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• A special publication of the Addison Independent • June 19, 2025

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# MUHS grad creates, perseveres and gives back

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY

— Middlebury's Gabe Schmitt is everything you'd want to see in a young man who has just earned his high school diploma.

Smart and confidently introspective. Content to work or recreate on his own, but joyful among others.

Polite. To. A. Fault.

During a recent interview at Middlebury Union High School, from which Schmitt was preparing to graduate this month, Gabe said "hello" and smiled at multiple educators and classmates. He held open the school library door for some folks after we'd exited.

A preoccupied classmate's stoic face quickly melted into a smile as she passed Schmitt on route to her next class.

It's clear Schmitt genuinely likes people, and they like him. He holds his fellow students and teachers in high regard.

"It's impossible to overstate how much (help my teachers) have been throughout the years, and also a shout-out to my peers," he said, beaming.

And Gabe has known some of his MUHS peers since kindergarten at Mary Hogan Elementary School. He said he's had a great experience in Middlebury schools, citing English, biology, history and science as his favorite subjects.

But for him, one program has stood above all others: Addison Repertory Theater, known as ART, which he attends at the Patricia Hannaford Career Center.

He's rounding out his second year in ART and has loved performing on stage with other students. He and his fellow teen thespians recently co-wrote and starred in a play called "I'll Tell You're a Secret," which blended thrills, chills and humor amid a 1970s backdrop to impart a cautionary message.

"I can learn lines pretty



GABE SCHMITT HAS had a rewarding career at Middlebury Union High School, thanks to hard work and a little help from his friends — and teachers.

Independent photo/John Flowers

quickly," he said, matter-of-factly.

Yes, there are plenty of things Gabe Schmitt can do easily, but he's needed help with other things.

"I've had disabilities that can hinder everything, academically and physically," he offered. "I've persevered through that, and that's given me a deeper appreciation for people who are also struggling with disabilities."

His own situation prompted him

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**"I** wanted to help everyone in the community find a place where they felt valued, that they were good at something. I wanted to give something back to my community."

---

— Gabe Schmitt

to take a lead role in the MUHS chapter of Best Buddies, which describes itself as "the world's

largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities."

Schmitt offered his own definition, and Best Buddies should consider adopting it:

"It's a club that seeks to create connections and friendships between students who are neurologically typical and neurologically atypical."

The MUHS group counts around 30 members, and Schmitt serves on its leadership board. The group meets regularly and holds special events at which Best Buddies socialize.

Schmitt was a key member in the planning of Neurodiversity Week 2024 at MUHS.

"I wanted to help everyone in the community find a place where they felt valued, that they were good at something," Gabe said.

"I wanted to give something back to my community."

It's a spirit of helping others that extends beyond the MUHS campus.

During the past year, Schmitt spent around four hours each week as a "community life assistant" at the EastView at Middlebury retirement community, leading its senior residents through such activities as bingo games and light exercise.

He's found the job so fulfilling that he's going to take on more hours at EastView during his upcoming gap year between MUHS and college.

A year of service to others and more time to invest in two major hobbies: Lego brick building and soaking up literature — through both reading and audiobooks.

"It's always been my escape after school," he said. "I'll listen to audio books and build Legos as a brain-break."

Gabe doesn't compete in Lego competitions, but let's just (See Gabe Schmitt, Page 4)

# Gabe Schmitt

(Continued from Page 3)

say he's darned good at it. The Lego Dune "Ornithopter" that the young man assembled was remarkable.

When I offered that I was 13 years old when the first Star Wars movie came out in "1975," he was quick to point out that the movie in fact premiered in 1977. While my error *must* have been age-related, don't challenge Gabe on Star Wars trivia or anything having to do with the Millennium Falcon. He's plugged into that universe, along with all things Dune and Lord of the Rings, to mention a few.

You might also want to think twice before challenging him to anything requiring stamina. Schmitt spent four seasons as a member of three Tiger sports teams: cross country running, Nordic skiing, and track & field.

"I joined (those sports) mainly because that's what my older siblings had done," he confessed, alluding to his brother Julian and sister Catherine. He also has a younger brother, Henry, who's 13. All are sons and daughters of Samantha Farrell Schmitt and John Schmitt of Middlebury.

Gabe is very happy with the athletic choices he made.

"I started running and I never looked back," he said.

Skiing, running, block building  
(See Schmitt, Page 5)



THE CAREER CENTER'S Addison Repertory Theater program was an important part of Gabe Schmitt's education while a student at Middlebury Union High School. Here he is rehearsing this past spring in the student written ART play "I'll Tell You a Secret."

Independent photo/John Flowers

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# Schmitt

(Continued from Page 4)

and reading are often solitary pursuits. But Schmitt doesn't look at them that way.

"With running and just about anything, you can connect with someone about it," he said.

And everyone needs an assist sometimes, no matter what the endeavor.

Case in point: Gabe described positioning himself in the starting line of a recent Nordic skiing race, when he suddenly realized he was wearing the wrong skis. He didn't dare leave the course, yet using the wrong skis might produce an epic fail.

Fortunately, two of his friends — Mathias and Baxter — were at

the venue and quickly read their pal's discomfort.

"Everyone sprints, I put on my skis 20 second before (race time)," he recalled. "It was the best race of the season for me. I've enjoyed all the help my peers have given me."

