



# LYDIA HAZLEWOOD

## VALEDICTORIAN GREENFIELD

GPA: 4.0

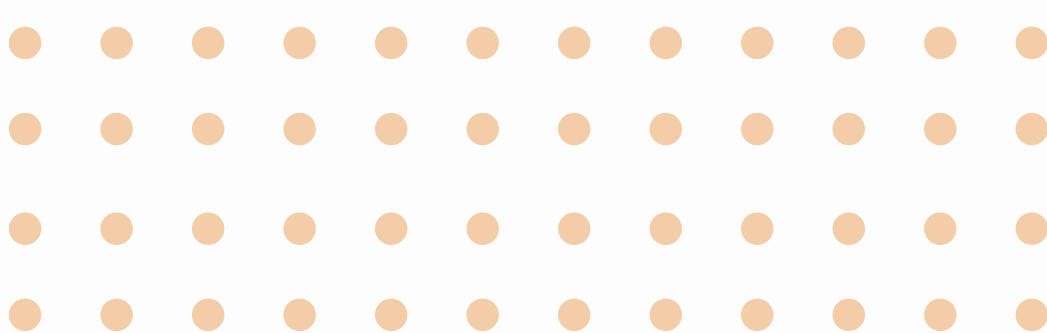
Hometown: Greenfield

Previous schools: Attended  
Greenfield School all 13 years

Favorite subjects: Math and  
History

Favorite teachers: Miss Linda  
Farmer and Miss Beverly  
Williams

Plans after high  
school: I have wrestled  
with whether or not I should  
go to college away from home  
or closer to home. I decided  
to attend college at UTM.



# REFLECTIONS

## from the Class of 2020

A normal graduating high school class will experience several lasts during their senior year; but in that sense, the Class of 2020 is not a normal class. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the class of 2020 never got to experience spring sports, their last academic or sports banquets, their last field day, their last day of high school or even take a senior trip. And now, we are looking at having a graduation ceremony that is unusual.

In addition to missing out on some important experiences, the class of 2020 never got to make the memories that are associated with those experiences. At our class reunions, I imagine that our reminiscing will include talk of toilet paper shortages, hand sanitizer, face masks and being isolated from our family and friends.

I was born two months after 9/11. While I was too young to understand the impact of those events, my life has been impacted by them. As I prepare to close this chapter of my life, I know that my life will be impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. I believe that this pandemic has brought attention to how our individual choices impacts others. The pandemic has also revealed just how vulnerable our nation is. In a matter of weeks, unemployment rose dramatically, the stock market took a drastic drop and some of the supplies in our stores became difficult to purchase. This pandemic has also revealed how prone human beings are to abuse the authority they have been given.

While I cannot speak for the entire class of 2020, these recent revelations have taught me some important lessons that I probably would have never been taught in school. I have learned not to take anything for granted and to enjoy each moment because it could be the last time you have that experience. When I walked out of my school on Monday, March 16th, I never dreamed that I had just completed my last day of high school. The shelter-in-place order caused most people to slow down. This pause was a good time to reflect upon the blessings in my life. Even in the midst of a pandemic, I still have it better than most of the children around the world. Abiding by social distancing guidelines and the shelter-in-place order also caused me to realize the importance and value of a handshake, a hug and the presence of friends and family. This time has also tested my faith but I have learned to keep my eyes on Christ. As the Bible says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV).