

# 77% Headed to University, 23% to Military or Work Force in LaSalle Class of 2007

## Commencement Exercises Held May 25

By Paul Gingras

A charged air of excitement pervaded the LaSalle High School commencement ceremony Friday, May 25, when 61 seniors dressed in finery passed down an aisle of decorated archways, created for them by junior members of the National Honor Society.

Admired by their peers, family members, teachers, mentors, and friends, the seniors took the stage, one by one, and were graduated. In the brief, formal rite of passage, they completed their first major academic achievement, and paused in the limelight to reflect.

In his farewell speech to the class of 2007, LaSalle Principal Donald Gustafson said 77% of the graduates are poised to enter the halls of higher education, and 23% are ready for the work force, or the discipline of the military.

Thirty-two students wore gold cords, acknowledging that they had earned a 3.0 grade point average or better throughout their years at LaSalle. Nineteen wore white chords, a testament that they had completed 90 hours or more of community service.

To celebrate the seniors' accomplishment and see them off, Mr. Gustafson focused on a theme that spoke to all occupations and ambitions: He implored them to pursue a life of meaning, quoting a poem by Michael Josephson entitled "What Will Matter."

To the music of the school band, which included seniors playing at LaSalle for the last time, the ceremony celebrated the talents and achievements of the class, highlighting its finest scholars, most talented athletes, and most dynamic musicians.



In anticipation of commencement, the senior class of 2007 assembles in front of LaSalle High School Friday, May 25.



Three new graduates of LaSalle High School, (from left) Jessica Hadley, Misti Gamble, and Sarah Schafer, celebrate immediately following their commencement ceremony.

The evening began with a greeting by Student Council President Allison Brown, who spoke of community. She offered thanks to the people of St. Ignace, who had made the graduates' education possible, kept their sports programs alive, and enabled their special projects to flourish, including the installation of three new flagpoles, complete with flags flapping in the breeze that evening, which marked the entrance to LaSalle for the first time.

Superintendent Michael Springsteen reminded the seniors that education never truly ends. In preparation for the next stage of their lives, he encouraged them to take "can't" out of their vocabularies.

"Never give up, and best of luck," he said.

Mr. Springsteen read the names of the 12 seniors who had earned highest honors by achieving a 3.5 grade point average or better, throughout their high school years.

Celebrating the spirit of the class, senior drummer Sam Fitzpatrick took the stage for a performance that moved from light drumming to cascading thunder. Ending the performance like a fireworks display, he produced a grand finale that roused his class to stand and cheer.

There were no guest speakers for the commencement. This year, all speeches came from within the school, and Mr. Gustafson noted that only two hundredths of a point separated the valedictorian and salutatorian, both of whom had better than 4.0 grade point averages.

In her address, salutatorian Kelsey Cryderman called her teachers "some of the best" and "truly dedicated."

"We appreciate them," she said, "at times disagree with them, but either way, they have taught us

something, about a subject or about ourselves."

In her message, Miss Cryderman spoke of developing character, noting that high school

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## 32 Pickford High Students Graduated in Class of '07



Pickford senior Kristen Schmitgal awaits the musical cue before leading classmates (clockwise, from left) Sarah Bew, Sarah Mastaw, and Brianna Nasser into the Pickford Gymnasium Saturday, May 26.

By Amy Polk

Life is full of mixed signals, which only get more complex as one leaves high school and heads out into the world, said Pickford Public Schools Superintendent Keith Krahnke.

Addressing the 32 graduating Pickford seniors Saturday, May 26, Mr. Krahnke advised the students to see opportunity in life's lack of clear signals, and "be encouraged that you have choices," but don't expect answers will come with time.

"Logic may tell you that as one continues through life, knowledge and experience would begin to make life's answers all the clearer. Actually, in many ways, it is just the opposite," Mr. Krahnke said. "A lot of the things we believe to be answers are really just traffic signs highlighting all sorts of new directions."

He talked of how mixed signals start with parents, then continue through their child's own adult life, marriage, and children. "We tell our children to tell the truth. Honesty is the best policy. It is wrong to lie," he said, describing how later, most parents advise children there is such a thing as too much honesty, and to hold back to spare someone's feelings.

He went on to list a number of contradictory rules of thumb and words to live by, such as "look before you leap," but "he who hesitates is lost." "There are no stupid questions," but "curiosity killed the cat." "To be successful you need an education," but "it's not what you know, but who you know."

Mixed signals indeed, Mr. Krahnke said, but "you just need to know that if you are searching for that one, clear, unmistakable signal about what you should do with your life, you may just spend the rest of your days looking for it."

All of the signals make it difficult to choose the right direction, but ultimately, he advised, "decide, put the pedal down, and don't look back."

"My only real advice," he said, "is to take responsibility for whatever choices you make. I wish you all the best in whatever direction you take."

Salutatorian Kristen Schmitgal said, "I'm not like most people, and cannot stay rooted in one place," before grabbing the microphone from the podium and delivering her address while walking back and forth across the stage.

She compared her classmates to rock stars, and the years of school before this day as spending time in the recording studio, developing their own albums for their release into the world.

"Here we are, Class of 2007, at our release party, about to receive our

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Pickford teacher Patricia "Tish" Walker pins the class flower, a rose, on the robe of student Keenan Wojnaroski before commencement ceremonies.

## 34 Earn Diplomas at Cedarville High Commencement



Cedarville High School's Class of 2007 lines up for one final class photograph before commencement ceremonies Sunday, May 27.



Cedarville High School's newly graduated students toss their caps at the end of commencement.

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