

Continued from Preceding Page

write fiction, which is one way she expresses herself.

"I will say or do whatever, as long as I approve of it," LaFevre said.

She would like to attend Vassar College, New York University, University of Pennsylvania or Temple University, and wants to major in journalism or education. Her career aspirations are teaching English or kindergarten, or journalism. Even though Temple is not her first-choice college, LaFevre is a big fan of their athletic program. ★

—Matt Borrelli

Asha Marchaman

Asha Marchaman, a recent graduate of Radnor High School, enjoyed her high-school years but found the town and community to be a little boring. That's not a surprising comment coming from a girl who spent the first 14 years of her life in Philadelphia.

Marchaman, 17, moved to Radnor, a suburb of Philadelphia, in ninth grade, but she still has a strong connection with her former home at 46th Street and Fairmount Avenue.

While attending Radnor High, Marchaman was a member of the key club and the dance team. She also was a part of Radnor's cheer-leading team. Additionally, Marchaman took classes at the college honors program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and DeVry University.

"After visiting the TV studios and radio stations there," Marchaman said, "I knew I wanted to do something related to journalism or communications."

Marchaman finds ways to keep herself busy when not in school by frequenting the mall, going to the movies and hanging out with friends.

Next month, Marchaman will start college at Lock Haven University, where she plans to major in communications media.



Lauren Melendez

Lauren Melendez, 16, is at the top of her class at the Country Day School of the Sacred Heart, where she is a junior. She is an aspiring actress, journalist and environmental engineer.

By 21, she hopes to have acted in a movie, published a poetry book and completed about 3,000 community-service hours.

This young African-American and Puerto Rican woman from West Philadelphia has already made one significant accomplishment: She ran the 26.2-mile Philadelphia marathon.

"It felt amazing," she said. "I never thought I could accomplish something like that." She also represented her school at the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Seminar, a statewide event.

Her creativity and passion to inform people inspires her to pursue journalism. But she has her less serious side, too, such as her obsession with R&B star Chris Brown.

Melendez lives her motto: "Just smile, it never fails." ★

—Jessica Dunbar

Nicole Onisick

Nicole Onisick, or "Coley," as she is affectionately called by friends and family, is the definition of versatile. In the fall, 16-year-old Onisick will begin her junior year at Neshaminy High School, where she will be the news editor for her school newspaper.

Though excited, she feels her true talent lies in celebrity gossip. She has written numerous celebrity-focused stories, from the Britney Spears head-shaving blunder to a review on the latest Janet Jackson CD.

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—Will Crowley

You can usually spot Onisick wearing earphones and bobbing her head to music at its highest volume. She feels as though her life has been changed by various musical artists, but in particular Dave Matthews, who has inspired her to one day want to write for *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Onisick prides herself in living every day like it's her last, and has one major goal: Be happy.

—Kristen Ford

Sean Purnell

Standing at 6 feet 3, Sean Purnell is known for displaying his skills on the YMCA court at 52nd and Sansom streets.

He believed he was destined to take these skills to high school and on to college, but in his journey through Franklin Learning Center, he discovered several passions besides basketball.

Purnell describes himself as a lover of hip-hop and a connoisseur of sneakers. In 2005, while sitting in his bedroom, he found his inspiration in both: Lupe Fiasco.

According to Purnell, "Nas is the G.O.A.T. [greatest of all time] and Lupe Fiasco is the Billy."

The Chicago rapper has influenced his style, and dreams of writing for the hip-hop magazine *XXL*. Purnell hasn't let the challenges that come with being a young black male growing up in West Philadelphia deter his dreams.

He plans to attend Millersville University in the fall to major in English with a concentration in journalism. He jokes that he's "in it for the clothes and sneakers," and that's what he'll get with his success.

—Jasmine Ingram

Matt Saunders

Matt Saunders, 16, is a rising junior at Washington High School. He listens to 2Pac and 50 Cent just like other teenagers his age, but is more self-motivated than many to accomplish his dream, which he admits with a smile is to be a chess champion.

"Get my team to the state championship and win it," Saunders said without hesitation when asked about his goals.



promptly replied, "Dad," and added that his father played on the hoop's team at Philadelphia's Lincoln High.

When Saunders isn't anticipating his opponents' next move, he likes sleeping and learning.

"I like to learn about things and just have random knowledge of things that people don't usually know."

He also admits that he likes being an only child.

—Megan Walsh

Megan Walsh

Megan Walsh lives in Linwood, N.J., and in the fall will be a junior at Mainland Regional High School. She enjoys most of her classes, especially English. She's determined to strive hard in school and learn anything she can.

Like most teens, Walsh enjoys listening to music. But her musical tastes aren't so ordinary. Her favorite genre of music is country and her favorite artist is Martina McBride. Walsh describes McBride's voice as "blissful" and says her songs are meaningful.

Walsh is a musician herself. She plays the violin, which she says helps her relax. She likes movies, especially dramas, and watches a lot of TV shows on the Lifetime channel.

Walsh dreams of becoming a war correspondent. By reporting from war-torn countries, she believes she can show how war affects the world.

When Walsh isn't writing, she is with her family. She has a sister, a stepsister and three stepbrothers. Her mother has had a great influence on Walsh.

"She is the strongest woman I know."

—Matt Saunders

