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Whitley County Graduation 2026



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Turtle Town USA
CHURUBUSCO NEWS

Before You Graduate

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Finally, the end is in sight. After all those hours studying, writing papers and sweating the exams, you're finally set to graduate.

Even the effort and planning of the day itself might have come and gone. But you deserve to savor this moment, after all you've accomplished. Here's how:

DRINK IT ALL IN

Don't let these final moments of high school or college go by unrecognized. This time is irreplaceable, and nothing can truly compare to it. Take a moment to fully appreciate the sights and sounds of an ordinary school day, knowing these experiences will soon give way to something new.

REMEMBER MENTORS

Take a moment to remember the people who supported and guided you along the way. Staying in touch with mentors after graduation can open doors, offer perspective and provide encouragement as you move into your next chapter.



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BEGIN NETWORKING

For college graduates, building connections in your field can be a valuable next step. Casual conversations

with professionals — whether over coffee or through a brief introduction online — can help you learn more

about your industry and begin forming meaningful relationships.

ENCOURAGE OTHERS

Graduation marks a shared milestone, but the paths that follow will look different for everyone. Some will move quickly into careers or further education, while others take time to explore what comes next.

Supporting one another through these transitions helps maintain the sense of community built along the

way.

LOOK BACK FONDLY

Take pride in what you've accomplished. From early classes to final exams, each step contributed to reaching this milestone. Whether you finished at the top of your class or simply crossed the finish line, earning a degree reflects persistence and dedication. While each graduate's path will unfold differently, the achievement itself is shared — and lasting.

***Congratulations
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Grads!***

***We're proud to wish the Class of 2026
much success for tomorrow and beyond.***

Churubusco Family Dentistry, L.L.C.

Dr. Richard Zollinger

Dr. Dionne Hladin, Dr. Emily Johnson

& Staff

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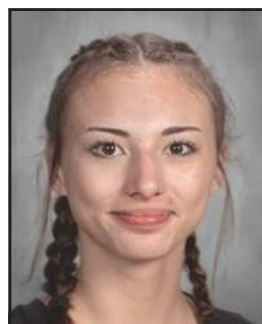
Bianski, Nancy



Bogard, Merisa



Campbell, Hunter



Chester, Ashlynn



Coil, Kelsee



Cook, James



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Crouse, Skylar



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Dhone, Landan



Doan, Elias



Driver, Ellie



Egly, William



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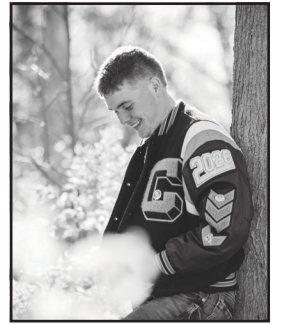
Korte, Kameron



Krider, Case



Lattimore, Cameron



Lawrence, Brody



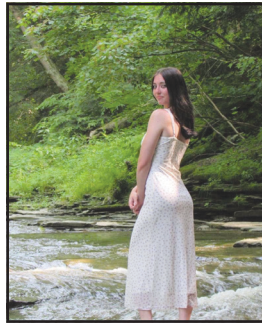
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Lemish, Emma



McConnell, Mataya



Milakovic, Briana



Morales, Christopher



Morris, Andrew



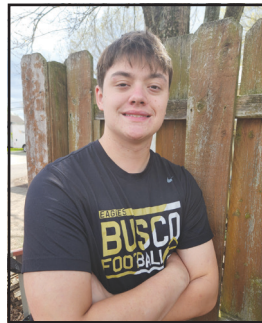
Nichter, Brooklyn



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Parker, Lydia



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Till, Keegan



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Vale, Elizabeth



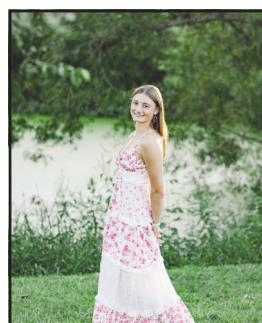
Van Houten, Ashlyn



Waggoner, Hunter



Whan, Aaron



Wiggs, Patricia



Wright, Jillian

Not pictured:
Sage Sloan
Kaiden Green
Isabel
Dickinson



Time to Move Out



SEAN LOCKE

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

What you choose for your future residence after graduation will be related to your after-school plans.

