study area. A fan or a running air purifier can produce enough white noise to drown out distractions.

## Consider these community college benefits

College is the next natural step for many students after they finish high school. The process of finding a school begins in junior year of high school, and students and their parents may visit many different colleges and universities throughout the next year. Even though the bulk of the focus might be on four-year schools, students who may not yet have everything all figured out should not overlook the many benefits of community colleges.

The United States Department of State's Education USA says community colleges offer two-year programs that lead

- More affordable tuition: Lower tuition is one of the major draws to community colleges. The career planning resource Indeed says that many community colleges further discount their offerings to in-state students. This helps make post-secondary education much more affordable, particularly for those who are not sure about what they want to study.

- Relationships with four-year schools: A number of community colleges have partnerships with sister schools to facilitate the transfer of associate degree credits for



a student working toward a four-year degree. Education USA says in this "2+2" process, a student can earn a bachelor's degree with two years of community college, followed by two years of university study.

Some community colleges also serve as satellite locations for other schools, meaning one can take classes for a four-year school right on the community college campus if the location is more convenient.

- Smaller class sizes: Many community colleges have smaller class sizes that make it easier for students to adjust to the pace of college life.

- Proximity to home: As the name implies, community college is a school that serves a particular community. That means it is likely close to home for the majority of students. Students who may not be willing or able to go away to school may appreciate the convenience and proximity of a community college.

Community college is an option that students may want to explore as they pursue post-secondary education.



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## Variables to consider when applying to colleges

Students' college decisions are among the most significant choices they will make over the course of their lifetimes. Many students lay the foundations for rewarding careers during college, and the friendships formed during university years often last a lifetime.

Students cannot utilize a magic formula to ensure they choose the right college or university. However, on-campus visits and discussions with current and former students can provide invaluable insight into what life is like at a given college or university. In addition, students and their families can consider a host of variables as they try to decide where to apply for college.

- **Cost:** The high cost of college is well documented, but prices vary significantly. According to the Trends in College Pricing 2023 report from the College Board, the average cost of tuition and fees at a public, four-year, in-state school was \$11,260 in the 2022-23 school year. The average cost of tuition and fees at a private, nonprofit, four-year school during that same academic year was \$41,540. That's a price difference of more than

\$30,000 annually. Many students borrow money to finance their college education, and high schoolers must consider the amount of debt they're willing to take on when making this pivotal life decision.

- **Campus life:** The atmosphere on and around campus is another variable to consider when deciding where to apply to college. College is the first taste of independence many young people experience. Though students are often excited by that prospect, it's important to recognize that the atmosphere on campus will go a long way toward determining how enjoyable life at a given college or university may be. For example, students who are looking forward to living on campus may not find that transition as enjoyable if a school has more commuter students than resident students. In addition, some students may prefer an insulated college environment, while others may be looking for opportunities to engage in city life that goes beyond campus activities. Students can identify what they want out of campus life and then choose schools based on how

closely their environments align with those priorities.

- **Curriculum:** Curriculum merits ample consideration, even among students who are uncertain about what they want to study. For those who know what they want to study, arrange to speak with department faculty and current students when visiting the campus to identify if a given program aligns with your academic interests. Curriculums are designed differently at each university, so programs under the same major can be vastly different from one school to the next. Students who are not sure what they want to study can look for colleges and universities that offer a wide range of majors, minors and concentrations.

- **Reputation:** A school's reputation is another factor that merits consideration. Reputation is a somewhat fluid variable, and it's not always the best barometer to use when assessing a college or university. However, if a school has an especially strong reputation among businesses and professionals in the field a student hopes to enter, then this can be a crucial variable when deciding where to apply.

## Tips to choose a college major

Millions of students attend college after high school. The Education Data Initiative says there were 18,939,568 people enrolled in colleges in the United States in 2023.

At some point in their pursuit of post-secondary education, students will need to choose a major. Choosing a major can be challenging for students who have various interests and/or did well in multiple subjects in high school. The good news is that once a major is chosen, it isn't set in stone. Many students change their majors as they are exposed to different coursework in college. Here are a few ideas for choosing a major.

- **Don't be pressured by family.** Some students simply choose "the family business" route and select the same school and major as one or both of their parents. Make this a well-informed choice that considers various aspects and not just what Mom or Dad do for a living.

- **Select a subject you enjoy.** You do not want to be slugging through the next four or more years of school studying topics that bore you. Avoid potential burnout by choosing a major that interests you and offers a future.

