YULIYA SUBOTSKAYA  
Valedictorian

Keene High School has grown to mean a lot to me over the last four years. I am beyond grateful for all of the experiences and countless memories that I have had here. From Geometry to AP Calculus, and from water bottle flipping to TikTok dances, Keene High has been the place where I have developed both as a student and as a person. It is where I met my best friends, favorite teachers, and most inspiring role models who helped me become the person I am today.

KHS gave me the opportunity to develop all the interests and passions that I have had. Throughout my time here, the incredibly diverse selection of classes and clubs allowed me to explore my abilities in theater, pottery, astronomy, chemistry, and Chinese language and culture. These subjects challenged me to grow in skill, patience, and knowledge, as well as helped me become a more well-rounded person, and I know I will continue to use the curiosity that KHS has fostered in me in my coming years at Dartmouth College and beyond!

Looking back, some of my best memories at KHS have stemmed from taking risks. By deciding on a whim freshman year to take Chinese, I have had the opportunity to travel to China and participate in annual Chinese New Year celebrations. By deciding to audition for Drama Club, I have been able to make new friends and enjoy the thrill of an opening night performance, and by being a part of Unified Track, I’ve been able to cheer and celebrate victories with some of the kindest and most warm-hearted people I’ve ever met.

As a freshman I never believed those who told me that my time in high school would be over before I knew it, but here I am, four years older and wise enough to tell you that high school really does fly by. If you are just coming to Keene High School or are already a student, my advice to you would be to try yourself at as many things as you can. Make choices to participate in the clubs and activities that you want even if it makes you uncomfortable, as to not have a list of regrets instead of good memories at graduation. You never know when doing something will spark your interest and lead to a life-long career or hobby.

I’d like to say thank you to all of the educators that have ever taught me; you all have been amazing, loving people in my time at KHS. In particular, I’d like to give an extra thank you to Mr. Minahan for teaching me to believe in my writing, Mrs. Hansel, for all of your help and support in English and in drama, Ms. Foley, Mr. Brady, and Mr. Olderstein, for nurturing my love of all things science, and my dearest Mrs. Hyde for making learning a new language exciting, relatable, and fun.

Most importantly, thank you mom and dad for your love and endless support!

“...There is freedom waiting for you, on the breezes of the sky. And you ask, ‘What if I fall?’ Oh, but my darling, ‘What if you fly?’ ”-Erin Hanson
ELIZA HOLMES
Salutatorian

I still cannot believe that my time at Keene High School is coming to an end. Four years can really fly by. It’s hard to sum up the entirety of my high school experience in a few words. There have been amazing and difficult moments, for sure, but I will always remember how much I grew academically and emotionally. I know it sounds cliché to say I discovered who I was during my high school years, but it’s true. Coming in as a freshman, I had no idea what I wanted, but over the years, I have discovered what I like, thanks to my peers and teachers. I have been able to further explore my love of learning by taking rigorous courses, and my interests have expanded immensely through the various clubs Keene High offers.

I have had so many memorable experiences at KHS. I know that I will certainly never forget the pandemic during my senior year. It sometimes feels hard to remember all of the other memories that occurred during the first three years of my high school experience, but I could never forget them either. I have been lucky enough to travel to Nicaragua and Puerto Rico through my involvement with the Keene Interact Club. Those trips have been extremely rewarding for me, being able to put my Spanish skills to use and helping people, and have helped me solidify my desire to study abroad and participate in further service work in the future.

Performing has always played an extremely important role in my life, and I have loved being able to perform in lead roles in Drama Club and MoCo Arts productions. I will always remember having to wear a gold unitard as Lumière and a blonde wig as Elle Woods! Dance and theater have given me tremendous confidence over the years, and I hope to be involved in both somehow throughout the rest of my life.

I have also extremely enjoyed the time I have spent with my Little Sister through Big Brothers Big Sisters. It has been an honor to watch her grow and mature over the years. Finally, I will remember my leadership role as part of the Class Council. Never in a million years would I have imagined planning a graduation ceremony and other senior events in the midst of a pandemic. It has definitely put my problem-solving skills to the test.

To the underclassmen and future high school students, my advice is to take advantage of your time at KHS. It will go by faster than you expect, and you should all take part in the amazing opportunities available. Get involved in activities you haven’t tried before and take challenging classes. There will be hard moments that may make you wish you weren’t in high school anymore, but don’t wish it away too quickly. I would give anything to be back in my classes and see my peers and teachers one last time. I know I was very anxious to be done with high school, but now I wish it wasn’t over so soon. Enjoy every moment because you never know when it will be your last.