Are you moving from high school to college or technical school? Are you planning to jump directly into a job, or do you intend to further your studies in graduate school? What about a gap year?

LIVING ON CAMPUS

Students who leave high school for college may prefer to live on campus, particularly if they're attending a school far from home. If you decide to live independently during your studies, evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of renting an apartment versus living in a dormitory. Take note of costs, necessary utilities, and any travel expenses associated with your commitments. Some schools now require students to live on campus for a set time. These dormitories provide convenience, but usually close during school breaks.

YOUR FIRST PLACE

After finishing college, some might worry about living far from key industry hubs. But many employers now conduct video interviews to attract talent globally. If you've

secured a job, working with a real estate agent can help you find a suitable home or apartment within your budget. Even when moving far away, you can coordinate online with these home-selling pros to ensure all arrangements are settled before your relocation. Your parents may be able to help. Of course, not having a job lined up can complicate your living situation. You might consider relocating to a city with better job prospects or staying in your family residence while you look for work or get established in a job.

STAYING PUT?

If you're a high school graduate heading to a nearby uni-

versity, you might find that relocating isn't necessary. When college is close to your family home, commuting daily can be a cheaper, easier option. For high schoolers, it is far easier to balance a job while studying with a manageable commute – so look for nearby employment opportunities. Some college graduates return to their family homes after completing their education. This choice allows them to save money while searching for job opportunities or to take a momentary pause between school and work.

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Bramley, Maxwell



Braun, Elijah



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Brenneke, Lucas



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Brown, Hunter



Brown, Richard



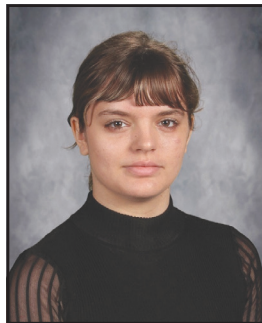
Buckley, Peyton



Bunn, Lileighana



Burns, Mackenzie



Burns, Madeline



Buzo Negron, Walter



Carmack, Kyndall



Carnahan, Emerson



Carpenter, Carson



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Crosson, Kaitlyn



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Farber, Katherine



Farris, Raymon



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Flanagan, Emma



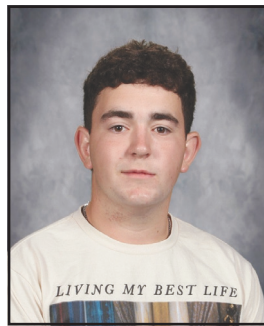
Foster, Kristina



Fowler, Wesley



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Frazier, Ian



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Frey, Logan



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Jones, Eli



Jones, Riley



Jordan, Reid



Joseph, Lillian



Kanagy, Toby



Kelley, Bryce



Kelly, Ilias



Kesling, Autumn



King, Alyson



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Lortie, James



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Marks, Joseph



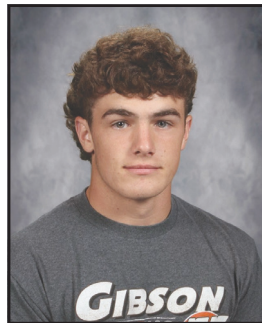
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McCain, Maleigha



