



Bradford High School

CLASS OF 2025

The Sweetest Strawberries this side of Heaven

Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, May 22, 2025

146th year, 45th Issue — \$1

Valedictorian

Salutatorian



Carolyn Grace Adams



Jessica Louiza Brown

Dear Graduating Class of 2025,

It is with great pride and heartfelt congratulations that I celebrate each and every one of you on reaching this incredible milestone. Your hard work, determination, and perseverance have brought you to this day, and you should be immensely proud of what you've accomplished.

Each of you has made a unique and meaningful contribution to our school district. Whether you're the student who overcame challenges in the classroom, the one who earned every grade through sheer effort, the dedicated band member, athlete, Ag student, JROTC cadet, honor roll student — or the student who showed up every day because you knew someone was counting on you — your presence has mattered. You've helped shape the spirit of this graduating class, and your impact will be felt for years to come.

As you prepare to take your next steps, know that both excitement and uncertainty are part of the journey. Some of you already have a clear vision for your future, while others are still discovering your path — and that's perfectly okay. Whether you choose to enter the workforce, attend a technical school or university, or serve in the military, you carry with you the strength, resilience and character that will enable you to succeed. The world needs what you have to offer.

Thank you, Class of 2025, for the many gifts you've shared with us — your energy, your presence, your perseverance and your passion. You've enriched our school community in countless ways. I also extend my deepest gratitude to your families, teachers and friends who have supported you on this journey.

Wishing you all the best in the adventures ahead. Chase your dreams, lift others as you rise, and never forget the power you have to make a difference.

Go be great, Tornadoes!



Will Hartley
Superintendent of Schools

To the Bradford High School Class of 2025,

Congratulations on reaching this incredible milestone. Over the past four years, you've demonstrated resilience, heart and determination. You've led with pride and left a lasting legacy on our school and community.

As you step into this next chapter, carry with you the pillars of BHS — be present, respectful, responsible, productive and safe.

You will always be part of the Tornado family. We are so very proud of you. Make the best out of each and every day! It's a GREAT day to have a GREAT day!

Go Tornadoes, Go Big Red!

Chris Coffey
Principal, Bradford High School



Weekly deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. • Phone 904-964-6305 • Fax 904-964-8628

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Congratulations to and asking God's blessings upon our Class of 2025!
1 Timothy 4:12

VALEDICTORIAN



Elizabeth Amis
 Esther 4:14
 HIGHEST HONORS

SALUTATORIAN



Benjamin Whalen
 Matthew 6:31-33
 HIGH HONORS



Annalei Brown
 Isaiah 40:8



James 'Jimmy' Depoe
 John 3:16



Luke Drew
 Proverbs 16:9



Jude Dugat
 Exodus 3:14



Alyssa Hunt
 Philippians 4:13
 HONORS



Lance 'Gunner' Lofton
 1 Corinthians 16:13
 HIGH HONORS



Rebeka McGee
 Philippians 4:13



Nicholas Scott
 John 3:16



Aiden Wilson
 II Timothy 1:7

Starke Memorial Day service

American Legion Post 56, in conjunction with the Starke Downtown Merchants, will be conducting a Memorial Day Ceremony honoring Veterans who lost their lives in the service of our country. The ceremony will be held on Monday, May 26, at 10 a.m. at Charles Schaefer Veterans Memorial Park in Starke. Refreshments will be available, and there will be a car show. The public is invited.

Collection site closings

Bradford County solid waste collection sites will be closed for Memorial Day on Monday, May 26. They will reopen Tuesday, May 27, at 10 a.m.

Women honored at Hat and Tea

Dreamers and Doers of Bradford County will honor women who have inspired and promoted excellence in the community at the second annual

Women of Excellence Hat and Tea on May 24 at The Downtown Grill in Starke at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$30. Women attending are encouraged to wear a hat. Proceeds will benefit the Miss Juneteenth Gala, set for June 21.

Pastor installation at Magnolia

Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church in Raiford will be having a installation worship service on Sunday, May 25, at 3 p.m. for

Pastor-elect Oscar Griffith Jr. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Lawtey food giveaway

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Feeding

Northeast Florida and True Vine Ministry will take place Wednesday, May 28, at 9 a.m. at the Philadelphia Baptist Church in Lawtey.

