

# At the top of her class on two fronts

□ Katy Norcross will graduate with a 4.0 GPA from Camas High and Clark College

By Danielle Frost  
*Post-Record staff*

When Katy Norcross graduates next week, she'll be earning both a diploma from Camas High School and an associate of arts degree from Clark College.

Not only that, but she'll do it having maintained a 4.0 GPA at both schools.

Norcross is one of six co-valedictorians at CHS and one of four Running Start graduates in Clark County to earn all As.

"Attending Clark was one of the best decisions in my life," she said. "It was a real challenge, but I've always been a hard worker and I just had to put the time

in. Earning my AA degree at the same time as my high school diploma is like getting two more years out of my life."

This past semester, she took a full load of college courses, plus two classes at CHS.

"I lost a lot of sleep, but it was worth it to me," she said. "The classes were a lot harder but I loved being in a more mature setting and meeting new people. The whole atmosphere was very different."

In addition to her classes at Clark and CHS, Norcross kept busy acting in the various high school plays and musicals, and coaching and playing recreational soccer.

"I work hard and am kind of a perfectionist, so I was able to manage my time well," she said. "I basically took my homework everywhere with me. It's

amazing how much extra time you have to do things."

After graduation and a little down time, Norcross will head off to the University of Montana, where she has earned a \$10,000 per year scholarship. She was also offered scholarships at other colleges, but is partial to Montana after spending every summer of her life there. She'll major in fine arts, with an emphasis in musical theatre.

"I really want to be on stage," Norcross said. "I started singing and acting at age 3 and I like performing and entertaining. I thought about changing it, but I like to perform."

A few times, she found it difficult to balance her time between classes, acting and soccer.

"I got frustrated but kept thinking about that two-year degree," she said. "I believed if I put the effort in,



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## Katy Norcross

then I would get it back."

Greg MacGowan, her CHS literature teacher, describes her as an "outstanding student in an outstanding class."

"What stands out in my mind is her uninhibited and enthusiastic participation in our class discussions, as well as her ability to express her

ideas in such an eloquent fashion," he said.

MacGowan added that her acting abilities impress him as well.

"Our drama department (directed by Rob Kankelberg) is as good as it gets and this turned out to be a very

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positive avenue for Katy and her exceptional qualities," he said. "She conveyed a range of expression and emotion that compelled the attention of the audience. I am so proud of her accomplishments and very ex-

cited about her prospects in the future."

Norcross said that becoming valedictorian was a goal she had since middle school.

"I always wanted it," she said. "In seventh or eighth grade, I started getting more

serious about it, and thought 'I'm smart enough, I work hard enough and I can do it.'"

Although Norcross has spent a significant amount of time during the past two years at Clark College, she does have some favorite memories from

CHS.

"I loved participating in the plays and musicals," she said. "You have such a sense of camaraderie with people. It's a rewarding feeling, and that's the best part."

Her advice for other high school students who are con-

sidering earning dual degrees is to "go for it."

"It's possible," Norcross said. "You can do it. Don't think just because it's difficult you shouldn't try, because anything that's worth it isn't going to be easy."