- **Research a related industry.** Investigate which jobs have higher rates of openings and compare other factors like earning potential. While the goal is not simply to select the major that will lead to a job with the highest earning potential, you should consider majors that will lead to jobs that are stable and offer growth potential. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics is a good start for data. It currently lists wind turbine service technicians and nurse practitioners

as the fastest-growing occupations.

- **Determine how rigorous coursework will be.** Some majors feature more rigorous coursework than others. If you know that marathon study sessions and lots of research or writing projects are going to lead to extensive stress, it is probably best to consider another course of study. Indiana University Bloomington determined the most difficult majors based on the average time students spent per week preparing included architecture, chemical engineering and aeronautical engineering. Public relations, communications and criminal justice were among the less demanding majors, though it's important to note that excelling in any course of study requires hard work and commitment.


- **Check in with your academic advisor.** Academic advisors can guide you by offering career assessment quizzes and going over your grades. Such assessments may reveal skills that align well with certain fields of study.

- **Delay the decision.** If you truly do not know what you want to study, enroll in school undeclared. This will give you a chance to explore some general education "core" classes and feel out a school before making a larger commitment. Typically colleges will require a declaration of major by the end of sophomore year to allow enough time for completing that major's required courses.

When choosing a major, students should weigh various factors to find a course of study that suits their interests and career goals.

*Class of*  
**2024**

We applaud your hard work and dedication!  
**Congratulations!**



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**Congratulations**  
**Bria Frey and the class**  
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Troy Anderson



Lucas Cassidy



Oscar Gonzalez III



Sierra Spohn



Vincent Zembrzski



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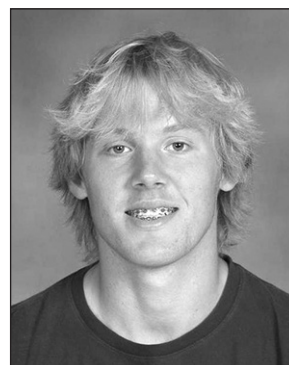
Chesney Auter



Jack Ballas



Ryan Browder



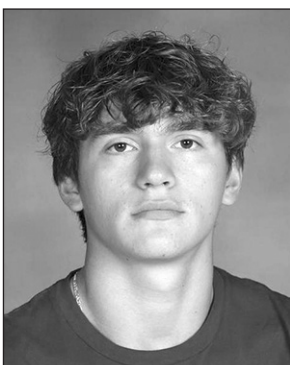
Griffin Cook



Sandra Decker



Ryleigh Dixon



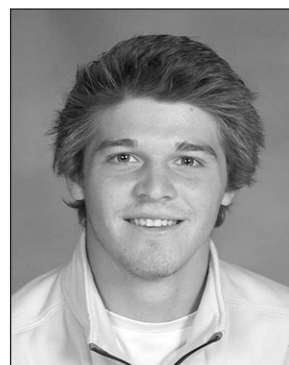
Trenton Fruit



Trey Gauer



Hayden Glant



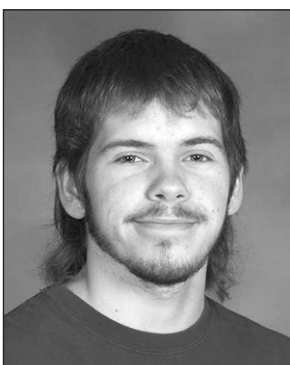
Domenic Gonzalez



Brooklynn Guelde



Emily Harness



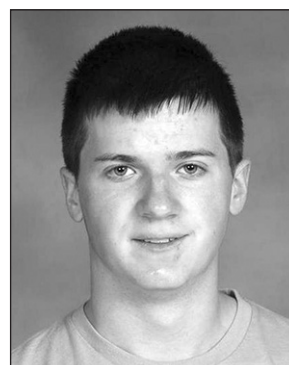
Brice Harrison



Braden Hill



Brylee Jess



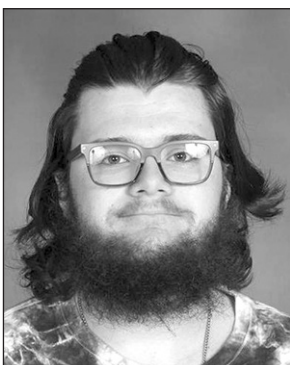
Joseph Jungels



Carter Kick



Jonathan McIntosh



Rocco Morsovillo



Madyson Olson



Hannah Pfaff



Nevaeh Sansone



Layla Tirevold



Andrew Whitney



## Preparation and guidance from EHS insures successful future for graduates

The year everyone wishes for until the time actually comes, our senior year. Once a freshman looking up to the upperclassmen mirroring almost everything that they did. We begin to realize what we once were, and what we have now become. We no longer have to look up to the big kids because we are the ones who lead by example and look down. Not believing everyone when they said that the four years flew by, but now it is over.