McConnell, Mataya



McCoy, Noah



McElroy, Payton



McMahon, Keylee



Metzger, Amelia



Meyers, Landon



Michaud, Zoe



Michel, Hallie



Miller, Callahan



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Montel, Brienna



Moon, Maddox



More, Olivia



Mullett, Allison

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Mullineaux, Kallie



Mullins, Aiden



Murphy-Wass, Gavin



Myers, Collin



Myers, Mackenzie



Myers, Marissa



Newkirk, Jaden



Ni Yi, Qing



Noe, Mackenzie



Noonan, Cecelia



North, Jade



Ochoa Vranas, Ana



Odum, Keller



Oelschlager, Holly



Parke, Vivian



Parker, Allison



Parrish, Landin



Parrish, Trace



Patton, Baylie



Payne, Aaron



Peppler, Anna



Pequignot, Zane



Pomeroy, Holly



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Preston, Isaak



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Pursley, Emery

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Ridley, Bryce



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Rowe, Marshall



Ruiz, Jacob



Rumschlag, Breana



Sanders, Barbara



Sattison, Kendyl



Schaekel, Evelyn



Schultis, Vienna



Schuman, Jarod



Schuman, Karaline



Semons, Itzik



Sexton, Casandra



Shaffer, Grant



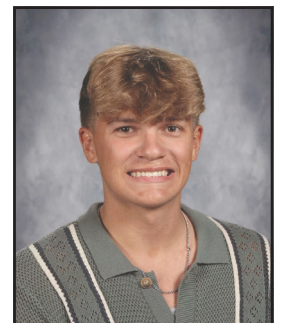
Shipman, Jonah



Shively, Autumn



Shively, Ebony



Shoemaker, Carter



Sigler, Ava



Skinner, Isaac



Smith, Amira



Smith, Gavin



Smith, Kaylin



Smith, Shelby

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Spohr, Allyssa



Stahl, Brynn



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Stolp, Olen



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Straub, Dylan



Street, Zoey



Summers, Emerson



Talati, Josh



Taulbee, Mackenzie



Taylor, Takoda



Terwilliger, Sophie



Tincher, Parker



Toles, Aaliyah



Tonkel, Anisa



Trahin, Josie



Traylor, Tyler



Trickle, Gavin



Trier, Alivia



Truman, Braxton



Tucker, Sanders



Van Buskirk, Sophia



VanRyn, Dean



VanZant, Jaxon



Vazquez, Jaxon



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Wagner, Selah



Waithira, Esperanza



Wallen, Kylie



Ward, Mylie



Ward, Sadie



Watkins, Hendrix



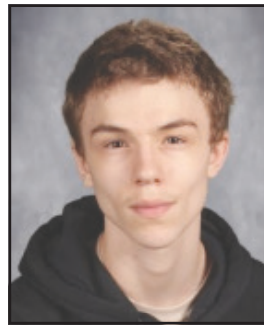
Waybright, Tyler



Weaver, Johnathon



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Wells, Justin



Western, Cora



Whiteman, Gabrielle



Wilkinson, Gracie



Wilkinson, Keaghan



Williams, Reid



Williamson, Kiersten



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Wooley, Brenden



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Young, Bryan



Zent, Laya



Ziko, Landon



Zimmerman, Riley



What Happens Next

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

There's no single path forward after graduation.

High school graduates are preparing their big move to college or technical school, while some college graduates may be considering a master's degree or going straight into their chosen careers.

Still others may take a "gap year" away.

Wherever you are headed, here are some things that help move you forward once that diploma or degree is in hand.

YOUR FINANCES

Whether you're off for more education or starting a new job, set up a budget before leaving the nest. Have your parents help; they've likely been doing it for years. Don't forget to set aside some for savings, too, in case of emergencies. (Oh, and be sure to define "emergency." A flat tire or visit to the ER is; late-night food deliveries are not.)

You'll need to set up a checking account and a savings account and, if you're going right into the workforce, a retirement account. If you don't know already, learn how taxes work and how much will be taken



SEAN LOCKE

out of each check.