Food boxes often include fresh produce, deli and bakery items, dairy and some meats. Inventory is subject to availability. This

institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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Felix, Atticus	Ford, Jessa	Fouts, Annalea	Harvell, Jagger	Harvey, Taylor	Henderson, Aaden	Hession, Kayden	Hill, Kate
Hutchins, Parker	Johns, Draco	Junk, Ella	Loper, Georgia	Miller, Gentry	Moreland, Calliope	Kenya (last name private)	Parsons, Lilyana
Rhoden, Adalynn	Ross, Tristan	Simmons, Shelby	Thomas, Hayden	Valdez, Jennifer	Valdez, William	Weintraub, Luke	Weldon, Gideon
Woodard, Jarrett							

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Hope Christian Academy was established in 2001 and is a ministry of Hope Baptist Church.

Crosby complaints under investigation

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Starke Chief Administrative Officer Jimmy Crosby remains on paid administrative leave pending an investigation into allegations that he created a “toxic work environment” for employees under his supervision. City Commissioner Bob Milner brought those allegations as well as other complaints about Crosby’s conduct to the commission earlier this month in an attempt to oust him from his position managing much of the city. Questions about the requirements of Crosby’s contract and due process kept him from being fired on the spot. Crosby had no warning he would come under fire prior to the May 6 meeting and was not prepared to offer a defense. Following the meeting,

Starke’s attorney, Danielle Adams, solicited quotes from two firms, requesting an independent investigator. In a letter to the commission, she explained an independent investigator would “ensure a neutral, unbiased and credible review of the allegations.” “As the city has a duty to provide a professional and respectful workplace for all employees, an impartial investigation conducted by a third party will help to safeguard the integrity of the process, foster confidence in the outcome, and minimize any perception of internal bias,” she wrote. The recommendation was to retain Megan Logan of the law firm Douglas and Douglas to carry out the investigation, including interviewing employees about their experiences. Commissioners voted 4-0

to proceed with Logan as investigator, with Commissioner Janice Mortimer absent. Cost was capped at \$5,000, but to avoid any delay requesting commission approval for additional expenses, and additional \$5,000 in contingency funds was approved. Mayor Andy Redding, Milner and Commissioner Danny Nugent also voted to extend Crosby’s administrative leave until the investigation is completed and the full board is present to vote on the outcome. Commissioner Scott Roberts dissented. Nugent is expected to be absent during his recovery from surgery, but Roberts said he wanted to see thing wrapped up. Redding agreed but said the gravity of the allegations required both swiftness and the presence of the full board when it comes to deciding the outcome. It was also Adams recommendation, he said. “We’re just trying to make sure that we do what we’re supposed to do and that we protect the city of Starke and its employees,” he said. Adams also confirmed in her letter to the commission that a simple majority of three commissioners could fire Crosby with cause, but his contract requires five days written notice prior to the meeting during which charges will be discussed.

Bradford turning Rainbow Center over to Episcopal Children’s Services

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Rainbow Center families are being told the Bradford School District plans to end involvement with the daycare program and turn it over to Episcopal Children’s services. A letter from Superintendent Will Hartley went out to families on Tuesday. School board members will consider the recommendation at their June 16 meeting. While it will be a transition, it might not be a major one. According to the letter, the school district would lease the Rainbow Center facility to Episcopal Children’s Services. “This would allow for ECS to operate a daycare center on the premises, ensuring that quality care and education would continue to be available for families in our community,” Hartley states in the letter. ECS currently runs a Head Start early learning program for ages 3-5 at the RJE Center, whereas the Rainbow Center provides daycare for families from birth to 3 years before they transition to voluntary prekindergarten at one of the elementary schools. Hartley explained to the Telegraph that the reasons for ceasing district involvement

in the Rainbow Center are budgetary. “We’ve tried and tried every year to figure out how to break even down there, and it’s hard,” he said. “It’s hard to run a small daycare center like that, and you’re trying to be as fair as you can be to the public and your teachers that have kids down there and not try to gouge them on prices. But then at the end of the day, you still have to pay all those employees, and it’s very hard to break even.” Hartley said the district was approached with the opportunity, and since the Rainbow Center was scheduled to be closed for the summer anyway, now seemed like the best time for the transition. “As we talked with Episcopal, we realized they were very interested in leasing that facility from us and running the daycare as it is. The thing that was important to us was that it didn’t just leave our community — that someone stepped in and filled that role,” he said. Hartley said caring for children is ECS’s specialty, and so they will be in good hands. “It’s a good fit. The community won’t lose anything,” he said. Hartley added that ECS is interested in maintaining employees, but those who want to continue working for the school district may apply for vacancies and receive preference in hiring.

