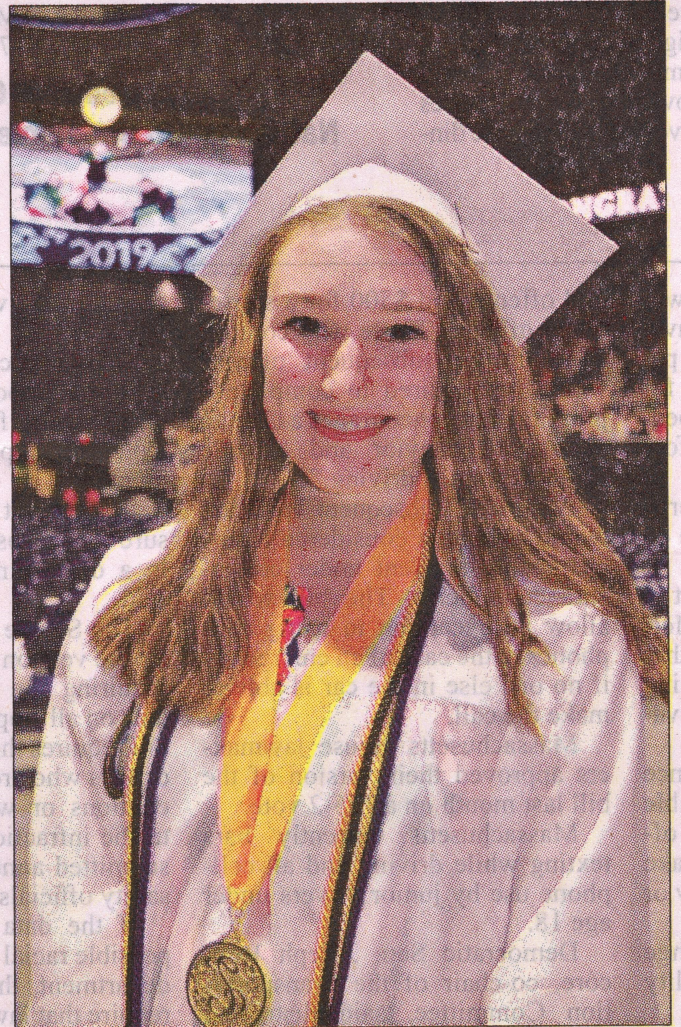


OUTSTANDING OAKERS



Photos by Kendra Gravelle

Abigail Sinotte, left, and Danielle Mattias, pictured during commencement ceremonies Thursday at the Ryan Center in South Kingstown, are the valedictorian and salutatorian of the Coventry High School Class of 2019, respectively. See tomorrow's edition of the Daily Times for more photos and coverage of 2019 commencement.

Sinotte, Mattias are Coventry High's top students for 2019

By KENDRA GRAVELLE

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COVENTRY — If Abigail Sinotte could leave rising Coventry High School students with any piece of advice, she said she'd encourage them to embrace what lies ahead.

"Take every opportunity you have — don't be scared of change," Sinotte, valedictorian of the class of 2019, said Wednesday, a day before crossing the stage at the Ryan Center to receive her high school diploma. "And make sure you work as hard as possible, but stay grounded and keep yourself balanced."

Sinotte will attend Brown University, where she plans to study applied mathematics in hopes of one day having a career in either the field of biostatistics or of actuarial science.

Sinotte had always known she'd like to pursue math beyond high school, but it was an AP statistics course that she said "totally changed" the way she felt about the subject.

"That totally changed everything for me," she said. "It was like, this is what I want to do."

And while she was never all that interested in science, Sinotte said her AP biology class helped her discover an appreciation for the field.

Having visited the Brown campus last summer, Sinotte said she'd actually expected that she'd end up at College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts.

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By KENDRA GRAVELLE

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COVENTRY — For Danielle Mattias, graduating from Coventry High School yesterday was bittersweet.

"I love the people there, I love the teachers," said Mattias, salutatorian of the class of 2019. "But I've been in Rhode Island my whole life, and I feel ready to try something new."

Having spent her entire life in the same home, Mattias will leave the comfort of Coventry in a few months to attend Ohio State University. She said she based her decision to attend Ohio State partly on the positive experiences of some family friends who matriculated there.

Then there's the university's football reputation.

"I'm a really big football fan," said Mattias, who added that after visiting campus she fell in love with the place.

Although she hasn't decided yet what she'd like to study as a major — she said she's gone back-and-forth between fields like math and international relations — Mattias said she definitely plans to continue taking Spanish courses.

"I think it's a beautiful language, and the culture around it is amazing," said Mattias, who's been studying Spanish since kindergarten and said she's thinking of declaring it as a minor.

In fact, Mattias has enjoyed studying the language so much that this year she did an internship with one of the high school's Spanish teachers. She also served for a

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Sinotte

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"But as soon as I got in, it was like, no, this is where I want to go," she said of getting accepted to Brown, adding that the university is "the perfect fit" for her and "the perfect distance" from home.

Sinotte said she's thrilled to be staying close to her family. In fact, it's her family who she credits for much of

her academic success.

"My mom and my sister are everything to me, and they just helped me so much, and give me so much motivation," Sinotte said, adding that the teachers she's had have always been happy to help, as well.

Throughout her high school career, Sinotte said she always strove to maintain a healthy balance between academics and extracurriculars.

"I think I found a really

good balance between my academics — I always took as many AP classes as possible — and making sure I got really involved," Sinotte said, adding she "always made time for friends and family."

As the treasurer of the National Honor Society and a senior mentor, Sinotte certainly kept busy. But of all the extracurriculars she participated in throughout high school, Sinotte was probably most passionate about her role co-founding Project Unify at the school.

"It focuses on the importance of including everybody — the isolated, the lonely, the bullied," said Sinotte, who worked alongside some classmates to bring the "choose to include movement" to Coventry.

"I'm really proud of that," she continued, adding that Brooke Macomber, the school's principal, has been a "huge support" in bringing the initiative to fruition.

"We went to [Macomber] with the idea and said, 'we want to make a difference in our school,' and she was like, 'alright, I'm on it,'" Sinotte continued. "And we just started."

A lifelong Coventry resident, Sinotte said Coventry High School gave her "the most perfect four years."

"I think I did a little bit of everything," she said. "I'm so grateful, and Coventry just gave me the perfect opportunity to do that."

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