And let's not forget his educators.

"All my teachers from kindergarten through high school have been a huge help in assisting me with all my academic and physical struggles," Schmitt said, adding,

"My coaches and my peers are kind of the reason I'm here and the reason you're interviewing me now."

John Flowers is at [johnf@addisonindependent.com](mailto:johnf@addisonindependent.com).

**"With running and just about anything, you can connect with someone about it."**

— Gabe Schmitt

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## Pure imagination

Audiences got a treat with the Class of 2025's senior play at Middlebury Union High School. In addition to all the singular characters portrayed on stage in "Willy Wonka Jr.," the senior class portrayed scores of Oompa-Loompas to everyone's delight.

Photo by Jason Duquette-Hoffman

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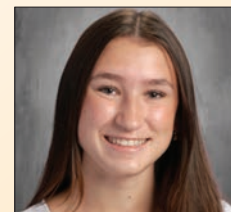
Alina Arias



Nicholas Bakerian



Nickolas  
Baldwin-Hutchins



Kylie A. Bean



Kayleigh Louise  
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Merisa Bergeron



Joseph Roger  
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Beck Besser-Jones



Michael Betourney



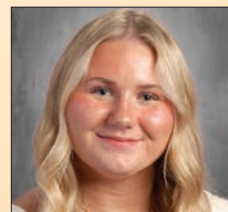
Thomas Bishop



Angus Blackwell



Jessie Bodette



Sophia Boise



CJ Bonner



Chase Michael  
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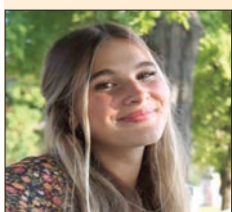
Cassidy Brown



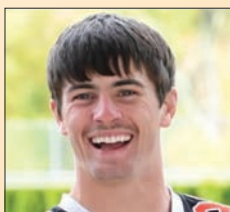
Tanner Burns



Elsa Burrows



Meredith Marie  
Cameron



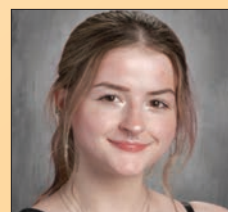
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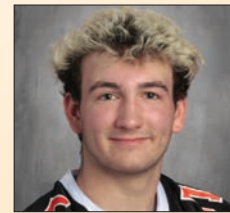
Joey Cross



Lily Elizabeth Lee  
Dame



India M. Danyow



Ethan Delorme



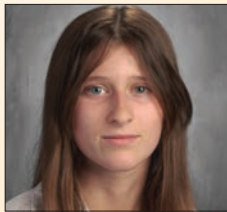
Greyson Landon  
Polo Dennison



George Forrest  
Devlin



Mai Thùy Hong  
Doan



Jillian Dragon



Addison Rye  
Dunakin



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Independence Ethan  
Allen Fetterolf



Analise Jane  
Fleming



Lucas Flinner



Aven Frankovic



Xavier Ruben  
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Austin Gendron



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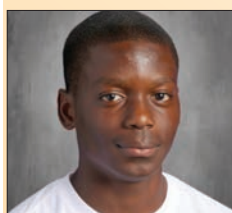
Jazmyn Skye  
Hurley



Dominic E. Jones



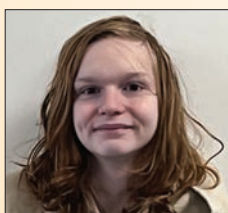
Gavin Jones



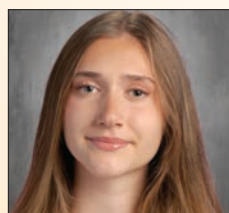
Joshua Kakomo  
Kafumbe



Landon Timothy  
Kean



Dylan Kearns



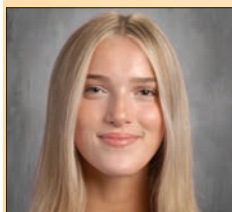
Sara Kent



Subia Khan



Georgie E. Kiel



Maggie  
Klingensmith



Dylan James  
Kolesnik



Ella Arlene Kozak



Vance Griffen  
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Sophia C. Lawton



Ezra F. Louer



Autumn Marie Lilly  
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Tassilo Luksch



William Maheu



Jayden Mahoney



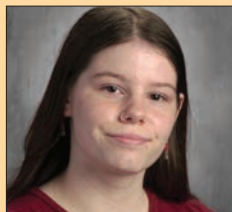
Mirabelle Markowski



Naomi Elise  
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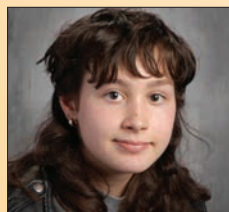
Thomas McGarry



Aislynn McGill



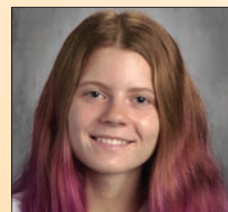
Elizabeth Frances  
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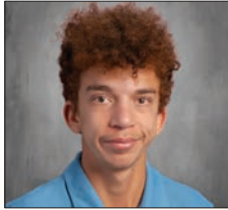
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Elijah Munson



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Finn Myers



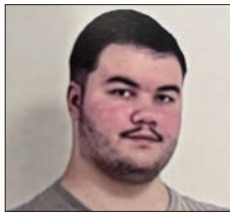
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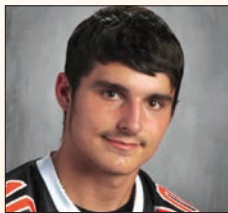
Maggie Noble



Luke A. Nuceder



Stephen  
Nuciolo Jr.