I am very excited to be attending Dartmouth College in the fall. I will double major in English and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Special shoutout to Mrs. Hansel and Ms. Chapman for helping me discover my love of these two topics. I cannot wait to further my education and meet people from all over the world.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who has helped me throughout high school. I don’t know where I would be without all of you guys. Thank you to every teacher I have ever had for pushing me intellectually, specifically Mrs. Hansel. You have read so many drafts of my essays over the years, and I cannot thank you enough for all of the writing insights you have given me. Thank you to my MoCo teachers for supporting me through every show. I feel so fortunate to have been part of such a loving community. I would like to thank my family for always being there for me, especially now. Thank you for helping me study, attending all my shows, and loving me unconditionally. I love you, Mom, Dad, and Row. Good luck to all my peers in your future endeavors!

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

-Eleanor Roosevelt
**NOAH TIMMER**

Ever since I walked into Keene High School in the fall of 2016, my life has been changed for the better. Through the material I have learned, the teachers I have interacted with, and the friends I have made, the Keene High School community and experience has turned me into the person I am today. My four years at Keene High have made me more sociable, persevering, thoughtful, mature, and empathetic. All of these qualities have helped me form a character that I am proud to call my own. I am forever grateful for all of that Keene High has given me and will miss it immensely, but at the same time, I am looking forward to the next step in my life at Bates College.

I am very excited to attend Bates in Lewiston, Maine. It is a place where I believe I will be able to specialize in something I love, continue my baseball career, meet new people from all over the world, and continue to better myself as a person. I do not believe, however, that I would be as excited for Bates as I am if it was not for my experience at Keene High. I have never felt more prepared to further my education than I am now. Keene High has helped me find my passions, such as Chemistry, Environmental Science, and Math. While I am not sure what I want to major in yet, I do know that I want to work in a career that I have interest in and am passionate about, which could lead me to either an Economics or Biochemistry major.

Along with preparing me for college and shaping me into the person I am today, Keene High has given me numerous memories that I will always cherish. If I had to choose my favorite memory of them all, it would have to be my basketball senior night. We were down by two in double overtime of a back and forth game when my teammate Liam Johnson threw me a pass. With the time expiring, I hoisted up a shot from beyond the three-point line. It had felt like an eternity when the ball finally went in. The whole gym went crazy and the student section stormed the court. Being able to celebrate such a special night with all my teammates, family, and friends is a moment at Keene High that I will never forget.

As I continue to reflect on my time at Keene High, I do have a couple pieces of advice for future KHS graduates. My first piece of advice is for everyone to challenge themselves. Whether it is in coursework, sports, or socially, challenging yourself will help bring out the best in you and help you discover something about yourself you may not have known. I also want to remind every single student to live in the present. High school blows by, and it is one of the best times of your life, so make sure to make the most of every single opportunity. Whether it is a class, a club, or something else you are passionate about, take advantage of the opportunities and do something you love. My last piece of advice is to cherish the moments with your friends, your teachers, and your loved ones over the next four years because unfortunately, before you know it, your time at Keene High will be wrapping up, just like the Class of 2020’s right now.

I would also like to thank all of my teachers I have had the opportunity to learn from over the years. Each and every teacher I have come across over my four years has given me knowledge, advice, and friendship that I will take with me to Bates and beyond. You have all helped me find my love for the sciences and math, while also expanding my horizons into new topics, such as advanced Spanish courses, psychology, and even cooking. The Keene community is lucky to have such a dedicated and passionate group of teachers, counselors, and administrators. I am forever grateful for the times and knowledge that we shared together.

To the Class of 2020, the class that will forever be remembered as the class that graduated in the midst of a global pandemic: I miss all of you. I still cannot believe that this has happened. While this may not be the way any of us wanted to leave Keene High School, I wanted to remind all of you that we did it. We made it through high school together as a class that will never be forgotten. No matter what has happened or what will happen in the future, nothing will be able to take away all of the hard work that we put in, the numerous things we have accomplished, and the memories we have made as a class. You have all made my high school experience unforgettable.

Finally, to my family and friends: thank you. You have all loved me and supported me each step of the way. I would not be where I am today without each and every one of you. High school brings challenges; however, you have all not only helped me get through these last four years, but you have helped me make the most of these challenges and succeed. I love each and every one of you and will miss you all dearly.

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“I don’t know what my future holds, but I do know who holds my future.” -Tim Tebow
ISABELLE FLEUETTE

My time at Keene High School was truly special. It is impossible to express the magnitude of how grateful I am for the opportunities I have been granted over the past four years. High school is where I was able to find my deepest passions, and KHS was nothing but supportive in allowing me to pursue each and every one of them. On most days, I would leave class, go to club meetings, then have sports practices, which, somehow, was manageable at KHS. I always felt supported by everyone around me to do what I loved, and, because of this encouragement, I have discovered so much about myself and grown as an individual.