“We do have a few people that have been down there for a while, or they’ve been in the district in some capacity for a while, and they want to stay on (the Florida retirement system), I’m sure. So, some of those will stay with us, but I think some of the others will probably end up working for Episcopal,” he said. “All around it seems like it’s going to work out, and we won’t be leaving anyone without a job that wants to stay and work.” Rainbow Center families do pay tuition for daycare services based on the age of the children. Hartley said ECS would set rates as close to the previously announced rates as possible, at least during the first year. ECS will also hold an open house over the summer so families can meet the staff and hear from them directly about what they can offer. With money getting tighter, Hartley said they are grateful to have found an alternative to ending daycare services. Out of necessity, they are keeping a close eye on spending in other areas as well. “Districts all around the state have already been told, ‘If you don’t like what the budget is going to look like this year, the next two years are going to be even worse,’” said Hartley. He pointed to surrounding districts that are either cutting positions or placing a hold on new hires. “Right now, we’re not there, but we don’t want to get there, and so we’re just making sure we do the things that we need to do to maintain a good financial situation,” he said.

Congratulations Class of 2025

from all of us at the
Bradford County School District!



Will Hartley
Superintendent of Schools



Sheila Cummings
Vice Chair
School Board
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Gayle Nicula
School Board
District 2



Julie Johnson
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SATURDAY 5/24 FINAL DESTINATION: BLOODLINES 1, 4 & 7 LILO & STITCH - 1, 4 & 7	SUNDAY 5/25 FINAL DESTINATION: BLOODLINES 4 & 7 LILO & STITCH - 4 & 7

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Free Car Seat safety checks offered thanks to grant

BY AMBER J. CRAFT
Special to the Telegraph

Bradford County families now have access to a vital free service aimed at keeping children safer on the road, thanks to the Bradford County Sheriff's Office and a dedicated Animal Control Officer who went the extra mile to help the community.

Christy Milligan recently completed an intensive four-day training focused on car seat safety. The training certifies her to inspect car seats, identify installation issues, and answer questions from caregivers. With this new certification, Milligan is bringing her knowledge back to the local community through free car seat check events.

These events give parents and caregivers the opportunity to have their car seats professionally inspected to ensure they are properly installed and meet current safety guidelines. Attendees can also get answers to their car seat questions—all free of charge.

"There are a lot of things that are not commonly known about car seat safety," Milligan said.

For example, by law, any car seat involved in a car accident must be replaced, even if no visible damage is present. Additionally, using a secondhand car seat can be risky since its history is often unknown. It may have been in a previous crash or could be expired, damaged, or missing key parts—making it unsafe for future use.

The initiative is possible thanks to an Occupant Safety Grant awarded to the sheriff's office, according to Sgt. Glenn Ward.

"We got an occupant safety grant," Ward explained. "I think we got \$50,000 in grant money from the state to get all that, so it's worked out well."

The funding not only covered Milligan's training but also supported the organization of



Animal Control Officer Christy Milligan filling out a data sheet to better assist parent Ashley Baribeau.

recurring community events. It may also allow the agency to offer discounted new car seats in the future for families in need.

"We're going to start trying to hold them every few weeks in different locations to get people to come in and get their car seats checked," Ward said. "Because if a car seat isn't right, a child can get hurt, and a lot of people don't know how to do it."

The goal of the program is education and prevention, not enforcement. "It's a free service. We're not looking to ticket anybody. We're not looking for any of that. We're just looking for the kids to be safe," Ward emphasized.

To make the events as accessible as possible, the sheriff's office plans to rotate locations throughout the county.

"We're going to move around the county to make it accessible to everybody," Ward said.