Heath Odell



Haakon Olsen



Lexi Orleans



Margaret Orten



Aiden James  
Pellerin



Emily Pierro



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Logan Smith



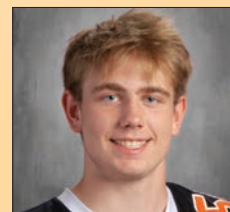
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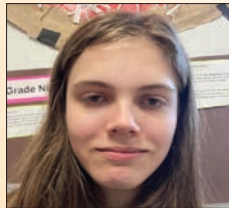
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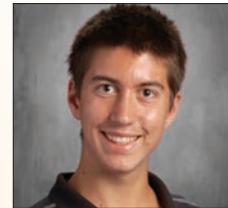
Kegan James Stone



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VUHS SENIOR CONNOR Brogan competes in a recent 400-meter race at the Middlebury College track in a meet hosted by the MUHS team. Independent photo/Steve James

## Brogan's VUHS career was transformative

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — As recent Vergennes Union High School grad Connor Brogan tells it, his career at the school did not get off to the best of starts.

Brogan said when he looks back he sees an 8th- and 9th-grader who was not physically fit, lacked social skills, and tended to sit on the sidelines.

"I guess I found the transition from elementary to middle school a little rough. I was a little less socially adept," Brogan said.

But few would make those observations about Brogan now, something he acknowledges.

"My whole transformation physically and confidence-wise was really big for me, going from an unathletic ... little kid, and a little kind of closed off, to now I'd say I'm pretty confident," he said. "I'm fairly well liked around the school, I hope, and I'm pretty physically fit. I'm happy with that."

So how did he change over (See Connor Brogan, Page 14)



CONNOR BROGAN

# Connor Brogan

*(Continued from Page 13)*

the years?

He took to the stage and has worked his way into a significant role in the most recent spring musical. He sings in the school chorus. He joined the school's student-run social justice club, Full Send, and served as the master of ceremonies for the recent VUHS day honoring social justice causes.

He joined the school's track team and now runs 400 meters in under a minute. He got into weightlifting and has deadlifted 315 pounds, and has taken up boxing.

Brogan points to late in the ninth grade as pivotal in his maturation — he had rebuilt his social connections after the COVID quarantine years and had begun to get into shape.

“Right around the end of

9th grade was when I got into working out,” Brogan said. “Then I felt I started hitting my stride. I finally formed a really solid group of friends as well.”

Also, in 9th grade he signed up for the school's annual spring musical, working on the crew that moved stage props between scenes of “Bye, Bye, Birdie.” He was hooked and started acting and singing.

“I was way too scared to go up on the stage and do anything (at first). I was too unpopular. So I hid back and moved stuff around,” Brogan said. “It was a super incredible experience. Such an amazing group of people ... Every year I started progressively getting bigger and bigger roles.”

Did theater help his confidence after starting out not wanting to be seen on stage?

“Oh, absolutely,” Brogan said.

“It's nice feeling you can hit your stride doing something.”

Encouragement from VUHS teachers also helped him grow. Karl Steen's 9th-grade Theater Arts class stands out for Brogan; he credits Steen for encouraging him to pursue his stage career.

“He really helped me get out of my shell and performing,” Brogan said. “I've always admired him as a teacher.”

As a 10th-grader Brogan had two small performing roles in “Newsies” after which VUHS chorus teacher Cailin O'Hara recruited him, and he signed on the next year.

“That was really awesome, feeling like not only was I decent in singing, but that I had a real talent for it, and having that be recognized,” he said.

Brogan also singled out as supportive his Spanish and

morning meeting teacher Kristine Kirkaldy, PE teacher Karyn Choromanski, Social Studies teacher David Grabin and English teacher Chris Wyckoff.

He added a verbal bouquet to all the school's faculty.

“All the teachers are really awesome and super involved with their students,” Brogan said.

## TRACK AND BEYOND

Friends also steered him in the right direction. Brody McGuire talked him into joining the track & field team as an 11th-grader. Brogan flirted with the shot put, but turned to running. During his first season he struggled with injuries and rarely competed. He stuck with it anyway. He enjoys the coach, his friends on the team, and the group ethic of cheering for others.

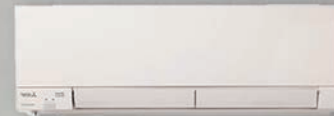
“I loved the team, and Brad  
*(See Brogan, Page 15)*

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# Brogan

*(Continued from Page 14)*

(Castillo), the coach, is an amazing guy,” Brogan said.

This season he started running the 400, partly because another friend on the team, Isabelle van Voorst, suggested it. Now his time in the event has caught the attention of the track & field coach at New Hampshire’s Colby-Sawyer College — his next academic stop.

Before Brogan took up track, another friend, James Buskey, introduced him to powerlifting.

