

# JACKSON ACADEMY

Tabitha Todd - Valedictorian / Katie Overstreet - Salutatorian

Jackson Academy's graduation ceremony Friday, May 24, 7 p.m. at Wayne Lathan Gymnasium



Tabitha Rose Todd

## Todd's future: 'Either a hospital or a zoo'

■ **SCHOOL:** Jackson Academy

■ **NAME:** Tabitha Rose Todd

■ **AGE:** 17

■ **PARENTS:** Bruce and Teryl Todd. My dad is a Wildlife Biologist. My mom is a 7th grade English teacher at Jackson Middle School.

■ **GPA AND HONORS:** 4.2 GPA; the honors and accomplishments I have earned throughout high school are as follows: Freshman Class President; Sophomore Class Vice President; Yearbook Editor 2015-present; Student Government Association Treasurer 2016-2017; Student Government Association Vice President 2017-2018; Student Government Association President 2018-2019; Alabama Lions High School Leadership Forum Ambassador 2016; Capstone Leadership Academy Ambassador 2017; Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Conference Ambassador 2017; Highest Academic Averages in English, Math, and Computer 2015-2016; Highest Academic Averages in all subjects 2016-2017; Highest Academic Averages in Literature and Career Management 2017-2018; Alabama Girls State Delegate 2018; Valedictorian, and a 4.20 GPA.

■ **COLLEGE PLANS:** I plan to attend the University of South Alabama in the fall and eventually go on to medical school or veterinarian school.

■ **MAJOR:** Biology

■ **ULTIMATE GOAL:**

I plan to become either a pediatric gastroenterologist or a veterinarian.

■ **WHAT IS THE HARDEST THING YOU DID IN HIGH SCHOOL?**

The hardest thing I have done in high school is to successfully balance sports, leadership clubs, and academics.

■ **WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE COURSES?**

My favorite courses are in the science field, specifically anatomy and forensic science. I also

enjoyed literature and history.

■ **WHAT IS YOUR BEST MEMORY FROM HIGH SCHOOL?**

I don't have one specific memory that stands out. However, some of my favorite things have been spending time with my teammates, decorating for homecoming, and traveling on field trips.

■ **WHO WERE YOUR BIGGEST INFLUENCES?**

Chloe Wofford, a former English teacher, was one of my biggest influences. Her passion for teaching and interest in her students inspired me to learn and pursue my dreams. Also, Mike Garrett, history teacher, is very wise and caring, and he adds humor to his students' lives.

■ **NAME AN ISSUE, LOCALLY, STATEWIDE, NATIONALLY, OR INTERNATIONALLY YOU WANT A REALISTIC CHANCE OF BEING INVOLVED WITH AND WHY?**

I would like to be an advocate to cure autoimmune diseases. They are very debilitating and expensive to treat. I think there should be more money allocated for government research to cure rather than treat these diseases.

■ **WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF 10 YEARS FROM NOW?**

In 10 years, I hope to be finished with either medical or veterinarian school. Depending on my career choice, I will be working in either a hospital or a zoo.

■ **WHAT SORT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS DO YOU HOPE WE WILL SEE 10 YEARS FROM NOW?**

Since I will be pursuing a career in the medical or veterinarian field, I hope there will be equipment that will shorten the length of time to make an accurate diagnosis of a patient. This can increase the likelihood that treatment will be successful.

## Katie Overstreet would like to see new outlook on kids with disabilities

■ **SCHOOL:** Jackson Academy

■ **FULL NAME:** Katie Elizabeth Overstreet

■ **PARENTS:** Paul and Maya Overstreet

■ **GPA AND HONORS:** 4.0 GPA, Salutatorian, Jackson Academy Journalism Editor-in-Chief, SGA Parliamentarian/Historian, Class Chaplain

■ **COLLEGE PLANS:** I plan to attend the University of South Alabama and pursue a degree in nursing.

■ **MAJOR:** nursing

■ **ULTIMATE GOAL:**

After getting my BSN, I want to be a travel nurse for several years, then return back to school to become a nurse practitioner.

■ **WHAT IS THE HARDEST THING YOU DID IN HIGH SCHOOL?**

The hardest thing I did in high school was maintain my good grades. As time wore on, it was very hard for me to stay focused on making good grades. I played basketball during my high school years which added to the stress of trying keeping my grades high. Making good grades was very difficult, but I always reminded myself to keep looking forward.

■ **WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE COURSES?**

My favorite courses have always been my English classes. Early on in high school I was very close to my English teacher. She really helped me develop my love for reading books and writing.

■ **WHAT IS YOUR BEST MEMORY FROM HIGH SCHOOL?**

My best memory from high school was playing basketball. I played for seven years, and it was a big part of



Katie Elizabeth Overstreet

my high school life growing up. I am so thankful for the coaches that dedicated their time and energy to help my team and me play basketball.

■ **WHO WERE YOUR BIGGEST INFLUENCES?**

My biggest influences in high school were my parents. They have always pushed me and encouraged me to do my best no matter what obstacles I am facing. Without them, I wouldn't have made the grades I did or have been as successful in my high school years.

*"The public needs to stop placing labels on kids with disabilities and start giving these children better opportunities to learn, explore, and be a regular kid."*

■ **NAME AN ISSUE, LOCALLY, STATEWIDE, NATIONALLY, OR INTERNATIONALLY YOU WANT A REALISTIC CHANCE OF BEING INVOLVED WITH AND WHY?**

I think there is a huge issue with the perceptions people (adults and students) have on children with disabilities. Every summer since the 7th grade, I have volunteered at a camp specifically designed for children with disabilities. These disabilities include cerebral palsy, spina bifida, autism, etc. Once I started volunteering at this camp, I realized that the kids with disabilities are just like you and me. They want to be treated just like a regular person. I have formed meaningful relationships with the children at the camp and I plan on volunteering there as long as I can. The public needs to stop placing labels on kids with disabilities and start giving these children better opportunities to learn, explore, and be a regular kid.

■ **WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF 10 YEARS FROM NOW?**

In 10 years from now I see myself working as a nurse practitioner. I plan to be involved with special needs children; whether it is with my job, or volunteer work.

■ **WHAT SORT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS DO YOU HOPE WE WILL SEE 10 YEARS FROM NOW?**

Ten years from now I hope to see more complex ways to screen for cancer. Many people are diagnosed with cancer each day, and if it isn't caught early, it can have deadly results. I hope that screening can develop more and catch cancer a lot earlier.