

2019

Hardworking Senior

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Recommended Citation

Taylor, Myka (2019) "Hardworking Senior," *Pathways*: Vol. 2015 : Iss. 1 , Article 14.
Available at: https://digitalcommons.xula.edu/pathways_journal/vol2015/iss1/14

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Hardworking Senior

One of the most stressful times for me was senior year of high school. My high school placed a lot of emphasis on our senior project, which required the entire year to prepare. The project encompassed many aspects, from research and volunteering to presenting in front of a panel of strangers. Every student needed to complete his or her senior project in order to graduate, so it was imperative to do well. Developing a solid senior project was difficult, but I also had to worry about advanced placement classes, school clubs, and volunteering. My senior year was truly a great year, but it was stressful balancing a job, school, friends, and family all at once.

I worked at a Walgreens for the entire year, mostly on a 4:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. shift, which wasn't that bad. The difficult part was not having a job, but not having a car or a license at the time. My school day ended at 2:20 p.m., which meant I constantly had to ask friends for rides to my grandmother's house in order for her to take me to work. It was difficult finding ways to get to and from work, but somehow I managed. I worked four days out of the week and on my off days I was extremely tired. I only had an hour after school to complete homework and other assignments. The rest I wouldn't be able to complete until after I got off, which most times wasn't until 11:00 at night, so keeping up was difficult.

During senior year my days ran on average from 5:00 in the morning (because I rode the bus to school) to 12:30 at night. On top of work and school, I struggled to balance friends and family. High school is a time when all types of relationships form and crumble. I lost touch with a lot of friends because they graduated before me, and other friends I realized my life would just be less dramatic without. I stopped being friends with a lot of people, simply because I didn't

have time to party or deal with drama. So a lot of my relationships with friends crumbled. It didn't bother me because I still had my best friend and other acquaintances, but looking back I do wish I had more memories from senior year besides work and stress. Drama with friends was just another obstacle to interfere with my academic success, so I eliminated that component from my life.

Family was another task. My younger brother was in first grade at the time, so on my off days I had to watch him and help him with homework. My work schedule was taking a toll on my mother as well. My mother was the one to pick me up from work and take me home once I got off at 10:30. I felt bad for interfering with her sleep schedule. There wasn't much I could do aside from get a license and drive myself, but conditions made that implausible at the time. My step-dad helped out when he could, but it was difficult for all of us. The main reason I wanted a job senior year was to save for college and alleviate the loans I would have to take out in order to attend. I also wanted to help my mom and step-dad by not depending on them for money.

I wasn't just working for me. I was working for my family as well. Just as I wasn't just trying to make good grades for me, I was doing it for my family. A good GPA opens so many doors in college. The grades, advanced courses, school clubs—I did all of it in order to make myself a good applicant for scholarships. I constantly stressed about school and work, but in the end I graduated with a 3.89 GPA and I got an A on my senior project because I was determined and organized. I constantly looked ahead to my future and made decisions I knew would benefit me in the future. The obstacles I faced senior year did not stop my success. All they did was motivate me to prove to my friends, family, and myself that I can handle any road bump that comes my way. Despite how much stressing I did that year, I managed to keep my GPA high by organizing a schedule to manage both school, work, friends, and family. My high GPA helped

me earn an academic scholarship to Xavier University of Louisiana, so all my hard work and stress paid off at the end.