

Lutheran High North Awards Top Honors

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Lutheran High North 2020 valedictorian Tabitha Waiser.

Editor's note: This is the first story in an ongoing series about the valedictorians and salutatorians in the area. This week we profile the top scholars at Lutheran High North, 1130 W. 34th St.

Valedictorian Tabitha Waiser has been at Lutheran High North since her freshman year of high school.

She found out about being honored as valedictorian at the beginning of her senior year when she logged into the school's online network.

"I had no idea I was valedictorian until that day," Waiser said. "It took me by complete surprise, and it actually made me anxious because after seeing that I was the top of the class, I really wanted to keep that spot."

Waiser said students have received an email from LHN principal Dana Gerard that graduation will be held virtually on Zoom.

"The speeches from the valedictorian and salutatorian will be pre-recorded and played for all to see," Waiser said. "The ceremony will continue, and after, the diplomas will be put under the porte-cochere at LHN. The seniors will drive up one by one and take their own diploma from the table, and then drive off and park so that the next car can come. There will be a lot of honking as applause."

Waiser understands the necessity of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic, but says it's also hard.

"I really wanted my whole family to be there cheering me on as I walked across the stage to get my diploma," she said.

Waiser said her favorite teachers at LHN include Blythe Barreto, who teaches Upper Level Theology, and Advanced Placement Calculus teacher Lynn Eickemeyer.

"Both of these women are so full of kindness and have a true passion for teaching and helping their students understand everything they say," Waiser said. "I loved the fact that I was able to learn so much from these two teachers, and I am so blessed to have been in their classes for the last two years."

Waiser's favorite classes were theology and English.

"I loved English class because every writing assignment I had was incredibly therapeutic to me," she said. "Every time I was given an essay to write, I was able to relate it to my own life while in the process really enjoying (what teacher Endira) Hawkins assigned to me."

Waiser was involved in varsity basketball all four years of high school and also played volleyball from her freshman through junior years.

"I played varsity softball my freshman, junior and senior year until it got cut short," she said.

Waiser is going to the University of Houston in the fall and plans to major in nursing.