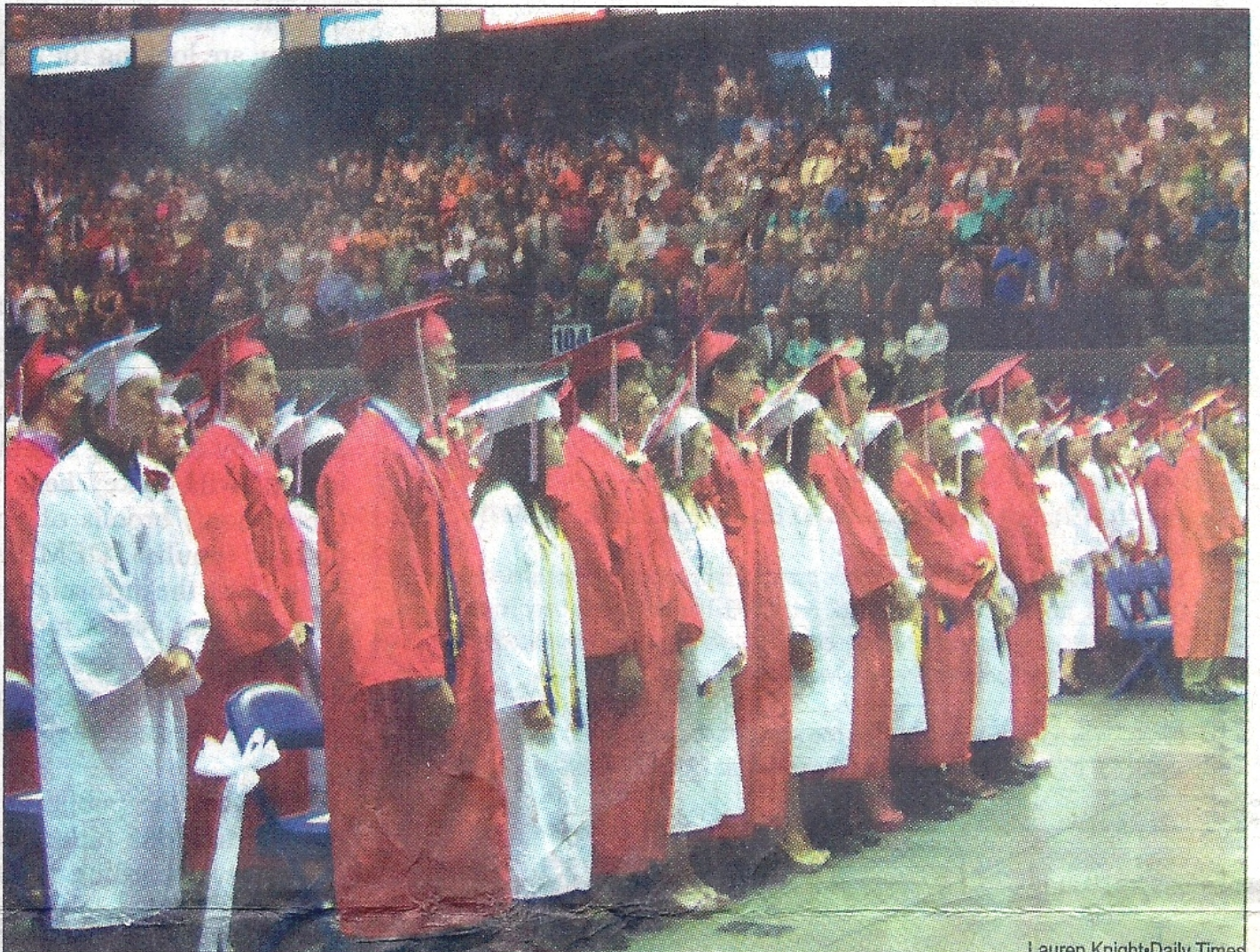


2011 Coventry High School Graduation



Lauren Knight•Daily Times

Coventry High School graduation took place last night. Over 300 students graduated, 86 of them with honors. Boston University, URI and Northeastern are just some of the colleges they will be attending. See A-6 for more pictures.

86 students graduate with honors

LAUREN KNIGHT

lknight@ricentral.com

COVENTRY—Last night, the graduating Class of '11 enthusiastically walked across the stage and stepped “directly into the future,” in the words of the class president, Viana Newton.

Over 300 seniors graduated, with 86 of them receiving honors from the Rhode Island Honor Society and the National Honor Society. The schools they will be attending in the fall include Boston University, Northeastern University and the University of Rhode Island.

A slide show of senior photos was played on a large screen before the ceremonies commenced for friends and family to view while waiting.

Newton sang the National Anthem and the high school AFJROTC Honor Guard and Color Guard presented the Posting of the Colors and the Prisoner of War/Missing in Ac-

tion Honor Table.

Michael Hobin, principal of the school, spoke before the students and honored those whom the faculty considered well-rounded individuals. He awarded 21 students.

Kathy Patenaude, school committee chairperson, and Gary Cote, president of the town council, both addressed the graduating class.

Patenaude quoted Kent Keith's paradoxical commandments and challenged the students to always do what is good, right and true regardless of circumstance.

In her president's message to the study body, Newton encouraged her fellow students to work hard, be caring, dedicated and driven, and embrace the opportunities ahead of them just as they all did at Coventry High School.

“We learned the power of taking action and making things happen for ourselves—individually and as a class,” said Newton. She reminisced about the past four years, the joys and the memories.

“I have a challenge for all of us tonight,” she stated. “Make

these next four years just as special as the last.”

Christopher Masse, the valedictorian, focused on the relationships he knew that each of the students built in high school. He stated that while most may expect him to speak about hard work and striving for success, he values investing in another type of success as well.

“I believe that for many of us, the most memorable moments of high school were the ones we were able to share together with those closest to us,” said Masse. “Perhaps the greatest lesson from our four years at Coventry High School is that true happiness is always shared.”

He stated that he would be willing to bet that each of the students could name one or two people that have helped them come to this day—like a sports coach, neighbor, teacher or fellow student.

In Stephen Pratt's speech, the salutatorian, he highlighted the valuable life lessons that his family, friends and teachers

See COVENTRY, Page A-2

Coventry High School graduation

Continued from Page A-1

have taught him.

“I have been very lucky that [they] taught me to never give up, never back down to anyone, and to chase after all my goals for the future,” he said.

Pratt explained during his speech that his mother and aunt, followed later by grandparents, had fled from Cuba in 1962 to avoid Fidel Castro’s communist

reign. His family’s livelihood had been taken away by Castro’s control and their perseverance and determination allowed them to prosper in the United States.

“Like my grandfather, who never gave up on his dreams, I hope that we too will never give up on our dreams,” said Pratt. “And we all have overcome challenges as evidenced by our presence here tonight.”