The next car seat check event—with a fun twist—is scheduled for Friday, May 24, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Dunkin' Donuts.

Called "Coffee, Car Seats, and Cats," the event is a partnership with Bradford County Animal Services, who will be on-site with cats available for adoption.

It's an opportunity for families to enjoy a cup of coffee, ensure their children's car seats are installed correctly, and even meet a furry friend who may be ready for a forever home.

The Sheriff's Office hopes to continue these events twice a month, ensuring families throughout the area can take advantage of the safety checks. With warmer weather and summer travel approaching, now is the perfect time for caregivers to ensure their children's car seats are up to standard.

25 members strong, fair board set to meet next week

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Bradford County Commissioners have reconstituted the board of the Bradford Fair Association after settling the association's debt and acquiring the fairgrounds property.

The number for board members has ballooned, however, after Sheriff Gordon Smith discovered the association's charter required a minimum of 20 members during his inquiry into the actions of the former fair board.

According to Amanda Brown in the county manager's office, the new fair board represents a diverse mix of community members with longstanding experience in agriculture, community outreach, economic development, etc.

They include Paul Huntley, president of the Bradford-Union Swine Association, whom the commission appointed to chair the fair board.

Also selected to serve were: Alana Borgner, Bradford-Union Cattleman's Show and Sale.

Amanda Hardee, National Barrel Horse Association.

Brad Thomas, Bradford Swine and Cattle Association.

Heather Hinds, Bradford County Public Works.

Judy Sumpter, Concerned

Citizens of Bradford County and president of Pleasant Grove Action Group.

Lisa M. Holtzendorf, Bradford and Union 4-H, Bradford County Farm Bureau, Union County Livestock Association and Florida Cattlewomen's Association.

Marty Shaw, board member of Jacksonville Fair Association (1999-2002), Rotary board member, Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation board member.

Michael Heeder, prior Bradford County Fair Association board member, Funtastic Fire Brigade, event organizer.

Teresa Phillips, county tax collector and Altrusa of Starke.

Valara Petteway, Dreamers and Doers of Bradford County.

Gregory Alvarez, 40 years of experience in agricultural education, community engagement and youth leadership

Brian Outlaw, Bradford-Union Swine Association.

JoAnna McHugh, Bailey Family Scholarship Selection Committee, 2018-19 Fair Volunteer.

Jeff Johnson, Starke Police Department Pension Board, former chief of police.

Kevin Thompson, Bradford-Union Cattleman's Show and Sale vice president, and Bradford-Union Swine Association.

Jimmy J.E. Smith, rib competition for Holidays for Heroes.

Blake Hamilton, Florida Junior Brahman Association.

Pam Whittle, North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce president.

Vyunda Strong, Lawtey Zoning Board chairman.

Clay Whitehead, Bradford-Union Cattleman's Association president Bradford-Union Cattleman's Show and Sale.

Members from the recent board who will continue to serve per the county's agreement with the fair association are Chris Page, Tammy Woodard, Kaitlin VanHeusen and Roxanne Rosier.

The Bradford County Fair Association has advertised it will meet on this Tuesday, May 27, at 5:30 p.m. in the county commission meeting room, located in the north wing of the courthouse.

As for questions about the actions of the former fair board, including the transfer of land and other property out of the hands of the fair association to a related nonprofit, Sheriff Smith confirmed he has turned the investigating over to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Florida Department of Agriculture.

Food distribution at True Vine

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Farm Share and True Vine Ministry will take place Tuesday, May 27, at 10 a.m. at True Vine Outreach Ministry in Starke.

Food boxes often include fresh produce, deli and bakery items, dairy and some meats. Inventory is subject to change based on availability. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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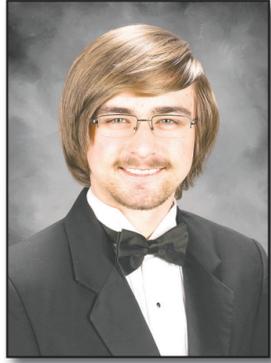
Mauriye Hankerson