Brogan had been working out in his basement and, “I was terrible at PE, terrible at everything.”

They would drive up at 4 a.m. to Lift VT in Williston, and they worked hard and made friends.

Brogan described the lifting environment as similar to that of the track team.

“When someone hits a PR, lifts a really heavy weight, everyone cheers,” Brogan said.

But as much as he enjoyed powerlifting, he has turned instead to boxing. His friend Tyrelle Lavoie fought in the New England Golden Gloves in Lowell, Mass., and Brogan tagged along, calling it “an unreal experience.”

Lavoie gave him boxing gloves and brought him to his gym to try it out in the summer before his junior year, and Brogan was hooked.

“I haven’t competed yet. I’ve just started off. I’m still training,” Brogan said. “But I really want to compete.”

Along the way, Brogan also joined Full Send, which as well as working at VUHS has

presented around the state and at a conference in Rhode Island. A friend recruited him, but Brogan also believes in what Full Send is trying to accomplish — inclusivity, equality and acceptance for all regardless of differences.

“I think it’s a really honorable cause, especially now,” Brogan said. “I can’t speak too much on social justice, obviously. I’m a straight white guy. I don’t have too much experience being discriminated against. But I think

it’s really valuable, and I think a lot of people don’t realize that racism is real, and that those kinds of discrimination are actually out there ...

“Most people, if you ask them, don’t think there’s tons of that in Vermont, but you hear from these people, yeah, this stuff is happening. So that was a really eye-opening experience.

So I think it’s really important to advocate.”

## LOOKING BACK, AHEAD

Brogan’s parents split at about the time he was born in the St. Albans area, and he has lived with his mother since, mostly in the Addison Northwest School District. He is on good terms with both parents.

More recently, his mother moved up north to Sheldon. In order to spend the end of his high school years at VUHS, Brogan has been living with family friends in Vergennes to whom he is profoundly attached and grateful, Tom and Rachel Cosgrove.

“They’re basically an aunt and uncle to me. We’re incredibly close. I’ve known them since I was really, really young,” he said.

**“I really want to box professionally,” Brogan said. “I really, really love boxing, everything about it.”**

— Connor Brogan



**CONNOR BROGAN, BOYS 400M**

“They’ve always treated me like family.”

Next, at Colby-Sawyer he plans to study exercise science and follow that up with a career in sports medicine, possibly as an athletic trainer.

But that could be Plan B. There are boxing clubs in and around New London, home to Colby-Sawyer.

“I really want to box professionally,” Brogan said. “I really, really love boxing, everything about it.”

That goal has created mixed feelings in his family.

“My mom is supportive, and my dad is iffy on it, but neither of them really like the idea,” Brogan said.

When drawbacks were mentioned, such as possible brain

damage, Brogan was unfazed.

“I think I’m doing alright so far,” he said.

For sure, Brogan is no longer someone who second-guesses himself. He was asked if he could, would he do anything differently at VUHS?

“Are there things that I regret? Absolutely,” Brogan said. “But even if I had the opportunity, I don’t think I would change any of that, because I don’t think I would be me without any of that stuff. I’ve learned from it, and it’s helped shape who I am and some of my core beliefs and values and all that cliché stuff. I think your experiences are what make you. So even the bad stuff I would take on. I’m pretty satisfied with who I am as a person.”

# Congratulations

VERGENNES UNION HIGH SCHOOL



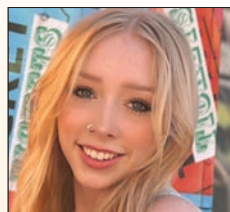
**Robin V Andrus**



**Hayden Lewis Bassett**



**Gerrit Beenen**



**Emma Katherine Bergmans**



**Savannah J Blaise**



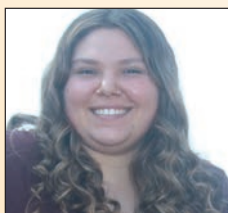
**Hannah Botala**



**Connor William Brogan**



**Evan Thomas Brooks**



**Tapanga Marie Burchard**



**Cheyenne Marie Carr**



**Blue Sunhwa Chouinard**



**Claire Watchida Clark**



**Owen Michael Collette**



**Mary Elizabeth Cosgrove**



**Rory Ann Couture**



**Ethan Croke**



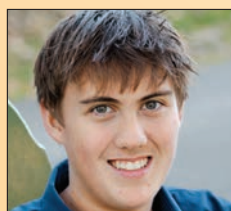
**Luke Nelson Davis**



**Morgan McKenzie Davis**



**Axel Theodorus de Boer**



**Gunnar Alexander DeGraaf**



**Chase Delorme**



**Brayden Richard Duggento**



**Hailey M Dusablon**



**Kira L Emmons**



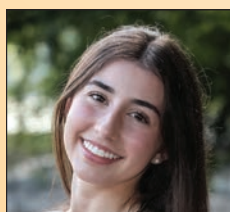
**Dylan Essex**



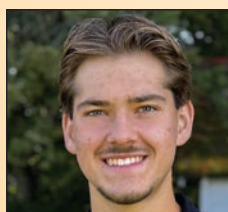
**Grey Fearon**



**Dylan Field**



**Rachel Emily Gebo**



**Spencer Ryan Gebo**



**Jackson James Gernander**



From your first steps through our doors to your final walk across the stage—thank you for letting us be part of your journey.