Freshman year was a rollercoaster. From not going to school our last quarter of eighth grade, to walking into the building the first day of our freshman year. Covid nearly ruined almost every extracurricular activity throughout the year. We didn't know if there was going to be sports, homecoming, and not that it matters to us freshmen but prom as well. Although all of this was a blur, we never stopped dedicating ourselves and figured out that there were going to be sports. We ended up winning the conference tournament championship in soccer that year, which is one of the most exciting memories of the last four years.

Sophomore year was a little bit different. Extracurricular activities were all a go and everything was on time. It was kind of a reality check since in Covid everything was laid back. We participated in fun activities like homecoming week, decorating floats, and the AG Olympics. The world started to get bigger as we got more responsibilities and began to get our driver's license. This is when the high school experience went into full effect.

Junior year was back to normal. We were now considered upperclassmen and had to start acting like it. There are many important things in Junior year like starting

a search for colleges and taking your SAT. It is our first year we can go to prom and we are the ones who have to set it up. School was getting harder and harder and we were expected to do better everyday. Junior year was definitely the hardest year yet.

Senior year flew by. Almost everyone says that their senior year flies by, and they aren't lying. From our last homecoming week to our last prom. This is where most people say goodbye to sports forever, which isn't the easiest thing. We are all grown up now. Everyone has to fully commit themselves to school so they can make it to the college they want to go to. With the stressful and sad memories that go along with senior year there are many good ones as well. Breaking school records for basketball wins in a season, having a successful soccer team, and remaining competitive in all of the other sports. We also will remember the bonds that we have created with each other and our teachers as well.

The time that I have spent and the experiences that I have had at Earlville High School can't be put into words. From the best staff to the best classmates, creates the best possible environment that I would want to grow up in. Now that it is over we have to answer the hardest question there is. What do you want to do with your life? Some of us can answer this on the spot and others it will take them years to answer. No matter how long it takes you though, the preparation and guidance that we have gotten from EHS will insure us to be successful in whatever journey we take. Thank you Earlville High School.

**Griffin Cook**  
2024 Class President  
Earlville High School



Earlville Class of 2023 officers, sitting, left to right, are Chesney Auter, secretary, and Emily Harness, treasurer. Back row, left to right, are Joseph Jungels, vice president, and Griffin Cook, president.



*We wish you all the best!*

Earlville  
High School  
graduates not  
pictured:  
Derrick Richardson



The top three students for the Earlville Class of 2024, left to right, are Brooklynn Guelde, valedictorian; Hannah Pfaff, salutatorian; and Emily Harness, valedictorian.

## Guelde, Harness are co-valedictorians, Pfaff is salutatorian of the Earlville H.S. Class of 2024

Brooklynn Guelde and Emily Harness are the valedictorians and Hannah Pfaff is the salutatorian of the Earlville High School Class of 2024.

Guelde is the daughter of Scott and Robyn Guelde of Leland.

Her honors and activities include volleyball, softball, student council and National

Honor Society.

Her future plans are to attend Southern Illinois University to major in dental hygiene.

Harness is the daughter of Brandon and Lisa Harness of Earlville.

Her honors and activities include National Honor Society, student council, Illinois State Scholar, class officer, teacher's

aide, Yearbook Club, baseball manager, varsity volleyball and community volunteer.

Her future plans are to attend Illinois State University to major in therapeutic recreation to get a degree in occupational therapy.

Pfaff is the daughter of Gregg and Rhiannon Pfaff of Earlville.

Her honors and activities

include volleyball, softball, National Honor Society, Junior marshal, high honor roll, Yearbook Club, art award, English award, summer school leader and Feed My Starving Children.

Her future plans are to attend Illinois State University to discover new topics and interesting careers that pique my full interest.

