

# DIVER

Students at NHS are planning in untraditional ways for life after high school

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# DIVERGENT

**I**t's a question that has plagued high school seniors since the modern education system was invented: "So, what will you do after high school?"

These words are usually uttered by some well-meaning aunt or likable teacher, so students, out of obligation, quickly rattle off their post-school plans for what feels like the millionth time. Usually, their responses end with one of three answers: college, the trades, or the ever-intimidating, "I don't know."

But, in recent years, one of those answers is heard more and more from students on the brink of the next phase of their lives: higher education.

Attending college has become by far the most common route. In fact, more than two-thirds of graduating high school students took that path in 2017, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

It's gotten to the point that the aforementioned question itself has changed. Now, it's morphed to become: "What college are you going to?"

This recent increase in college enrollment shouldn't be surprising. Today's students are told that the college degree of today is equivalent to the high school diploma of thirty years ago. They're told—from parents and teachers and friends—that college is an essential stop on the road to success.

So what about the students who don't go to college? Are they stupid? Brave? Why would they buck the trend and ignore the advice of their peers?

To help answer those questions, "Divergent" tells the stories of three people that are choosing to trail-blaze their own routes. You, the reader, are encouraged to follow along. There are no rules here. You can skip around, find your pace, take the quiz. It's up to you. Here, you can do what so many people will say you can't: follow your own path.

# CARVING A NEW PATH

In the first few pages of the Bible, it's said that God created the world in seven days. Senior Hank Rose believes God completely altered his world—for the better—in less than five. And that change flipped his plans for the future upside down.

When the school year began, Rose was, like many of his peers, confident in the road he had mapped out for himself.

"My plan was, 'OK, go to Purdue, get a mechanical engineering degree, maybe get some scholarship money so I'm not going to be piling on student loan debts,'" Rose said.

This idea was perfectly logical. After all, as of August 2018, Rose had an internship at Gaylor Electric, and his history of doing well in difficult STEM classes marked him as a bright, college-ready student. It wasn't until one Monday in early September that Rose would begin to question these plans. By Thursday of that week, he would make a life-changing decision: instead of college, he



would pursue a career in woodworking.

This decision, though it may seem quickly-made, was not without hours of contemplation.

"Every single time I thought about it, I thought, 'That's irrational. That's the dumbest thing you could do,'" Rose said. "[But eventually] I started wondering, 'Is this God poking at my heart? Does he know something that I don't? Does he have something in store for me here?'"

Rose has always liked to build things. He remembers a moment of boredom in his sophomore year when he and a friend spontaneously designed and built a pong table. But Rose knew that if he was to pursue woodworking, he'd need someone to show him the ropes.

Rose had just one problem: he didn't know anyone who could do that.

So Rose prayed. And, through a connection at his church, that prayer was soon answered in the form of Chad Thomas, the owner of Limitless Woodworking and

Rose's now-mentor.

"Hank seems to really care. [Some people] are just here for the money, and they just want a paycheck. Hank kind of has a vision for what he wants to do with his life. A lot of people don't," Thomas said.

That vision explains why, even though he doesn't need them for college, Rose takes on challenging courses like AP Calculus and Physics C.

"It's the idea of learning and becoming rather than having," Rose said. "A lot of people go to college to have a degree so that they can have more money. But I'm more interested in becoming. When I'm in a difficult class, I'm becoming more intelligent. I'm becoming smarter. So I'm equipping myself with more skills and capabilities so that I can do more, not necessarily for myself, but for God."

Woodworking is one key part of Rose's "becoming," and it doesn't come without its own challenges.

"Your brain has to function in a way that I've never had it function before. [You're focused on] designing and creating solutions. It's just a lot more than your academic courses. So, I guess that stereotype of lack of intelligence in the trades is honestly really far off, unless you're not doing it right," Rose said.

Daunting as it may be to go against the grain the way he has, Rose views his choice less as blazing his own path and more as following the one he believes God laid out for him. The post-high school future may be intimidating now, but with his faith, Rose isn't worried.

"There are times that I doubt [my decision]," Rose said. "Because it's more risky, obviously. Because the cultural norm is to go to college, get some education, formally, so that you can actually have a corporate job. But everytime, I'm like, 'Wait a second. I think somebody literally put me here, and I think

there is a reason I am here,' so I kind of fall back on that, and it gives me hope."