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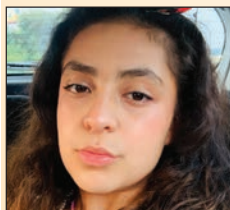
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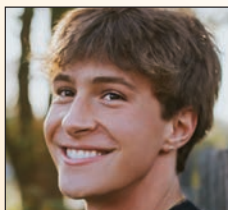
VERGENNES UNION HIGH SCHOOL



**Nina  
Morales-Giron**



**Reed McKinley  
Grant**



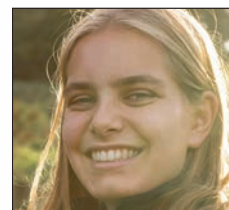
**Spencer Grimm**



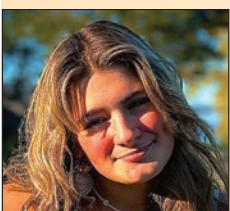
**Ethan John Hallock**



**Austen Joseph  
Hamel**



**Torrey C Hanna**



**Rory Ellen Hendee**



**Kendra Alexis  
Jackson**



**Sophia Ann  
Johnson**



**Kay Alea Kenyon**



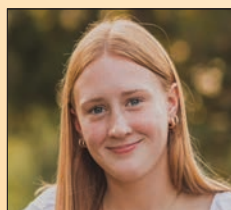
**Mia Beth  
Kutchukian**



**Katelyn Anne  
Laberge**



**Megan Haley  
LaFontaine**



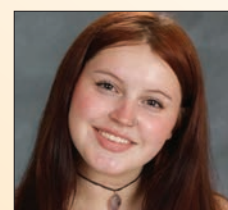
**Hannah Lynn  
Larrow**



**Brody McGuire**



**Megan Laura  
Mentzer**



**Elsa Michaels**



**Tryphene Samuela  
Miguel**



**Ava Elizabeth Mullin**



**Zachary P Norris**



**Elizabeth Olenga**



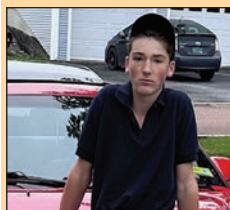
**Charles Ouellette**



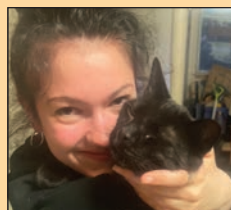
**Reese Ronald  
Paquette**



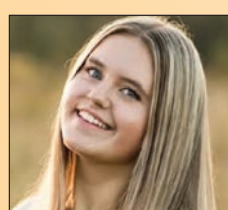
**Dakota Parker**



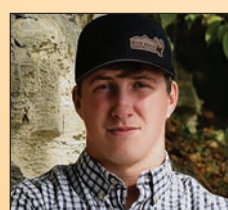
**Devon M Pierce**



**Isabella M Porter**



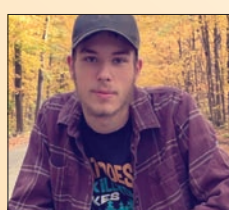
**Hailey Rose  
Preston**



**Isaac Preston**



**Kestin  
Puechi-Sproul**



**Xavier M Redmond**

# Congratulations

VERGENNES UNION HIGH SCHOOL



Corey Lee Ramon



Lily B Root



Felipe Sanchez-Gonzalez



Francisco Santiago-Loyola



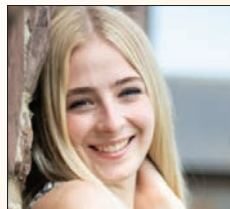
Gabriel Lewis Scribner



Zoey Elizabeth Waas



Garrett W. Stearns



Kaitlyn Lorraine Wagner



Tenley Whitehouse



Kiersten Charlotte Wigle



Jing Mae Williams

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# Art leads Roberts from Mount Abe to Montreal

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Addison County may be a small community, but the opportunities offered at each of its local high schools can unlock doors to places and possibilities far beyond the Champlain Valley.

That's certainly been the case for Nola Roberts, a 2025 Mount Abraham Union High School graduate. The Monkton resident is headed to Montreal's Concordia University in the fall, a step she feels ready to take thanks in part to the experiences she's had at Mount Abe.

"The ceramics department and the language department have definitely guided that decision to go abroad," Roberts said during a recent interview. "The influence of my ceramics teacher (Ryan Strobel) has also guided what I've

wanted to do. I've been very lucky to have taken the classes that I have and also have the opportunities to come into the ceramics department during lunch blocks or free blocks."

Now at the end of her time at the Bristol school, Roberts said she'd encourage current and incoming students to experiment with the different courses that high school affords.


"High school is so special in the way that it's a completely free education, and this year especially ... I've definitely been trying to take advantage of any classes that I've had any interest in," Roberts said.

"Taking advantage of the career center and the virtual classes and the college virtual classes that are all offered by the school is such a great (See Nola Roberts, Page 21)



OPPORTUNITIES IN AND outside of the arts at Mount Abraham Union High School have helped encourage recent grad Nola Roberts to continue pursuing her passions abroad at Montreal's Concordia University this fall. Roberts recommends other students experiment with the different activities and courses offered during their time in high school.

