

Community Comment
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Graduation 2013

Another graduation has come and gone for CR and Humboldt State. Let me express my congratulations to those of you who completed your studies. Getting into college is one thing; completing the requirements to graduate is quite another. It not only takes a certain level of academic intelligence, but it also takes dedication and perseverance. If you are in college as a full time student you have to figure out the life style. College takes a lot of hard work and time. But it is often an unstructured schedule. Successful students master the art of time management. It also demands the ability to be a self starter. Nobody tells you exactly what to do and when. Students need to figure this out. While having a major gives a student some mastery over some subject, college is not job training. The idea is to get an education. The general aspect of higher education allows you to study and discuss issues of history as well as current events. Some math and science are required for everyone as are art and social science and behavioral studies. A graduate leaves college a more well rounded individual with a better sense of our society and the world. It makes for a better citizen in most cases.

While college is not meant to be job training, many degrees do lead directly to a job. But we know that most people will do more than one type of job over the course of their life time. Certainly there are some who have a passion for a field from a young age. I think that's a gift. Many of us will find our passion for a career along the way. Some may have a good career but always consider it just a job. I've often thought there are two kinds of people: those who live to work and those who work to live. Either seems to work. But college does set up the skills for a job. The skills learned in college, self starting, time management and perseverance are the same needed to be successful on the job.

Completing college is a big deal and should be celebrated. Arcata seems to do this well. Graduation weekend brings hundreds of family and friends to Humboldt County to witness the official completion ceremony. We don't have enough bed space in our Inns, hotels and vacation rentals to accommodate the crowd. The restaurants do a brisk business as do many of the retail stores in the county. We are happy for the parents who have often supported their children through the college years and we need to appreciate the imported money that has come into Arcata and the County. College of the Redwoods and HSU are not only quality institutions of higher education, they are also big business. Students rent housing and buy food and clothing. They buy gas and need maintenance and repair for their cars. The schools employ hundreds of people from administrators to teachers to carpenters to groundskeepers, to support staff and janitors. The influence on our local economy is huge.

Finally, we have hope for these new graduates. They truly are our future. In many ways, the baby boomers are the me generation. Their parents gave them, us, many opportunities

that they didn't have. Maybe this new group will be the we generation. Maybe they will fix some of the things we couldn't quite get right.

Cheers!

This has been Sam pennisi for community comment.