

## Class of 2012 Closes One Chapter, Opens Countless More

The Commencement ceremony ushered CHS seniors into the next phase of their lives.

By [Lauren Costa](#) | June 8, 2012



After 13 years of schooling, countless quizzes, tests, required reading assignments, portfolios and four years of Capstone preparation, the [Coventry High School](#) Class of 2012 officially ended their time as Coventry students.

406 students donned their red and white cap and gowns and received their diplomas Thursday at the University of Rhode Island's Ryan Center.

The graduates, along with family and friends, were addressed by Principal Michael Hobin, who likened the evening to one of many choices made in Milton Bradley's 'The Game of Life'.

"Your choices will dictate many outcomes," said Hobin. "What is inevitable is that your life, like the game, will always move forward. Tonight in your seat, you have already made choices, which will impact your future."

He pointed out the importance of staying focused and working toward goals even when times get difficult and stressed that the choices made as the students move forward will dictate the quality of life that they enjoy.

"Never be afraid to start over and improve your chances for success, always meet twists and turns on the road forward with courage and conviction," he said. "Play the game of life with caring family and friends."

Superintendent Michael Convery pointed out that many of the graduates will be involved in careers that have yet to be created due to the ever-evolving world of technology that will lead to new services and industries.

"Let tomorrow be your gateway to new opportunities and certainly many new decisions and choices," he encouraged. "Each of you has something special and unique to offer the world. Go out there; love, live and study. Work hard but above all make the most of this amazing opportunity you have at this time."

School Committee Chairperson Kathy Patenaude pointed out to the graduates the importance of having empathy towards others as they make their way in the world. Town Council Vice-President Kerry McGee followed with a brief address in which he pointed out just how fast time passes and that the students should take advantage of every chance they are offered.

Class President, Nina Morelli in her spirited speech, expressed to her peers that they have endless opportunities ahead of them to look forward to and take hold of.

[Salutatorian Andy Chen](#) delivered a thought-provoking speech about keeping things simple in order to get the most from life.

"Life is best when it's simple and easy to understand," he began. "Instead of saying, 'I have a prospect that the populous sitting before me will have a consciousness prevalent of exuberance and grandeur,' wouldn't it be easier to say 'I hope you all have a life of happiness?' Life is about always remembering what is simple and true and not getting hung up on what is overly complicated."

He wrapped up his address with a quote from Bruce Lee, "Simplicity is the key to brilliance."

[Malaree Shields, the Class of 2012's valedictorian](#), spoke of how her family camping trips in New Hampshire as a child helped her learn how to conquer seemingly impossible tasks by turning them into a series of smaller challenges, using a game called "Next Tree" that would allow Malaree and her brother to conquer long hikes by reaching one tree after the next.

"High school is the first loop trail we complete tonight," she said. "As we embark on our journey in the 'real world', we may wander down several paths searching for our niche on this planet. At times we may stumble and get hurt; however, we must remember to keep moving forward to make it the next tree."



Attendees also had the opportunity to watch selections by the CHS Select Choir and Jazz Band before the graduates performed their final task as a class and turned their tassels, ushering themselves into a new and promising point in their lives.

*Editor's Note: Congratulations Class of 2012! Best of luck in the future!*