My success does not come alone, though, and my amazing high school experience never could have happened without the teachers who taught me not only their course’s content, but also valuable life lessons. I cannot thank each and every one of my teachers enough for their patience, dedication, and support. They always went above and beyond to provide the best educational experience for their students, as well as taking the time to personally connect with them. I would not have become the student I am today if it was not for the teachers I had.

The education I received at Keene High has prepared me for my future both within and beyond the classroom. The learning atmosphere at KHS was always positive, and it motivated me to strive to learn the most I could each day. Through the variety of challenging and insightful courses I took, I feel prepared with a well-rounded academic foundation as I enter college.

There was never a dull moment over the past four years. Some of my favorite highlights are karaoke on the soccer bus, track meets with my distance girls, participating in the French Exchange program, and attending sports games. Additionally, I am grateful for all the weekends I spent at Interact Club events and my two service trips to Puerto Rico with the club that taught me the importance of giving back to the community and leaving a positive impact, no matter the size. I have loved making these memories with the best family, friends, and teammates imaginable. Thanks to you all, everything was that much more special.

To the younger students: be open to new opportunities, and be willing to push yourself out of your comfort zone. At KHS, you are bound to discover something you love, so if you’re questioning whether to join that club, take that class, or try out for that sport, you should give it a chance. Embrace the challenges you face, but do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it. In retrospect, high school flies by so fast, so do everything you can with the time you have, because in the blink of an eye, you will be in my shoes, wondering where the time went.

I will spend my next four years furthering my education at the University of Vermont. Although I am excited about this new chapter of life, I will never forget how much Keene High has meant to me and how lucky I was to be a Blackbird!

ISABEL GARCIA

When I look back at my time at Keene High School, I realize that it is completely different from when I was age 14 looking forward. Looking back, it wasn’t nearly as intimidating as I had thought it would be. I found myself surrounded by an immense network of support. With these people, teachers, students, counselors, I was able to go through the huge changes that were necessary to become who I am today. I was able to grow and learn all I needed to move on with life. I learned how to solve equations, write essays, and perform experiments, but I also learned how to work with my peers and how to problem solve. I learned how to manage my time and how to communicate with others in new ways, all thanks to the people and classes at KHS.

But, high school wasn’t all learning. Through all four years I made memories and met people who made a huge impact on my life. Some of my best memories are from bonfires, sports games, and dances that I got to experience with friends. Out of all of them, experiencing prom for the first time last year was amazing. I can remember taking the most hilarious photo booth pictures with all my friends, and that will stick with me for years!

For those students who are joining the KHS community next year, I wish you luck. I know that you will also discover a whole new world of people and opportunities. The best advice I can
Although my Keene High School experience did not end how I would have liked it to, these past few years were full of countless memories and exciting adventures. The four years that I have spent here have created a profound impact on my life that I will carry with me forever. When I started my journey at Keene High School, I was a timid freshman who was afraid to speak up for what I believed in. Now, I have become a confident and passionate person because of the day to day and large trip experiences that I had at Keene High School.

Through all of the fun times and difficult times in the classroom, my education at Keene High School has taught me that perseverance and determination are the key components to creating my future. Along the way, many teachers at Keene High School have made a lasting impact on my life. I would like to give a special thank you to Mr. Davenson, who led me to discover my passion: environmental science. His enthusiasm about the environment inspired me to pursue a career in an environmental field. In the fall, I will be attending the University of Central Florida in their EXCEL Program for environmental engineering with a specific study in Renewable Energy.

During my time at Keene High, I have made so many lasting memories, but my favorite memory was the Belize trip during my sophomore year. It was eye-opening to experience the unique culture in the tiny country of Belize and how it was vastly different from what I was used to in the US. It was truly exciting to stay in the middle of the rainforest, sleeping in a hammock for a week. My other favorite memories are being the captain of the Envirothon team for two years and placing third in the state at the Envirothon competition, as well as being on the Varsity Gymnastics Team when we placed in the top ten during the state meet my junior year.

My advice for incoming freshmen and current students would be to explore and join any extracurricular, athletic, or in-school club because these opportunities can help you find what you are passionate about. These clubs can guide you as to what you want to pursue after high school. Join clubs with your friends, but also take the time to express yourself as an individual and participate in an activity that may be of interest to you, regardless of what other people are doing.

I am very grateful for everyone who made my Keene High experience a successful and memorable one. Additionally I would like to thank Ms. Taft for spending countless hours helping me explore the “why” of math and satisfying my curiosity, Ms. Hamilton for encouraging me to express my creativity through art, and Mrs. Herbert for always giving me valuable information about life. I would also like to thank my family for encouraging me to pursue my passions and explore my interests. I could not have done it without all of your support!
MIKAYLA RANDALL

After four years at Keene High School, I am confident in saying that it has helped me branch out more than I ever thought I would. By my senior year, I found myself involved in a multitude of activities that I never would have seen myself taking part in when I first came to Keene High for my freshman year. From class council to science club, student government to the Student Athletic Leadership Council, I engaged with school more than I ever had in the past. Though there are elections for executive positions within these clubs, most of them you can join on the whim.

This demonstrates the level of acceptance that Keene High has developed over its history of teaching, inspiring, and guiding students through four years of their tumultuous teenage lives. I have experienced the teachers of Keene High to be some of the most passionate and dedicated teachers I have ever had. Not only have they put in time and effort towards helping me grasp the topic at hand, but they have pushed me to delve deeper into the whys and hows of the material and constantly challenged me to reach a higher level of understanding. I would especially like to thank Mrs. Taft and Ms. Romano for instilling their enthusiasm for learning in me and Mr. Gitchell and Mr. Olderstein for cementing my love for chemistry. In the fall I’ll be attending Lafayette College where I will be studying Chemical Engineering and running cross-country and track.

My time at Keene High has given me a plethora of memories that I will remember well into my adult years. Some highlights include working and spending time with my fellow student council members at the homecoming game and dance and all of my experiences with the cross-country and track teams, especially finding out that our cross-country team made it to New Englands.

To all the returning and rising Keene High students: my advice to you is to make the most of all the resources and opportunities that Keene High offers. Participate in extracurricular activities, support the various sports teams, take Cheshire Career Center classes, and look into school trips. My only regret over these four years is that I did not take full advantage of everything that Keene High offered. Additionally, don’t be afraid to ask for assistance. Between the teachers and the KHS tutoring program, you are surrounded by a community that is willing and wants to help you succeed and excel. It is important to know that seeking help does not make you any less intelligent.

Thank you to all of my peers and classmates for a wonderful four years and good luck in the next stage of your lives. Thank you to the staff and administrators for making Keene High a place that keeps students visiting even after they have graduated. Everything that you have done and continue to do for this school and its community is greatly appreciated. Lastly, thank you to my parents who have supported me from the very beginning.

ALISON POWER

As I near the end of my senior year, I have been reflecting intensely on my three years at Keene High School. My sophomore year, I decided to attend a private school. It was much smaller, and quite isolated. It never felt like quite the right fit. The hallways and classrooms were not as inviting as Keene High was. I began my junior year back at Keene High. I am so grateful I made the decision to come back. My teachers, classmates, and classes here have begun to shape me into a strong and independent person. I’ve had the opportunity to explore my passions inside and out of the classroom. I have made some truly amazing friends and have so many lasting memories.

Although senior year is not ending the way I would like it to, I still have many moments throughout my years at Keene High that I will always cherish. Some of these include attending junior prom with my best friends, going to the river cleanup with Mr. Davenson and some members from my AP Environmental Science class, and playing in the Powderpuff game this fall. Every single memory and experience I have of Keene High has shaped me into the caring and passionate individual I am now.
The past two years of upper level classes have helped ready me for the next four years of my life at Scripps College. I have discovered my love for discussion-based classes, and realized my passion for speaking for what I believe in. My AP Language class inspired me to search for a liberal arts women’s college that would check off all my boxes. My AP Environmental Science class has been my absolute favorite class and helped me form a dedication to helping the environment. I have also had the joy of being the president of our Sierra Club. Without these two opportunities at Keene High I would not have discovered my passion to study Environmental Science.

My advice to younger KHS students would be to appreciate every class and teacher you have during high school. Even if it wasn’t my favorite subject, every single one of my classes has taught me something different. I never imagined this would be how my senior year ended, so don’t take your time for granted. The teachers are there to help you further your learning, so reach out when you need assistance. My last piece of advice is to go to all the school events you can, participate in the clubs you’re interested in, and make an effort to meet as many new people as possible!

Lastly, I would like to thank those who made a lasting impact on me during my years at Keene High. Thank you to Mr. Davenson, Mrs. Taft, and Mrs. Hansel. You have all shaped me into who I am and helped me to understand the importance of education.

I am so thankful for everyone who has been a part of my journey through high school. I will cherish the memories and friendships I have formed for the rest of my life.

