

# Future civil engineer a leader at CHS

**By Dawn Feldhaus**  
*Post-Record staff*

A musician who aspires to help people in developing countries is among the four valedictorians for the Camas High School Class of 2008.

Jennifer Brannan has excelled academically in a class that exceeds 400 graduates.

"It was a lot of hard work," she said. "I had to be very disciplined, but I was very self motivated. My mom was very encouraging and always promoted academics."

Brannan's family includes her mother Judy Brannan, sister Jocelyn, 15, and brother Jared, 13.

Brannan plans to major in civil engineering at the University of Portland.

"I love math and science," she said. "I like the idea of working with public works, bridges and roads. I hope maybe I can use the resources being educated in that area in Third World countries. I'd like to help with their public works."

Brannan said she might minor in music, while in college. She has played flute in the CHS wind ensemble for four years.

"I had the most fun in band," Brannan said. "I made a lot of good



DAWN FELDHAUS/POST-RECORD

**Jennifer Brannan** is one of four valedictorians for Camas High School.

friends. It's like a family. I enjoy playing music, so that's a big part of it."

She credits band Director Richard Mancini for enhancing her high school experience.

"He teaches music and life lessons," Brannan said. "He is the best teacher imaginable. He cares about the students."

Mancini described Brannan as "always polite, highly disciplined and highly motivated."

"If all the students had her demeanor, teaching would be an easy

job," he said. "And, of course, they would all have good grades too."

During Brannan's junior year, she served as the CHS band secretary. This year, she has been the band president.

For Brannan's senior project, she learned to play guitar. That involved taking lessons, writing a song and performing it in front of the congregation at Warehouse Christian Church in Washougal. Brannan's involvement at Warehouse also involved teaching in the church's nursery, volunteering as a youth group leader and singing on the worship team.

Brannan has also been a member of the Key Club and the junior varsity Knowledge Bowl team. As a member of the National Honor Society, she served as a blood drive coordinator.

During Brannan's senior year at CHS, she was enrolled in the Running Start program at Clark College. That involved driving to day and evening classes.

"It was definitely difficult maintaining that schedule, but I don't regret it because it gave me a taste of the college atmosphere," Brannan said.