CONGRATULATIONS  
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## LaMoille High School Graduates



Ben Durdan



Brian Edwards



Giovanni Gatza



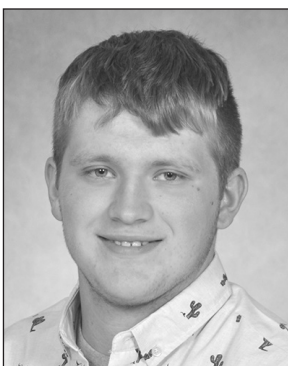
Alijah Hebel



Jenessa Karvonen



Donna Sloan



Ian Sundberg



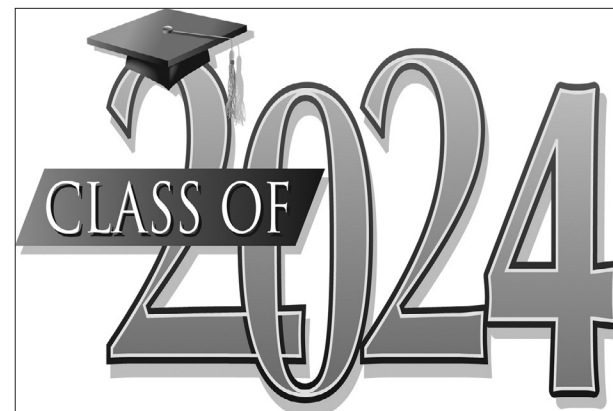
Nataleigh Wamhoff



Ava Williams



Isabella Wittenauer



### Williams, Wittenauer are top two students at LHS

Ava Williams is the valedictorian and Isabella Wittenauer is the salutatorian of the LaMoille High School Class of 2024.

Williams is the daughter of Bradley and Jennifer Williams of Van Orin.

Her honors and activities include National Honor Society, student council, class vice president, Scholastic Bowl, yearbook committee, high honor roll, Illinois State Scholar, DAR Good Citizens Award and John Ourth Student Recognition Award.

Her future plans are to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to major in molecular and cellular biology to seek a career as a forensic science technician.

Wittenauer is the daughter of Donnie and Sarah Wittenauer of Van Orin.

Her honors and activities include National Honor Society, yearbook committee, Scholastic Bowl, class president, honor roll and Kindness Award.

Her future plans are to attend IVCC to finish her associate's in science degree in the spring of 2025 and then transfer to a university to receive a bachelor's and master's in clinical psychology. She will pursue a career in a hospital or facility as a clinical psychologist.



# Get schooled on vocational training

High school graduates or individuals looking to explore continuing education at any age have various options. Among the most popular options is enrolling in a college or university. Studying a trade in a vocational school is another popular option.

## What are vocational schools?

Vocational schools are sometimes referred to as career or trade schools. Vocational schools tend to offer certificate programs that are much shorter in duration than traditional college degree programs, and train students for skilled jobs. Vocational programs prepare individuals for careers in electrical work, hairstyling and cosmetology, certified nursing aids, automotive work, and HVAC services, among others.

## Cost of attendance

Cost of education is an important factor when

choosing a career, and the cost of vocational school is no exception. The College Board says trade school costs between \$5,000 and \$15,000 on average for a three-to-18-month program. By comparison, the national average for a two-year degree program at public and private colleges can range from \$3,621 to \$15,333 per year. The cost to attend a four-year college is considerably higher, though it varies widely by institution.

NerdWallet reports that, as of 2021, total student loan debt in the United States exceeded \$1.61 trillion. Vocational school can be a much more affordable option than attending college, without the specter of large amounts of debt looming once the training is over.

## An obvious job path

Many higher education concentrations are confronting low enrollment, while vocational programs are

doing quite well, according to The Hechinger Report, which covers innovation and equality in education. The reason may be that vocational training presents a clear career path, and a more secure way to a solid job. Mechanic and repair trade programs had an enrollment increase of 11.5 percent from spring 2021 to 2022, indicates the National Student Clearinghouse.

"America is lending money it doesn't have to kids who can't pay it back to train them for jobs that no longer exist," says Mike Rowe, television personality and founder of the Mike Rowe Works Foundation, which offers scholarship money to those who are pursuing the trades. Rowe feels that America has convinced people that the best path for most people is an expensive education. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates there are more than



seven million jobs available across the U.S. that do not require a four-year degree.

## Advantages to vocational schools

Trade school students can look forward to some benefits.

- hands-on learning
- more rigid schedule

- efficient time usage
- faster class pace
- small class sizes
- ability for licensure, where needed
- lower costs of attendance compared to other types of schooling
- instructors who are

experts in their fields

Vocational schools are an option for students right out of high school or those returning to school later in life. Such schools provide access to millions of rewarding and lucrative jobs that can offer financial security.