Photo courtesy of Nola Roberts



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• Anya Grace Szczecinski • Joy Beth Trombly • Idries Shawn Rios Twyman • Esme Marie Visco-Lyons • Jordan Richard Wedge • Allison B. Wells • Sydney I. Wetmore • Zoie C. Whitcomb • Tyler White • Rowan V. Zeno

Congratulations to the faculty, staff and administrators who helped these kids along - you are also appreciated

SOAR EAGLES SOAR!

# Nola Roberts

*(Continued from Page 20)*

way to try out different things,” Roberts continued. “Through those opportunities at Mount Abe that have been offered to me, I’ve found interests, and they’ve really guided me toward what I’ve wanted to do in the future.”

As an artist, Roberts has used the variety of art courses offered at Mount Abe to home in on her interests.

“I’ve taken metal design and art and technology, along with the drawing and painting courses at Mount Abe,” she recalled. “I knew I really wanted to go into an artistic field, but it definitely took me a while to find something that I really loved.”

Roberts noted that she’s found a lot of joy in mixing different art disciplines she’s studied at Mount Abe, such as painting and ceramics.

“It’s been a very interesting thing to explore and has been

very supported by Mount Abe’s departments and teachers,” she said.

Roberts has been particularly involved in the school’s ceramics department.

“With the department and some of my friends we’ve run Mount Abe craft fair tables, selling pots and pieces from students to run events for the Clay Club,” she said.

The Mount Abe Clay Club was established by fellow student Maya Menzel.

“It’s an afterschool club where (Strobel) has allowed students to come in and do extra work on their pieces after school,” Roberts explained.

The club has also done some fundraising, with the money allowing students on a field trip to use a special type of firing process known as “Raku firing.”

Roberts has taken advantage of opportunities to pursue artistic



**TEAPOT BY NOLA ROBERTS**

endeavors outside of school, such as through classes offered at studios in Bristol and South Burlington. More recently, she’s also been a part of Mount Abe’s track and field team.

Looking back on her time in high school, Roberts said virtual courses like AP Art History are the ones that stick out to her. She’s also enjoyed exploring languages through a virtual course on American Sign Language and French classes at Mount Abe.

“Before I had decided to take language, the idea of going abroad or to a different country had never crossed my mind as a possibility for college,” she said.

Roberts can remember the exact moment that changed. During her freshman year, she recalls hearing from an upperclassman at the school who’d just returned from a semester abroad in France.

“Her entire experience was so interesting to me and really opened my eyes to this whole world of possibilities of studying in different areas and learning about different cultures, which really ties into this interest in art history that I have,” she said.

Roberts credits Strobel and other teachers as another impactful part of her time at Mount Abe, so much so that she and other students rallied

*(See Roberts, Page 26)*

**Wishing the Best  
to the  
Class of 2025!**



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**Good Luck  
to All of Our 2025 Graduates!**

