



MARTHA NICHOLS

VALEDICTORIAN GLEASON

GPA: 4.0

Hometown: Gleason

Previous Schools: Greenfield

Favorite Subjects: English
and History

Favorite Teachers: Ms.
Phyllis Gearin and Mrs. Amy
Orr

Plans after high school: I am
planning to attend the
University of Mississippi in
the fall to pursue a B.A. in
Political Science in hopes to
attend law school after
graduation.

REFLECTIONS

from the Class of 2020

To say that this school year was unconventional would absolutely be an understatement. However, if any class would have to graduate during a global pandemic, it would be none other than the Class of 2020. Most of us were born in a time when the United States was in recovery from the tragic events of 9/11; we witnessed the first African American man to become President; we experienced a solar eclipse; we saw the launches of revolutionary technology, and so much more. As a class and generation as a whole, we've experienced many historical events, both good and bad.

However, nothing could have prepared us for the unprecedented end to our senior year caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This unexpected end to the school year has denied many students in the Class of 2020 what is often considered a rite of passage into adulthood: graduation. While we are still having graduation ceremonies in Weakley County, some seniors- both high school and college alike- were not so fortunate to have a graduation ceremony. Although this unexpected end to our high school careers was anything but ideal, it does not have to be the defining factor of the Class of 2020. Perhaps instead of looking upon our class with pity and sadness, future generations will look at our class as the seniors who pushed through and persevered despite adverse circumstances. To me, being part of the Class of 2020 means persevering through difficult, unprecedented times.

This pandemic changed life as we knew it before our eyes, and I believe some of these changes will be long-term. I think people will generally be more cautious in social gatherings, public gatherings will likely be much more restricted, and our generation will certainly have unique stories to tell our children and grandchildren. However, I do not know exactly how this pandemic will change our generation and the generations to come; I believe that we will be the ones to determine that fate in the coming years, and, to me, that thought is very exciting. In a matter of weeks, things that seemed most important were no longer of importance. With the world around us being so fluid, I have realized that the future truly belongs to our generation and the generations to follow, and we will be the ones to shape the future. Regardless of what has happened or what is happening now, the future is in our hands. So even though I do not know how our generation will respond to the post-Covid-19 world, I do know that we have the power to emerge stronger than we were before.