# Congratulations,

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# AHS Class of 2024: Dream big, set goals and believe in yourself

## To the Class of 2024....

As our final month winds down let us remember who we are and where we came from. Going to a small school has allowed us to experience great things together. When we first met in 2011, we were shy, scared and nervous. We were excited for our favorite classes, recess and PE. We loved bringing treats in for our birthdays especially if we brought them to Mrs. Grady's class so we could get a giant pixie stick. We laughed and we had fun. We celebrated our very first field trip to Tanners Orchard. Then had our first Pilgrim meal over Thanksgiving week and we celebrated our first Christmas concert singing our favorite Christmas songs. In first grade, we became readers trying to meet our AR reading goals and visited Blackberry Farms learning about the "old days". Then came second grade where our reading skills improved and we had the chance to visit Brookfield Zoo. Even though many of us probably acted like we belonged in the zoo, our wonderful teachers put up with us. Third grade we learned about the Civil War and heard a costumed Abraham Lincoln speak at Midway Village Museum. We learned how to hold a rifle, how to salute, and how to not stick out like a sore thumb. We also enjoyed the wax museum where we came alive with pushing a make believe button on our hand. Many of us were dressed as historical figures or other famous inventors. Also, if you had Ms. Farmer as a teacher you had an extra lesson on how to put out small

fires. Before we knew it, we were in 4th grade where we learned about Medieval Times and got the chance to experience it by going to the Medieval Times dinner theater. We celebrated our last pancake breakfast and our last track and field day. Then came Junior High where many things changed. We met more friends, we were able to participate in clubs and sports and we had to switch classes while learning how to use a combination lock to get into our lockers. While in fifth grade we had the joy of making our totem poles and when spring came along we went to Camp Reynoldswood to have our 5th grade campout. We played games and listened to Mr. Spangler tell ghost stories around the campfire. In sixth grade we were able to see Navy Pier. We also got to learn the lesson about how to survive study hall. Then in seventh grade we were able to go to the Art Museum in Chicago. Eighth grade started great. We were at the top of the school. Many of us still involved in sports, scholastic bowl and band. We learned about the Iditarod and participated in a dog sled race. And then in March of 2020, our world changed, the COVID pandemic was here. We suddenly had to stop everything. School changed to on-line, we were stuck at home, stores and restaurants closed, and to see our friends we had to be on a zoom call on our chromebooks or use our cell phones to snapchat or facetime to stay in touch. Our 8th grade field trip to Springfield was canceled, graduation

was canceled and all other activities were canceled. It was a trying time, but we survived. Five months later, our class finally celebrated with a group graduation party. It was great seeing everyone as we had ended our 8th grade year so suddenly. As our freshman year started, we were happy to be back, but forced to wear a mask, hours at a time and even during sporting events. Every sniffle and every cough caused a 7-10 day quarantine, one time wiping out most of the school staff and students. We missed out on Homecoming festivities and sports were shortened and moved to the spring. It was a trying time for all. And finally our sophomore year, things started to normalize. FFA, band, musicals, sports and other activities returned. We learned to drive, get our licenses and were able to go to the movies and out to eat. We finally got to have Homecoming week where we played Powderpuff

football, decorated floats, hallways, went teepeeing, and made fools of ourselves during skit night. We dressed up for our Homecoming dance even though we all stood very awkwardly in our circle of friends. The FFA sent two teams to state this year, with the parliamentary team getting a third place finish and the Conduct of Chapter team obtaining first place. We were required to take the SAT and some of us were inducted into the National Honor Society. Many of us went to prom for the first time, trying to make it a memorable night. We learned how to play euchre and other card games from the seniors. And just like that our senior year was here. Winning the state championship in football was a memory many of us will never forget. The school spirit shined high under those Friday night lights. We painted the town, the band played loudly, the cheerleaders cheered and

danced, and the stands were full. During the fall we got to enjoy the play, "I Only Have Fangs For You" and during the spring we got to enjoy the musical, "The Spelling Bee." We also got to see many of our girls track members make it to state throughout all of high school. The summer concerts, our senior class trip over spring break, and multiple other memories we have shared together will certainly never be forgotten. And now, just weeks away from receiving our diplomas, our class will be signing off one last time. Many of us have been together since that very first day. As we look through all those old pictures on our phones and in the yearbooks, the memories will last a lifetime. We have grown stronger than ever. We have overcome many obstacles to reach this day. Many of us will be leaving for the military, getting a job, or going to college or a trade school. Some may be moving out of state. Let

us conquer and celebrate each other's triumphs and failures. Let us never forget each other and our friendship as the years go by. Continue to go and do good things while making a difference in someone's life. Remember there is no script. It is up to you to write your own story. Dream big, set goals and believe in yourself. Most importantly, remember to smile, think positive, and dream big. To the Class of 2024, we did it!! Congratulations and Best Wishes. Remember once a Clipper, always a Clipper. Keep reaching for the stars as this is only the beginning. And just as Arnold Schwarzenegger said, "Just remember, you can't climb the ladder of success with your hands in your pockets". Good luck friends. I will miss you all.