When I was younger, I had always hoped that high school would be an exciting, experimental, and challenging cycle in my evolution of growth. I hoped that it would be a time of meeting new friends, joining clubs filled with driven and passionate people, and participating in rigorous academic courses to prepare me for my future. I am glad and grateful to be able to say that all of those hopes came true during my four years at Keene High School. I will always be able to look back on my high school career with fondness and joy due to the numerous teachers, staff, and community members of Keene High making my experience an unforgettable one. I will treasure my memories of performing in plays and musicals with the Keene High School Drama Club, as well as spending countless hours workshoping incredible, creative writing pieces in my Advanced Creative Writing class.

Every teacher that I have had the honor of working with at Keene High School has made a significant impact on me and my education. However, my English and Social Studies teachers, Mr. Barry, Mrs. Johnston, Ms. McLaughlin, and Mr. Hope have helped me grow as a person and a writer in indescribable ways.

Keene High School offers a generous array of challenging liberal arts and history classes, and because I was able to take advantage of the incredible mentorship and education that is offered, my passion and inspiration for English and creative writing was fostered. Thus, I will be attending Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York while majoring in English-Writing and participating in the Honors Program this fall. I want to thank every teacher who has worked with me over the past four years for your encouragement and for pushing me to achieve the best that I could at every opportunity. I know that I would not be the person I am today nor would I have the achievements I can call my own had I not had the honor of working with all of you.

As for advice for younger students, I would tell you to take the opportunity to build genuine, creative relationships with your teachers. They want to see you succeed, and they want to talk with you about your passions and ideas. Ask your questions, stay after class if you need to, and work as hard as you can. Success is sure to come if you do.

Again, thank you to all of my teachers, and especially to Mrs. Ahnert and Ms. Romano, for never failing to make me smile. Thank you to my mother, my stepfather, and my sister for always offering me love, support and time. I would not be where I am or where I am going had it not been for the extraordinary community around me.

“I urge you to please notice when you are happy, and exclaim or murmur or think at some point, ‘If this isn’t nice, I don’t know what is.’”  -Kurt Vonnegut
As I conclude my journey at Keene High School, I find myself struggling to fully illustrate my unique and momentous experiences. From debates in class, numerous club events, exciting science labs, homecoming floats, and going to junior prom with friends, every minute was filled with remarkable memories. These are the moments that helped shape me into who I am today and inspire me through every aspect of my life.

When entering high school from the small town of Chesterfield, I was unsure of my place and loathed the question “what do you plan to major in?” While having the opportunity to explore my interests, I discovered my passions and learned many lifelong lessons. My time at Keene High has helped me achieve my life long dream of pursuing science at a higher institution. In the fall I will be headed off to Cornell University for Chemical Engineering.

Some of my top highlights include my final project in AP Chemistry, billiards with my physics class, running the snack shack with student council, being a techie with drama club and Nostalgia, and the spring leadership conferences with FBLA. My favorite times at Keene High consist purely of class, clubs, and colleagues. While many of the senior events I was helping to organize were canceled, I would not change a single thing. Life is truly what you make of it. I have learned discipline, organization, and leadership skills while having some of the best times of my life.

To the future alumni of Keene High, there are too many things I’ve learned from my time here to fit onto a single page. The most significant thing I can tell you is to treasure your time. Four years fly by in a blink of an eye and while class might seem a drag at times or you just don’t feel like going to a school event, you are going to look back with a smile and remember all the sentimental memories.

One of my favorite things to tell incoming freshmen is that teachers are your best friends. This statement could not be more accurate. The teachers at Keene High School are truly remarkable and one of the best parts of school. They are mentors, friends, confidants, and inspirations to all students. There are way too many teachers and staff that deserve to be recognized, to list them all; however, I would like to give a special shout out to Mr. Olderstein, Mr. Lybarger, and Mrs. Taft for fostering my passion in science and engineering; Mr. Derry and Ms. McLaughlin for encouraging my adoration of reading; Mr. Lagace and Mrs. Merrill for inspiring my fondness of clubs and community; and Mrs. White for enriching my view of the world. And most importantly Mr. Craven, who has been by my side through the highs and lows as my steadfast advisor for my entire high school experience. He has encouraged me, bolstered me, and most importantly, challenged me to be better.

The most important thing I will take away from Keene High is the fact that your potential is only limited by the zenith of your aspirations. If you want something to happen, feel truly passionate about it, throw yourself head first into it. No matter the time, difficulty, sweat, or tears; it is possible for dreams to come true.

“Never give up on what you really want to do. The person with the big dreams is more powerful than the one with all the facts.” -Albert Einstein