Desirae Jones



Mabel Karinen



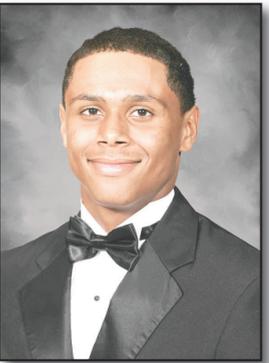
Hayden Kilby



August Lefevers



Carson McKenzie



Jeremiah McKenzie



Alissa Reddish



Caleb Rodriguez



Cody Spratlin



Matthew Stafford



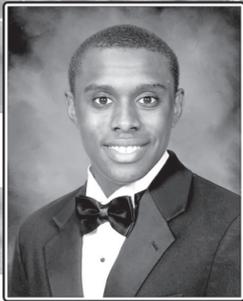
Kaylah Vargas



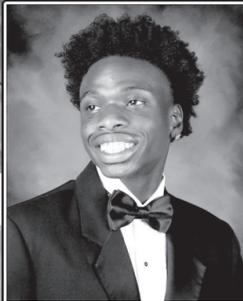
Daniece Westberry

Not Pictured
Anaria Early

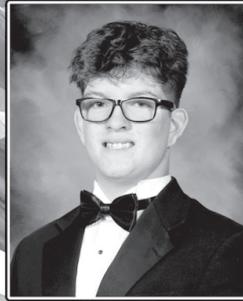
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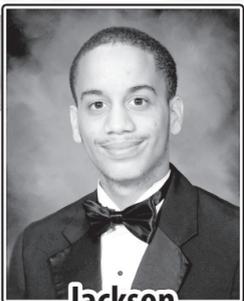
Ezra Green



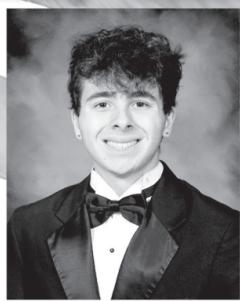
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2025

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Kenny Clark
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Gordon Smith
Sheriff

Denny Thompson
Clerk of the Courts

Tatum Davis, Judge
Eighth Judicial Circuit

2025 High Honors Graduates



Kelsey Burgin



Lorali Cantu



Cayden Carter



Madison Casey



Seth Clemons



Jaleel Easley



Jacob Ferguson



Ella Hense



Katira Hinson



Carlton Kelliebrew



Jordan Norman



Dayton Roberts



Owen Roberts



Zaezion Small



Brayden Smyth



Brooklyn Stephens



Saniya Thompson



Reese Wainwright

Student Government

President Reese Wainwright
 Vice President Kaylah Vargas
 Secretary Jeremiah McKenzie
 Treasurer Cayden Carter
 Senators Brian Cliffin, Jaleal Easley, Grayson Jennings, Abigail Markham, Matthew Stafford, Blakeleigh Smith
 Parliamentarian Jaden Hankerson
 Chaplin Summer Sutton
 Sergeant At Arms Amber Wynn

Executive Board

President Madison Casey
 Vice President Dayton Roberts
 Secretary Ja'Kyiah Dean
 Treasurer Kendall Cook
 Senators Alysia Rentz, Kelsey Burgin, Skyla Buonacore

Outdoor movies at St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Join a nostalgic evening of outdoor movies with cartoons at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on May 28 beginning at 5:30 p.m. Relive old memories and make some new ones. Free tickets are available for a hot dog and beverage.
 Ride your bikes, pull a wagon or push a stroller and come enjoy a night of old-fashioned family fun. The church is located at 212 N. Church St. in Starke.

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Class Verse

Proverbs 3:6
“In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

Class Motto

“Forget the rest, Class of 2025 is the best!”

Bradford County Florida
 EVERYTHING IS BETTER IN BRADFORD
 District 1, Carolyn Spooner
 District 2, Kenny Thompson
 Vice Chair
 District 3, Chris Dougherty
 District 4, Danny Riddick
 Chair
 District 5, Diane Andrews
Congratulations 2025 graduates!