Sincerely,  
Landon Whelchel,  
President,  
Amboy High School  
Class of 2024



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# Top 10 students named for Amboy High School Class of '24

Ten Amboy High School students earned a grade point average of 3.5 or higher and thus earned Top of the Class honors for the Class of 2024.

Brennan Blaine is the son of Brian and Amanda Blaine.

Honors and activities include Illinois State Scholar, National Honor Society secretary, football, all-state football, basketball and three-time Academic All-Conference.

Future plans are to get a CDL through IVCC, join and eventually take over multigenerational family farm.

Elizabeth Clarida of Amboy is the daughter of James Clarida and Emily Clarida.

Honors and activities include president of Leo's Club, National Honor Society, student council, volleyball, education pathways endorsement, student of the month for Whiteside Area Career Center and Amboy High School.

Future plans are to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to major in special education and work toward an endorsement in early childhood special education.

Emma Dinges of Sublette is the daughter of Nichola and Stacey Dinges.

Honors and activities include Section 2 FFA president, Amboy FFA president, golf, National Honor Society president, student council president, Scholastic Bowl, AHS musical, AHS backstage manager, student of the month, 2024 Principal's Award recipient, choir, class treasurer, 8th grade discovery ag teacher.

Future plans are to attend Iowa State University to major in animal science with a pre-vet focus.

Elly Jones of West Brooklyn is the daughter

of Doug and Nicole Jones.

Honors and activities include National Honor Society, highest honor roll, Homecoming senior court, President's Dean's List at SVCC, volleyball, basketball, track, cross country, academic all-conference, indoor and outdoor state track qualifier.

Future plans are to attend the University of Kansas to study in the medical field.

Rylyn Karrow of Amboy is the daughter of Brittney Karrow.

Honors and activities include National Honor Society, cheerleading, marching pep/concert band, Art Club and dance at Center Stage Dance Company.

Future plans are to attend Sauk Valley Community College and then transfer to a four-year college.

Alexis Ketchum of Amboy is the daughter of Tanya Ketchum and Daniel Ketchum.

Honors and activities include basketball, volleyball, track, class council, Leo's Club, National Honor Society, Rodney Lindenmeyer Award, Most Valuable Distance Award, Sauk Valley media honorable mention, AHS volleyball award and IHSA Add-A-Tude Award.

Future plans are to attend Illinois State University to pursue a degree in interior design.

Alexa Morris of Amboy is the daughter of David and Josie Morris.

Honors and activities include agronomy state qualifier, volleyball, veterinary internship, lifeguard and swim lessons.

Future plans are to move to Pensacola, Fla., to attend the University of West Florida for four years to study marine biology. After earning a bachelor's degree, plans are to enroll in veterinary school to become an

aquatic veterinarian.

Austin Shugars of Amboy is the son of Jeremy and Angie Shugars.

Honors and activities include highest honor roll, high honors, President's and Dean's List at SVCC, National Honor Society treasurer, baseball, Academic Bowl, Art Club, fall play.

Future plans are to attend Illinois Wesleyan University to study history to maybe become a history teacher/professor and to keep doing theater throughout college.

Landon Whelchel of Amboy is the son of Chad and Laurie Whelchel.

Honors and activities include football, baseball, basketball, FFA, Leo's Club, National Honor Society president and secretary, Illinois State Scholar, Academic all-conference, highest honor roll, FFA agronomy award, AHS student of the month, all-area first-team football offensive and defensive Player of the Year, all-area first-team baseball honorable mention, 2023 Homecoming King, Amboy Clipper Team Maker Award, baseball and football team captain.

Future plans are to attend Northern Illinois University in DeKalb in hopes of obtaining a master's degree in engineering as they offer a graduate program that can be completed in five years. Hope to become involved in the competition and design teams.