HOUSEKEEPING DUTIES

Hopefully, you've picked up everyday skills like laundry, cooking and cleaning during your time at home. If not, start learning before you find yourself on your own. Once you get your first apartment or dorm room, you'll have to perform the basics of living on your own, including how to cook, clean the bathroom, wash

your clothes and other basic life skills. Some other things to learn include how your health insurance works and basic car care, if you're taking a vehicle with you.

TIME MANAGEMENT

As you transition from

school to whatever's next, you'll find that you're suddenly the master of your own time. There are no parents to wake you or feed you and no bells to make sure you go where you're needed next. Start practicing time

management before you leave home. Give yourself plenty of time to get to class or to work, to get home and to make meals. Monitor your cash flow, since that will determine when you can pay bills and run errands.



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Brennaman, Jonah



Brubaker, Mayson



Buckles, Makayla



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Mathias, Jasmyn



Meyer, Salome



Meyo-Tecuall, Yareli



Moore, Hannah



Morse, Emma



Neer, Layce



O'Connell, Christopher



Pender, Olivia



Perkins, Dylan



Perkins, Serenity



Platt, Alexandria



Pratt, Dylan



Prieto-Lopez, Kevin

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Romine, Randy



Rose, Ryan



Saunders, Lyncon



Shoemaker, Grace



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Smith, Kimberly



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Stewart, Kenlee



Stonebraker, Reese



Thomas, Brooklyn



Thomas, Ella



Turner, Camryn



Yates, Ethan



Ybarra, Kabriel



Gap Year: Taking Time Off

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Finishing high school is more than a four-year commitment.

Counting pre-K, most graduates have been in school for 13 straight years by then – the vast majority of their lives. If you went straight to college and graduated, you may have been in school for 17 years, or longer. That could leave anyone feeling drained after dedicating so much time to studying, writing essays and passing exams. So, would taking a year off be right for you?

THE GAP YEAR CONCEPT

Some view the period between high school and college or between college and entering the workforce as a chance to evaluate things. Graduates can take part in travel adventures or in community service, both of which can be hard to fit into a busy new schedule in college or at work. That's how the idea of a gap year originated. It's a break from the continuous demands of academia or employment. Ahead lies a big future, with much still unknown. Taking some time away could help you gain new focus.

DEVELOP A STRATEGY

Deciding whether to take a gap year is a personal choice, and there is no single right reason to do so. What matters most is having a clear sense of purpose and a plan for how the time will be used. For some, a gap year provides space to explore interests, reconsider academic goals or gain clarity about a chosen field of study. Others may use the time after college to travel, meet new people and broaden their perspective—experiences that can help shape future career decisions.

KEY FACTORS TO THINK ABOUT

A gap year can come with trade-offs. Some students may need to navigate changes to scholarships or delay entering the workforce, while others take on part-time or temporary jobs to support themselves during the year. Entering the workforce right away may offer opportunities that include college credit or pathways to financial assistance. For those interested in structured programs, organizations such as the Gap Year Association provide information about grants,



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Paying Off Your Student Loans



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BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Experts say the average student loan debt for newly graduated college students is in the tens of thousands of dollars.

Some don't know how to move forward after their higher education career. Here's a look at what's ahead.

EXIT COUNSELING

Federal law requires exit counseling as part of your college's graduation process. During this session, you will learn about the types of loans that you have and your options for repayment. You'll need to bring along some information to complete exit counseling: the names, addresses, phone numbers and emails of your closest living relative, two references who live in the U.S. and your employer or future employer, if there is one. Check with your particular office of financial aid to find out more.

MAKING PAYMENTS

You will be assigned a federal loan servicer that will handle all the billing information regarding your government student loans. Generally speaking, you will start making payments six months after you graduate. Signing up for automatic debit takes a lot of the stress out of paying your student loan bill. Some borrowers may get a reduction in

interest rates when they do.
LOWERING OR SUSPENDING PAYMENTS

Having trouble making payments? If you need to lower or suspend them because of financial hardship, contact your loan servicer. There are several options: An increase in your family size or a decrease in your income makes you immediately eligible for a recalculation in an income-driven repayment plan. You can apply for a deferment or forbearance that will allow you to stop making payments altogether. It's important to note, however, that you will still accrue interest charges. Deferments and forbearance may affect potential loan forgiveness options.

