

Valedictorian

From Central to East, Dezell Turner's high school

story/ E. Rothmayer

The class of 2018, a phenomenal group of students, full of crazy stories, fun memories, and shared secrets. One particular member, was able rise above the rest and earn the title of "Valedictorian". How he did it, and who helped him, makes for an interesting story.

Enter David "Dezell" Turner, a quiet hardworking individual who is nothing if not dedicated. But who is he? While he may be a top student he isn't chained to a desk.

"You can usually find me making short films with my friends, or playing video games. I've also got a bit of a pop culture obsession, so I read a lot of comic books and watch a lot of Marvel movies. I don't have a job, but I do volunteer with a charity cosplay group and at Joshua Christian Academy," Turner said.

Working on a short film isn't easy, it takes a lot of passion to see it through.

"I like doing all parts of the short films, since it's really just a few of us and a cellphone, but I enjoy editing the most. We're not really making these for an audience, so I like to edit the films in absurd ways or add in jokes at the last minute that my friends aren't expecting. We once improvised an entire parody of Duck Dynasty and edited it in a mockumentary style; that was probably the most fun," Turner said.

Getting back to school and extracurriculars and college classes isn't easy though, sometimes it can take a helping hand to keep going.

"I'm blessed to have very supportive parents, friends, and teachers. I'm pursuing a career in aerospace engineering, and they've been a massive help with that; my parents have always encouraged my curiosity, my teachers have helped me given me resources and helped me make connections in the scientific community, and my friends have helped me forget my stress and enjoy myself," Turner said.

One of those friends would be classmate Gabe Ewert who has been friends with Turner since an eighth grade accelerated math course at Central.

"He's probably one of the hardest working people i know, if there's only one person raising their hand it's probably Dezell," Ewert said.

Turner admits that he's definitely had an

unforgettable senior year,

"It's been insane — and I mean that in the best possible way. I spent the first three years of high school at Central Academy, then one day a week, I would tutor students at Joshua Christian Academy. That was great, but I decided I wanted to transfer to East for my senior year (while still going to Central). I actually had no idea I was valedictorian until about midway through the year. The year's been pretty stressful with homework, college applications, and science fairs, but becoming valedictorian was definitely a nice surprise." Turner said.

While valedictorian may have been unexpected for Turner, it was no surprise to Scott Schoneberg, a Central Campus science and computer science teacher. Schoneberg first met the aspiring academic in one of his many classes, and formed a bond with Turner.

"He was a quiet but very directed young man when I met him years ago. Then I had David in AP Computer Science where I found out that this young man is very talented. He knows everything. He has such deep insight to everything. He also was great at problem solving. I also found out that he was quite a humorous person. Every once in a while another side would come out and it makes everyone laugh. He is the kind of person that represents Des Moines Public School highest level of excellence," Schoneberg said. When asked if he had any advice for Turner, Schoneberg only had one answer, "Be true to yourself. If he does that, he has nothing



Dezell's Top 3 Marvel Movies

Guardians of the Galaxy (Vol. 1)

Captain America: Civil War

Iron Man 2

photo/ E. Rothmayer

Page Editor/ E. Rothmayer

I'm thinking Iron Man will die in Infinity War. I mean, the franchise started with him, so maybe this phase should end with him, too -- and I'm thinking

Was he right?

page /10 feature