2025 Honors Graduates



Drake Benejam



Skyla Buonacore



Calum Butler



Kaylee Devore



Trace Kite



Daniel Macedo-Banda



Alexandria McFarland



Jalisia McMillian



Sean Moya



Aliyah Pueschel



Alysia Rentz



Journie Sampson



Randi Smith



Jackson Stepter-Charles



Chadsity Stevens-Cummings



Summer Sutton



Savanna Trollinger



Amber Wynn



Kallie Yowell



Keegan Yowell

Not Pictured

Jillian Lee

Reagan Markwich

Brianna McCarter

Garrison Ritch

Class Song

“Shine”

—Bishop Gunn



Gordon Smith
Sheriff



from
SHERIFF
GORDON SMITH
&
The Bradford County
Sheriff's Office

you Did It!

Congrats to all 2025 GRADS!

Congratulations!

Clay Electric wishes all the best to the class of 2025.



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CLASS OF

2025

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Keystone Heights
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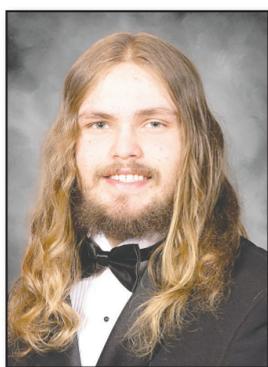
2025 Graduates



Ne-O Addison



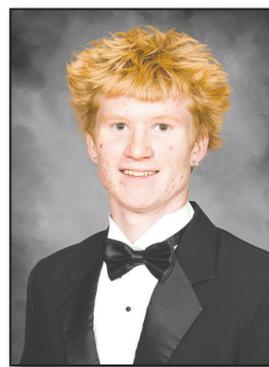
Justice Adkins



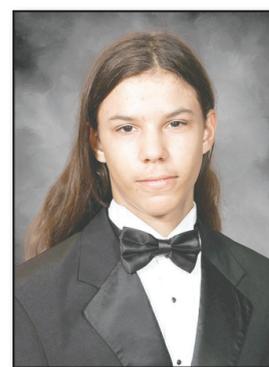
Aidan Alvarez



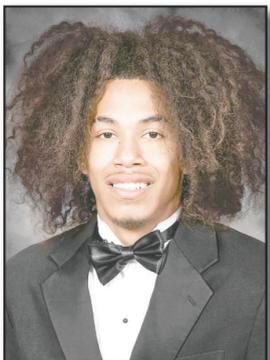
Shyann Alvarez



Jordan Barton



Dalton Bergstrom



Tyler Berry



Taylor Bice



Kaelyn Booker



Jo Vanni Borelli-Simms



Ricky Brennan



Nathan Briscoe



Delana Callan



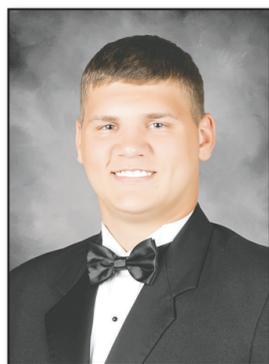
Za'khia Carn



Alyssa Cleveland



Brian Cliffin III



Hunter Cochran



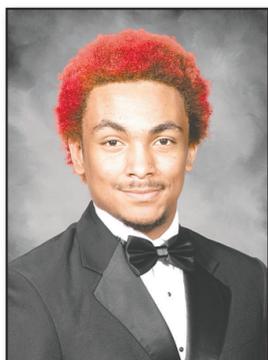
Ashten Cope



Christian Crews



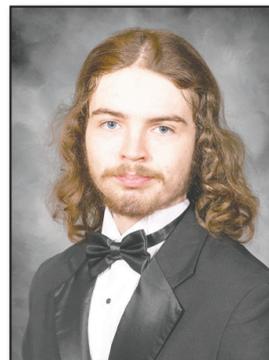
Talaysia Cummings



Tyrik Dell



Izarriya Desue



Kyle Early



Daysha Ferguson

Best Smile

Jaden Hankerson
Madison Casey

Most Athletic

Brian Cliffin III
Nichelle Brown

Most Flirtatious

Miguel Rivera
Kaylah Vargas

Most Talkative

Branden Williams
Camiyah Gosten

Class Clown

Barron Walden
Tariana Smith

Class Parent

Journie Sampson
Desirae Jones

Most School Spirit

Cayden Carter
Kelsey Burgin

Best Dressed

Jaleel Easley
Malaiah Williams

Most Likely to be Late to Graduation

Jacob Ferguson
Shyann Alvarez

Most Opinionated

Seth Clemons
Ariana Price

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