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Hailee Allen



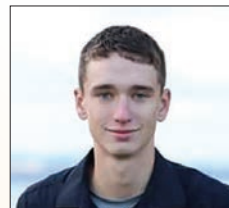
Isabelle L. Allenson



Chase Atkins



Lorenzo Atocha



Peyton Ball



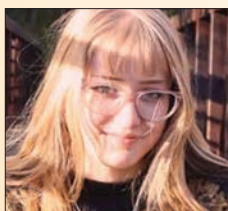
Jack E. Barnum



Hailey Marie Bartlett



Fallon Evelyn Bataille



Sophie Batten



Rosemary Adelaide Wisdom Behounek



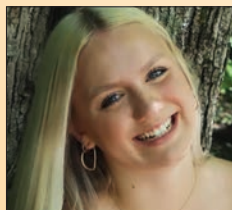
Lily Benoit



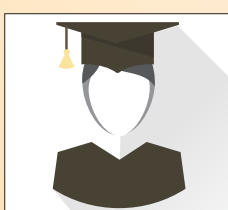
Jada Iris Boise



Adam W. Bolduc



Hayley Mae Bromley



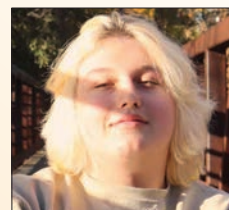
Elaine Beatrice Burt



Safoura Camara



Lilyana R. Case



David Sean Charlebois



Mackenzie J. Chase



Ethan Chasse



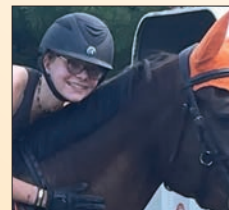
Mollee A. Codding



Riley Coffey



Owen Collins



Madeline Condil



Ruby Connell



Gavin A. Conrad



Lauren Alice Cousino



Ryan M. Cross



Nichole L. Crowe



William D. Deering

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Alina Donaldson



Ethan W. Dunbar



Whitney Dykstra



Ian M. Emilio



Nicholas S. Fox



Kayla Friend



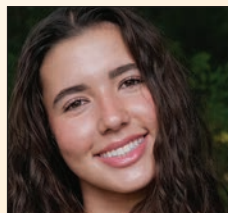
Brendan A. Gebo



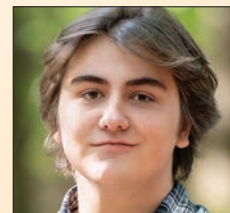
Aricin Griffin



Mackenzie P. Griner



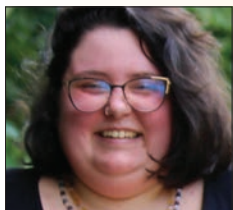
Hazel Guillmette



Finn D. Harris



Bella Hartwell



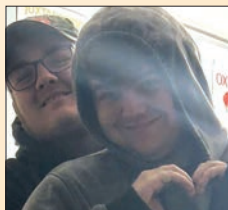
Ella Marie Heath



Ruby June Hellier



Joseph Alexander  
Davidson Henley



Ira Quesnel Hines



JD Jacobs



Connor James



MacKenzy Reese  
Jennings



Autumn Jerome



Kyle Johnston



Michael LaRock



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Tyler S. Linehan



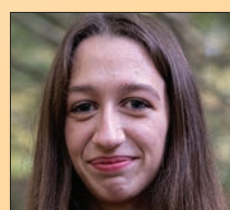
Brailey Marie  
Livingston



Hayden Lutz



Angelica Mahoney



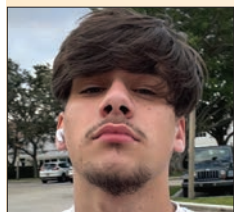
Caitlyn Marcotullio



Regan P. Mayhew

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Caleb Thomas Meacham



Maya A. Menzel



Peter Meyer



Lizzie J. Mikkelsen



Kaleigh Murphy



Damian Newell



Adeline Nezin



Moises Otero



Louisa Knox Painter



Abigail R. Parker



Elise Parker



Eleanor Florian Payne-Vinick



Connor J. Peck



Halle Perkins



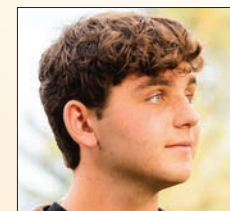
Alexis Perlee



Megan A. Porter



Tucker W. Porter



Jacob Prouty



Brayden A. Pudvah



Ethan Ramsey



Nola J. Roberts



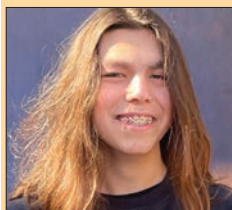
Tyler Thomas Roorda



Namid Ruiz-Warnock



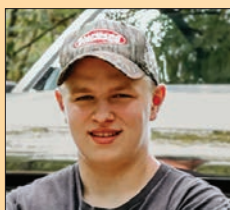
Austin Rule



William Chris Rule



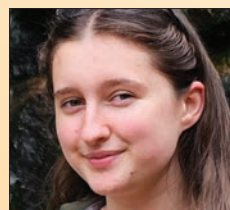
Evan R. Russell



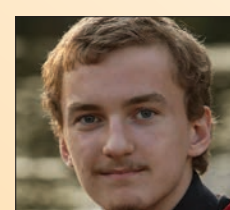
Dom Saunders



Sam Schoendorf



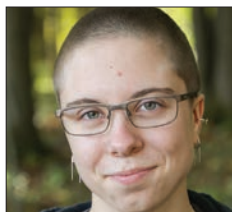
Ivy Evelyn Schulte



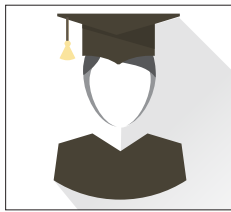
Elliot Senecal

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Maya W. Shea



Faith Stearns



Avery Stetson



Hazel Bee Stoddard



Anya Grace Szczecinski



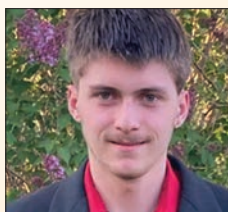
Joy Beth Trombly



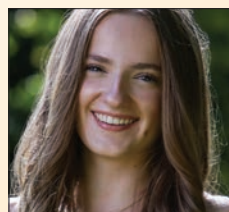
Idries Shawn Rios Twyman



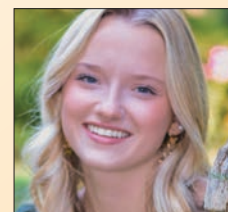
Esme Marie Visco-Lyons



Jordan Richard Wedge



Allison B. Wells



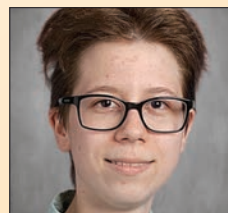
Sydney I. Wetmore



Zoie C. Whitcomb



Tyler White



Rowan V. Zeno

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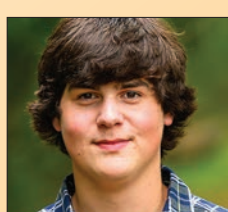
OTTER VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL ADDISON COUNTY GRADUATES



Elisha Bagley



Jordan Bertrand



Fletcher Crane



Wyatt Fallon

# Roberts

*(Continued from Page 21)*

around educators at the school when it appeared several positions were destined for the chopping block last spring.

At the time, the Mount Abraham Unified School District, and several others around the state, was struggling to get a budget for the upcoming fiscal year approved by voters.

