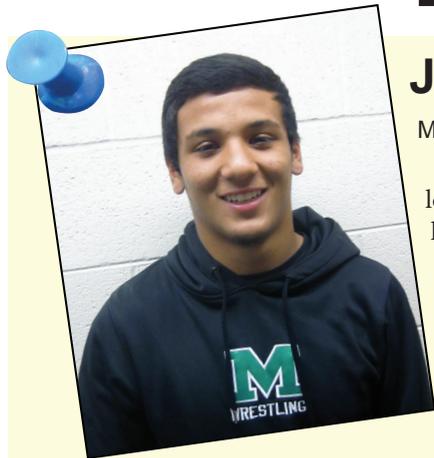




OTHER PATHS TO SUCCESS

With Prom tomorrow night, the countdown begins for seniors; there are eight days left of the 2012 school year and with waiting comes anticipation for the future. For some students this means college life is just a summer away, for others it means the alternative.



Jorge Gonzalez

Mitchell Matacia | Staff Writer

When seniors look for colleges, generally, their scope is limited due to the lofty expense of out-of-state tuition. In most cases

really haven't looked into like which one I want to go to," Gonzalez said. "It's still a process of [whether] my family is going to move down there or not."

Gonzalez said that the benefit of attending college in Mexico is not only being home with his family, but also the reduced cost, making his options more available. He's continuing to look at colleges that offer him the tools to support his desired hands-on training in his field.

"College down there is a lot cheaper than it is in [the U.S.]," Gonzalez said. "I'll just have to see around."

Despite being offered to wrestle in college in the U.S., Gonzalez said he'll go back to Mexico with his family.

"I was going to probably wrestle in college, but then it came that my parents might be moving," Gonzalez said. "I had a lot of offers, but I didn't really look into it. I don't think they wrestle down there."

As for him and his parents, they're anticipating living around their relatives again, who would have previously lived a nation away.

"[My parents] have been here for a long time," Gonzalez said. "They miss their family too."

though, moving away from their hometown is enough to reclaim some form of adventure. However, senior Jorge Gonzalez, who was born in Morelia, Michoacán, will most likely be traveling back to Mexico with his family to attend college.

"[My parents'] plan was for [me] to finish high school here," Gonzalez said. "They didn't really worry about me applying to colleges here. They were just like, 'You can go down there, you can study at college [in Mexico].'"

If he moves back to Mexico, Gonzalez said he'll probably focus his attention on mechanical engineering in college, as for the specific college, he's undecided.

"I mean there are plenty of [colleges] down there, I



Spencer Eddingfield

Mitchell Matacia | Staff Writer

A person who knows their interests, the college they like and their potential career path at an early age, is often considered fortunate.

However, senior Spencer Ed-

dingfield is one student faced with indecision when selecting a college major. Instead of going right to college after high school, he plans on staying in Mason for another year.

"I plan on just working full time, being able to save up some money [for the first year]," Eddingfield said.

Eddingfield plans to keep his full-time job at Kroger in the following year and during that time, decide on a career path. Originally, he planned to attend college after his senior year, but without a

major, he didn't feel it made sense.

"Last year I figured I'd just go to college immediately after [high school], but it really hit me like, 'Oh, I have no idea what I want to do. Should I rush into it or could that be a really bad decision?'" Eddingfield said.

Although Eddingfield won't be enrolled in college for the 2013 school year, he does plan to attend college later on. He said that attending the University of Cincinnati might be one of his future options.

"I definitely plan on going to college," Eddingfield said. "I'll probably go to UC for the first year and then I can transfer to a more specific college if I need to."

According to Eddingfield, however, college shouldn't always be the immediate approach after high school. He said that there are alternatives that people overlook.

"I feel like a lot of people completely dismiss the idea of learning a trade," Eddingfield said. "There are some careers you can be successful in and make a decent amount of money in without getting a degree."



Kaeleigh Warfield

Taylor Telford | Staff Writer

Like many seniors graduating this year, Warfield is going off to college. She, however, will be attending the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York. According to Warfield, West Point will provide her with a vastly different college experience than the majority of college students will have.

"It's going to be a lot harder than a regular college," Warfield said. "I will have gone through some things that regular college students can't even imagine."

Because West Point is a military college, its students are placed in programs designed specifically for success in the military. According to Warfield, all West Point students take an engineering track, as well as participate in rigorous physical training. Warfield said that every student will undergo periodic tests of their fitness, and if a student fails to pass two consecutive tests, they are kicked out of the school.

Unlike the majority of colleges, West Point students are not required to pay tuition. On the contrary, they are actually paid by the school for their participation through a stipend program which provides students with a monthly cash payment, uniforms, food and necessary materials like textbooks.

In its' severe discipline and regimented lifestyle, West Point is void of the typical experience many young adults seek when attending college. However, according to Warfield, it is worth it to miss out on the freedoms of a traditional college experience in order to follow a dream and grow into a stronger person.

"I know I'll be missing out on partying and doing whatever I want to whenever I want to, but I know it will make me a better person in the end, and that's really what I'm going for," Warfield said.