Kimber Zitelman of Amboy is the daughter of Mikael and Kelly Zitelman.

Honors and activities include National Honor Society vice president, cheerleading captain, track captain, Leo's Club, student council, AHS student of the month.

Future plans are to attend Aurora University to double major in criminal justice and psychology.



**Amboy High School Class of 2024 Top 10 students, front row, left to right, are Emma Dinges, Elizabeth Clarida, Rylyn Karrow, Kimber Zitelman and Alexa Morris. Back row, Brennan Blaine, Austin Shugars, Landon Whelchel, Alexis Ketchum and Elly Jones.**

## Going off to college?



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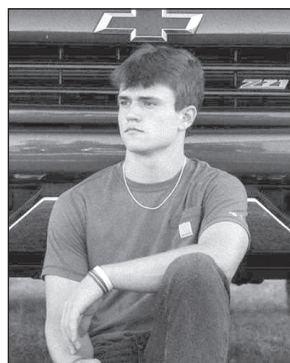
## Amboy High School Graduates



Aden Albee



Keaten Altizer



Brennan Blaine



Lucas Blanton



Carter Boehle



KayLynn Bopes



Elizabeth Clarida



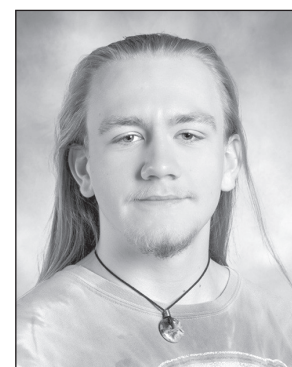
Luke Corcoran



Kody Currier



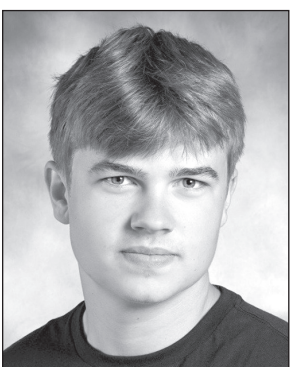
Emma Dinges



Zachary Dunne



Blerta Fekolli



Alex Fields



Tyler Gross



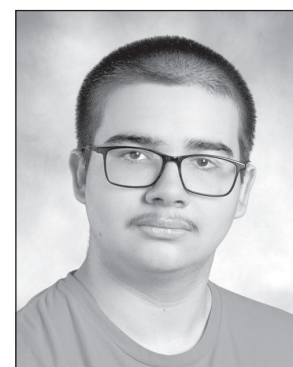
Austin Heath



Teagan Jergens



Elly Jones



Gabriel Jones



Hanna Jones



Rylyn Karrow



Alexis Ketchum



Kain Ketchum



