

GHS Class of 2010 Graduates; Vargo Is Valedictorian

Written by Author as indicated
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By Jessica Samuel



(L to R) Jernings Abraham, Afrika Anthony, Monae Clark, Deneisha Davis, Tristan Ewald, salutatorian Isaac Lalich, Shaiman Lalich, Jane Miller, Autumn Orlandini and valedictorian Michael Vargo.

The Giffit Hill School's Commencement Exercise on Thursday night, June 17, was in many ways a christening of the school's newly finished Trayser Field.

The graduating seniors, the island's only 12th grade promotion, kicked off at 5:30 p.m. at Trayser Field under bright skies.

The GHS class of 2010 consisted of 10 graduates — Jernings Abraham, Afrika Anthony, Monae Clark, Deneisha Davis, Tristan Ewald, Isaac Lalich, Shaiman Lalich, Jane Miller, Autumn Orlandini and Michael Vargo.

Vargo, a member of GHS' National Honor Society chapter was this year's Valedictorian. Not only did Vargo succeed with his stringent course load but he also posted the highest SAT scores in Giffit Hill School's history.

In the fall, Vargo will attend the University of Miami, where he plans to study biology. During his remarks to his fellow graduates and supporters, Vargo encouraged his classmates to be inventive, question things, and be different — which he felt should come easily to them. GHS Salutatorian Isaac Lalich will be attending Regis University in Denver, Colorado, where he plans to study visual arts and physical therapy.

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GHS Interim Head Ed Deusser's welcoming remarks initiated the evening's theme of change and growth when he reminisced on the whirlwind of change the school had been through this year alone.

Deusser ended his speech with a quote by Thomas Wolfe reminding graduates to use the whole of their talents in order to truly be triumphant.

Dr. Michael Reinert from Iowa State University, who is directing a five-year service project at GHS, also gave remarks during the ceremony.
GHS alumni Evanna Chinnery, who just finished her freshman year at Berklee College of Music, performed Miley Cyrus' "The Climb."

The keynote speaker was incoming Head of School Judith Chamberlin, who will take over as the school's top brass in the fall.

Chamberlin expressed her excitement of hearing "Pomp and Circumstance" for the first time on steel pan played by the Love City Pan Dragons. She also praised the school's sense of "collective pride, community and steadfast beliefs."

Chamberlin concluded her speech with a reference to Emily Dickinson.

In a first for GHS, which will uphold the tradition in the future, student body president Afrika Anthony gave a speech during the ceremony as well.

Anthony expressed her fortune at having been a part of the GHS community which allowed her to dream of attending college.

Interim Headmaster Deusser wrapped up the ceremony by speaking about what made each student unique and special in their own way.

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He then handed out diplomas and the GHS senior high school graduating class of 2010 threw their caps in the air in celebration.

Distinguished guests at the ceremony included Board of Education member Oswin Sewer, Senator-at-Large Craig Barshinger and Senator Wayne James.

As the Chairman of the Committee on Youth and Education, James conveyed his support of Giff Hill School being an alternative high school for St. John students.

“As an interim [to an on-island public high school], it is the next best thing,” he said.

Congratulations to all graduates of GHS' Class of 2010.