Hank Rose practices woodworking at his internship.

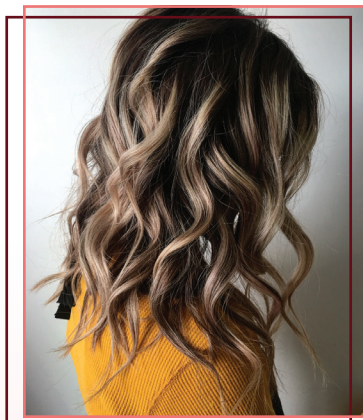
# MAKING OVER HER FUTURE

Remember when you were younger and you would try on your parents clothes? Maybe you would strut around in your mom's high heels, soak in your dad's cologne, or burn yourself with the hair curler. Sydney LeGrand has always been immersed in the art of beauty since she was a child.

LeGrand has always loved to change the way someone looks at themselves with a simple alter in style. She plans on expanding this passion further and making a career out of it. Choosing a creative path, LeGrand seeks success on a more alternative route.

"When I was younger, my stylist told me about how she did a program during high school to become a hairstylist. She suggested it to me," said LeGrand. "I really like changing people's looks and helping them feel better about themselves."

The main reason LeGrand loves her work is the result and it has on others.



Whether through hair, or even makeup. "I just really like to transform people. The end result and how they feel, makes me feel better. And the same with makeup, it makes them feel pretty" said LeGrand. For future hairstylists, LeGrand offers a few words of wisdom.

"It takes time, it takes practice. You could do something one day and do the same exact thing the next, and it sucks. It happens." LeGrand said "It takes time to get perfect and even hairstylists have been hairstylists for ten years still mess up sometimes"

After graduation, LeGrand's aspiration is to study at beauty school and further her education. However, a trade school isn't quite as popular as the average four year

university. She believes the importance of one plan over another depends on the person, and that it should be up to that person to make that decision.

"I don't like how a lot of parents force their kids into something like college. I think it's up to whoever's life it is." LeGrand said. "It just depends if you find the right career choice for you. Only do something if you really want to and that applies to traditional college and other paths"



Senior Sydnie Graves gets her makeup done by Sydney LeGrand.

Photos provided by Sydney LeGrand

# MARCHING ON

Each year, military recruiters roam the halls of NHS seeking out students interested in joining the armed forces.

Senior Jacob Zuniga plans to join the Army as a watercraft operator. He will primarily be responsible for navigation and cargo operations.

Before obtaining that position, Zuniga must take a series of tests called the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. This test will help him identify his strengths. He will then have to undergo 10 weeks of Basic Combat Training and six weeks of Advanced Individual Training.

While in the military, he will be receiving compensation, for his efforts.

"On base, I don't have to pay rent and insurance is covered by the military. I also don't have to worry about paying for food," Zuniga said.

All five branches of the military require training and dedication, but have numerous job opportunities to offer soldiers such as finance, arts, communications, construction and many more.



Jacob Zuniga shakes hands with military personnel at his oath of enlistment ceremony.

Photo provided by Jacob Zuniga



# WHAT POTENTIAL CAREERS MATCH YOUR PERSONALITY?

TAKE THE QUIZ TO FIND OUT...

WHICH COLOR DO YOU PREFER?

yellow

red

ARE YOU PRO WINTER OR ANTI WINTER?

pro

anti

DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS?

cats

dogs

ARE YOU AN OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC PERSON?

optimistic

pessimistic

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR MUSIC TASTE?

older

newer

WHAT'S YOUR IDEA OF AN IDEAL SATURDAY NIGHT?

at home

with friends

WHAT'S YOUR STARBUCKS ORDER LIKE?

plain coffee or tea

barista's pick

## CREATIVE

Sound like you? Maybe you should look into:

- Writer
- Artist
- Muscial production
- Event planner

## STEM

Sound like you? Maybe you should look into:

- Carpentry
- Electrician
- Welding
- Surgical Tech.

## ADVENTUROUS

Sound like you? Maybe you should look into:

- flight attendant
- travel agent
- tour guide
- cruise ship employee