Cole Larson



Maeve Larson



## Amboy High School Graduates



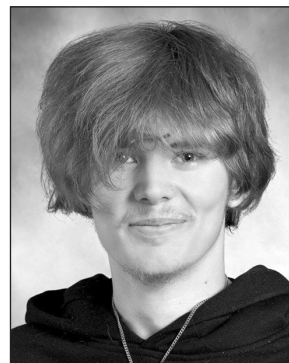
Landon Montavon



Alexa Morris



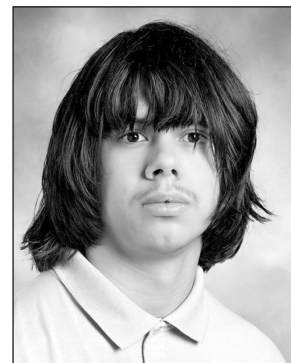
Serenity Munk



Brayden Newcomer



Madison O'Malley



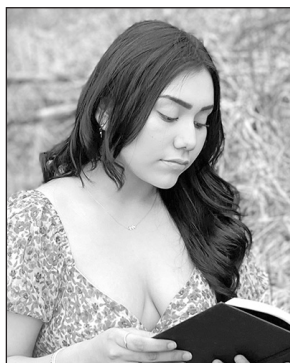
Nicholas Ochoa



Trey Payne



Aaliyah Pointer



Angeles Salgado



Kaylee Scanland



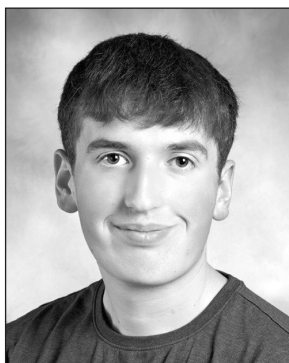
Isaac Schamberger



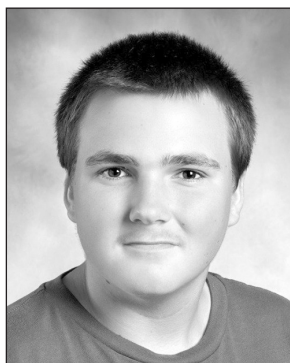
Addison Shaw



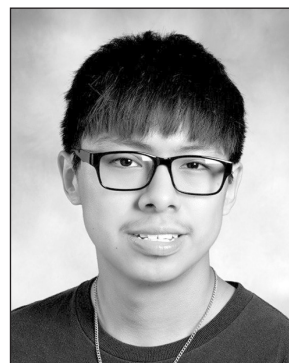
Austin Shugars



Zylar Smith



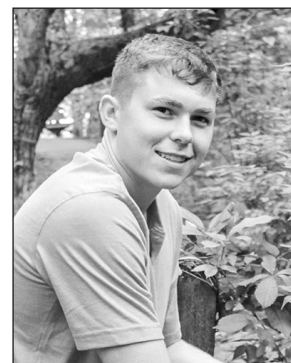
Keenan Thier-Kessel



Eliseo Vazquez-Tapia



Skyler Ware



Landon Whelchel



Kimber Zitelman

**Congratulations to the**  
*Class of 2024* **Graduates!**





# CONGRATS

*to the Class of*

# 2024

*We wish you all the best!*

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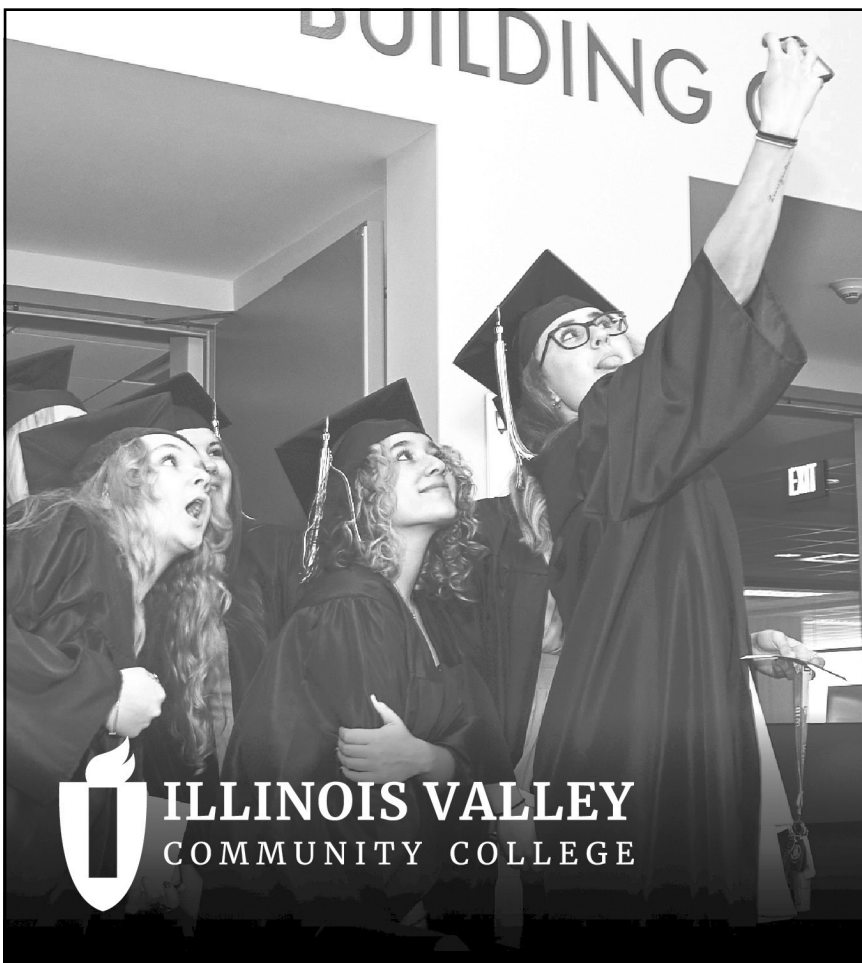


Amboy High School 2024 Class Officers, left to right, are Austin Shugars, vice president; Landon Whelchel, president; Emma Dinges, treasurer; Kimber Zitelman, secretary.



**CONGRATS**  
to the Class of  
**2024**

*We wish you all the best!*



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