MAUSD officials had at one point issued Reduction in Force (RIF) notices to 17 teachers, reflecting a “worst-case scenario” if the district wasn’t able to pass a budget by July 1. They later identified additional savings that could be realized without acting on any RIFs.

“A lot of people in the school were very upset because a lot of these teachers were very much favorites,” Roberts said of the RIFs.

She worked with other students to meet with administrators and

organize a school-wide walkout with over 150 participants.

Roberts said it was meaningful to her and other students that school officials ultimately found other areas to achieve savings in.

“It’s such a small community, but the fact that we have such a thriving art department with our musical theater and our language (department) and the ceramics and jewelry opportunities that Mount Abe offers, it was just something that hit a lot of people really hard,” she said.

Roberts said she believes the various opportunities offered at the school help form a sense of community at Mount Abe.

“There’s so many places for kids to find communities that have just been so important to see form,” she said. “As an art kid, I’ve definitely made a lot of friends through the art department, and it’s just such a nice thing that the school has, to have



**PLATE AND SCULPTURE BY NOLA ROBERTS**

the opportunities in the arts that would usually not be considered vital in a high school.”

Roberts acknowledges that leaving the Mount Abe community for a new one in Montreal will be a major shift, but she’s looking forward to the opportunity.

“I really wanted to go to Montreal because of that different cultural experience I know it’s going to offer, specifically with

the language and also it being such a large city,” she said. “I live on a dirt road in Monkton, and so the difference between that and a large city is definitely going to be a big change, but I’m very excited for that difference.”

Roberts plans to study art history and studio art at Concordia, with the hope of going on to explore museum work, curation or another career path in the arts.

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## CAREER CENTER 2025

The Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center provides vocational and technical education to students and adults in the 17 Addison County towns served by the Addison Central, Addison Northwest and Mount Abraham Unified school districts. Students step away from their home high school to take part in hands-on and classroom instruction at the Career Center's main campus and satellite campus in Middlebury. On May 29, the Career Center held a Celebration of Learning at the Middlebury Union High School Auditorium where it recognized youngsters (and one adult) who had participated in nine of its professional training programs.

What follows are photos from most of the 12 programs and names of those who completed the programs.



### Welding

Left to right: Namid Ruiz-Warnock, Isabella Porter and Vance Larocque.

# CAREER CENTER 2025



## Automotive Technology

Left to right: Adam Bolduc, Felipe Sanchez-Gonzalez, Austin Rule, Owen Collins, Gerrit Beenen, Brendan Gebo, Nicholas Bakerian and Ethan Ramsey. Other program grads are Tyler Linehan, Dylan Pennell and Jordan Wedge.

# Congratulations to all of the 2025 Graduates and especially to our current team members!



Ethan Delorme,  
MUHS



Owen Collins,  
MAUHS



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## CAREER CENTER 2025



### Design & Illustration

Left to right: Georgie Kiel, Lily Root, Chris Rule, Damian Newell, Maggie Noble, Sam Wootten, Silas Quinn, Maggie Kingensmith, Evva Dicovitsky and Hannah Botala. Other program grads are Peter Chiles, Conner Dempsey and Tim Ploegman.



### Medical Professions

Left to right: Michaela Charbonneau, Subia Khan, Piper Farnsworth, Jada Boise, Megan Porter, Sydney Wetmore, Lily Case, Paden Lathrop and Ruby Hellier. Other program grads are Kylie Bean, Solstice Binder, Eliza Olenga, Lexy Perlee, Mckenna Raymond and Maya Shea.



### Sustainable Agriculture

Left to right: Alex Henley, Megan LaFontaine, Ruby Hubbell and Hailee Allen. Other program grads are Hailey Bartlett, Mackenzie Chase, Madeline Condil, Michael LaRock, Brailey Livingston, Erin Whipple, Zoie Whitcomb and Alexxis Zeno.

## CAREER CENTER 2025



### Diesel Power Technology

Left to right: Chase Boudreau, Peyton Ball, Connor James, Joshua Malbon, Kegan Stone, Francisco Santiago-Loyola and Xavier Redmond. Also a program grad is Isaac Preston.

### Natural Resource Management

Left to right: Jack Barnum, Tucker Porter, Zachary Norris, Riley Coffey and Gavin Conrad. The other program grad is Will Aranguiz Schroeder.



### Education & Human Services

Left to right: Kassidy Brown, Riley Amerio, Zoie Whitcomb, Keenan Chicoine and Vanessa Brown. Other program grads are Hayley Bromley, Meredith Cameron, Sophia Lawton, Adeline Nezin, Elliot Senecal, Mackenzie Thompson and Alexis Whitney.

Other Hannaford Career Center programs and their 2025 grads are **Culinary Arts** (Asher Bent, Gunnar Boe, Jordan Couture, Nina Giron, Dominic Jones, John Lafountain, Finn Myers, Madison Selleck and Avigail Wheeler); **Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering** (Michael Sayre-Deering); **Addison Repertory Theatre** (Gabe Schmitt, Bea Hooper, Lucas Flinner, Nick Carpenter, MaryBeth Cosgrove, Torrey Hanna, Mirabelle Markowski and Penelope Stein); and **Construction Technology** (Jayden Mahoney, Aiden Pellerin, Will Maheu, Austin Gendron, Michael Betourney, Avery Carl and Levi Norris).

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