DELINQUENCY AND DEFAULT

Your student loans must be repaid. If you've missed a payment, immediately contact your loan servicer to discuss options. Your loan becomes delinquent the first day after you miss a student loan payment and it remains delinquent until you repay the past due amount or make other arrangements. If you're delinquent for 90 days or more, your loan servicer will report the delinquency to the major national credit bureaus – and your credit score will be affected.

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Remembering the Big Day

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

You've probably heard it a million times: Graduation is going to be an unforgettable day. But it will pass by in a blur of ceremony and emotion.

Documenting everything preserves each special moment throughout the day.

THE RIGHT ONE

Seek out advice from relatives or older friends when choosing a graduation photographer. Their insights can help you find the right fit. Take time to explore online portfolios, since they can provide a greater understanding of a photographer's style. Establish and stick to a photography budget since costs can vary widely. Don't forget that there will be related expenses like invitations, clothing and trips. After selecting a photographer, communicate your expectations clearly but remain open to their professional suggestions.

WHAT TO SHOOT

Obviously, snapshots in your cap and gown are a must. But casual photos with your friends and family are great keepsakes. Consider posing near a historic building on campus or exploring a beautiful

waterfront area or garden. Invite your classmates, since they've been instrumental in your educational experience.

Ask the photographer to capture some candid shots during the graduation ceremony, rather than just your entrance and the moment you receive your diploma. With so much happening in a busy event, it can be tough to absorb everything. Then make sure they get plenty of pictures as you celebrate with loved ones afterward. These moments will be cherished by everyone involved.


WHY IT MATTERS

In the future, when you have settled into your new life, pictures can bring back fond memories. Your parents will likely cherish this important occasion and may want to display some of these photos at home. Additionally, your new images can act as a valuable asset for your career. High-quality photos can enhance your profile on professional sites like LinkedIn and elevate your resume. The initial years in college or job-hunting can often be tight financially. This may be an opportunity to create a polished headshot or professional portrait.



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Going to Grad School

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

A bachelor's degree might just be one step in your academic journey.

Some jobs require graduate-level study. Other graduates pursue advanced degrees for personal or professional reasons.

When evaluating graduate schools, consider the specifics of what they offer and whether that will bolster your credentials in the field of your choice. The school's accreditation and ranking may play a role in future hiring decisions. Other factors to keep in mind include:

PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME

Consider whether you want to enroll part-time or full-time. Scheduling could be a big problem if you are working while going to graduate school. Some programs require full-time enrollment, whereas others make room for busy part-time students. The choice to go part- or full-time affects the commitment needed to earn the degree with the former taking longer to complete than the latter.

IN-PERSON OR ONLINE?

An increasing number



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of graduate programs are now offering hybrid or fully online graduate degrees. This could be beneficial for people with busy schedules who want to pursue an

education without the pressures of mandatory in-person attendance. Find out whether the online courses are accredited. In some fields, getting a degree from an accredited

school is required to get the job. Look into what types of accreditation are recognized in your area of study, and ask potential schools about their status if it's not already made clear.

Research the career trajectories of their alumni; this can be a terrific gauge for your own success. Discuss financial assistance and loan options, since some undergraduate support doesn't extend into post-graduate studies. If you're moving to a new area to go to school, research housing availability and living costs. Remember that graduate programs typically require a separate application fee. They may require more testing and recommendation letters.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Choose a program where the curriculum aligns with your schedule and specific area of study. Ask whether faculty or academic advisors are available throughout your studies. Those going into research fields will need to choose programs with adequate facilities.



We Wish You the Best!

Class of 2026

Congratulations!

REID JORDAN

COLUMBIA CITY HIGH SCHOOL

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HAPPY GRADUATION