

Top three seniors at Coventry graduate tonight



Lauren Knight•Daily Times

Christopher Masse, valedictorian, Stephen Pratt, salutatorian, and Nicholas Paiva, ranked third in the class, will graduate tonight from Coventry High School.

They head off to URI and Boston College in the fall

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COVENTRY—The top three graduating seniors in the Class of '11 will walk tall tonight at their ceremonies, consummating the end of a four year academic experience at Coventry High School.

Christopher Masse, the valedictorian, Stephen Pratt, the salutatorian, and Nicholas Paiva, ranked third in the class, all have nothing but praise for their high school experiences and exude their enthusiasm for the years to come.

Throughout high school, Masse spent much of his time running cross country. He also considers the memories with his friends a significant part of his four years at the school.

Masse stated that cross country has not only enabled him to meet new people, but also to “learn a lot about time management and dedication.”

Extracurricular activities amongst the three students were significant factors to what they believe made their high school experience so special.

“The extracurricular [activities] have made me want to network, reach out to people and not be shy to talk to them,” said Pratt. His experiences include cross country, student government, advanced band and jazz band. “I’ve learned a lot about time management, patience and teamwork with everyone else in the band.”

For Paiva, a big part of his social life has been hockey and cross country. He stated that his freshman year, the hockey team was struggling with only three wins. By his senior year, the team had grown and won the state championship.

“It kind of completed my senior year,” said Paiva.

In addition to sports, Masse, Pratt and Paiva were also all enrolled in advanced placement (AP) courses. While their experiences differ, each felt they are fully prepared for their future endeavors.

“My English classes have been a big help over the past few years,” said Masse. In his opinion, he is more of a “math and science kind of person.”

Masse explained that his English classes have pushed him to improve his public speaking abilities and helped him to become more outgoing.

Masse also said that when he first entered AP History, the

workload was overwhelming.

“By junior year, I could get a handle on the work and had learned how to study on my own,” he said. “It helped me form a more individual focus on how I can study and prepared me well for college.”

For Paiva, a physics class he took sparked an interest on the subject and gave him some direction for his future.

“The class discussions made me question things that I want to learn more about now,” said Paiva. He stated that his plans are to enter college as a mechanical engineer major but is “not sure exactly what I will want to go into since engineering is a broad field.”

Pratt was also enrolled in honors and AP courses and stated that he felt they established a good work ethic in order to excel and succeed. He, too, plans to major in mechanical engineering.

“I feel like my total experience has hit all aspects of life in a way,” said Pratt. As far as his future in college, he stated that he wants to “get really involved, especially within the engineering department.”

Pratt and Paiva will attend the University of Rhode Island in the fall. Masse will attend

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Boston College and will major in finance at the Carroll School of Management.

Paiva explained that after college, he is interested in fossil fuels and looking at alternative fuel sources.

"I want to look at more efficient means of using fuel, to get better gas mileage, for example," he said. "Wind power and

solar power are all interesting to me as we deplete our resources."

Since Pratt was young, he dreamed that he would design theme park rides with the engineering department at Walt Disney, designing the hotels, cruises or rides. He expressed that if those plans failed, he would be interested in military airplanes.

"I'd like to design future fighter jets," said Pratt.

Masse said he plans to take a variety of finance and business classes first before deciding what career he would like to fully pursue.

Masse, Pratt and Paiva are all enthusiastic for what college will bring, but will also miss the relationships and experiences they had at Coventry High School.

"It's a double-edged blade," said Masse. "I'm going to miss my friends but look forward to college."