

Stafford Landscaping On the Rise

Former student creates business, then sets up scholarship opportunity for RHS students

By: Nick Thomas
Sports Co-Editor

From small town Richmond High School, to big time landscaping business, Stafford Landscaping is on the rise.

Dave Stafford, now an RHS alumnus, has been busy at work the last few years... Or eight years.

"I started my business in 7th grade by cutting my neighbor's lawn for 35 dollars a week."

Dave, who now cuts 105 lawns, as of last year, has seen his business take off in the recent years with cutting lawns, doing landscaping projects, and snow removal.

"I love it; I love this work. If you don't love it, you'll just treat it as another job. Your business will never survive," said Stafford.

Dave, who graduated from RHS in 2014, is now currently attending Michigan State University for horticulture to help expand his business.

For those of you that don't know, horticulture is the prac-

tice of garden cultivation and management.

"Attending MSU for horticulture has helped benefit the business because it gives me a lot of information about the industry I didn't know. It showed me I really didn't know all the different techniques that are available to do your work better and more efficient," said Stafford.

Stafford started his business with just his neighbor's houses and a little riding mower his parents had. After doing that he got more houses and then traded up to a small, zero turn John Deere and trailer just big enough to fit the 40 inch deck lawn mower.

From there he pulled the trailer along with his two weed whackers and gas for the equipment in his Jeep Cherokee Sport.

Now, Dave has two trailers, one enclosed and one open, both equipped to fit two 60 inch zero turns, weed whackers, and backpack blowers. Oh and don't forget the gas.

Stafford Landscaping is now rolling on four vehicles as well. A GMC 1500, an enclosed Chevy 4500, and two Ford F-250's to pull the equipment.

Stafford's business has grown a lot since he started to cut his first lawn, but like any other great business, he has to

continue to grow.

"We have a lot of plans. I want to keep growing every single day of the year in some way, shape, or form. We want to have higher profit margins. I also want to get the company to be a very attractive place for men and women to want to work," said Stafford.

Stafford is not only running a full time landscaping business. He is also giving back to the community that was once home to his education.

Stafford is giving away a \$1000 scholarship to a senior at Richmond that is pursuing a field after high school in these following subjects: horticulture, skilled trade, or entrepreneurship.

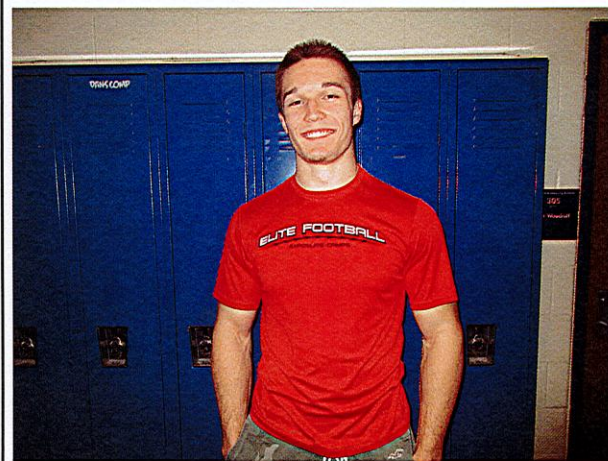
"I wanted to give back to the community that has given me so much. Also I think the labor force and people in skilled trades is very under recognized and we need men and women to pursue one of these areas," said Stafford.

This is another example of how Stafford is constantly giving back to the community. Many business come into towns and don't recognize the community at all.

Giving back to the community is one way Dave makes Stafford Landscaping a great company among all others.

Star Student of the Month

Andrew Hamel



1. **Role Model:** His Dad
2. **Greatest Accomplishment in High School:** Being an MVP in football
3. **Favorite After School Activity:** Going to the gym
4. **Favorite Year of High School:** Senior Year because there's less pressure and he can relax more

From Homecoming Queen to Miss Richmond: Kuzatko Takes the Crown

By: Emma Gillem
News Co-Editor

"I didn't expect it at all," Miss Richmond's Ashley Kuzatko said. "When they announced my name I didn't know if I was excited that I won, or excited that my childhood dream finally came true."

Miss Richmond has been around for more than 50 years now, and each year it gives three more girls the opportunity to experience it.

All girls involved in the pageant had a few practices before they were in front of an actual audience.

They had three practices which contained the group dance they had to do along with practicing the questions.

Each of the girls was required to write a personal biography about themselves and had a private interview with each of the judges.

"The interview wasn't that bad," Kuzatko said. "I thought I would be more nervous but I just answered the questions the best I could off of the top of my head."

The answers the girls come up with to the questions is very important to give your best answers without any hesitation.

Some of the questions however, had to do with things they are already aware about.

For Kuzatko being in dance her whole life, she was asked about theater and why it correlated to dance.

But this was nothing looking up to previous court members can't help with.

"One of my really good friends, Hailey Nicolopoulos, was on court last year for Miss Richmond and

always told me how much fun she had," Kuzatko said. "Always seeing the pictures and hearing about what they did that day just made me that much more excited to be a part of it."

As many may or may not know, being a part the Miss Richmond comes with a large amount of responsibilities.

It is not just about wearing a sash and crown all of the time.

"We have quite a few responsibilities," Kuzatko said. "We have some parades, we have to go to Armada to watch their Miss Armada pageant

along with other side events."

The first official aspect of their responsibilities comes this spring when they are attending an Easter egg hunt.

But as Miss Richmond and her court (Madie Teltow and Mary Gaffney) know they now have many young girls

looking up to them.

"I love knowing that they look up to me as a role model," Kuzatko said. "I hope they see how much fun it is to be a part of and someday be able to get this opportunity."

Let's not forget, Kuzatko has already made this impression by winning Homecoming Queen this past fall.

"It's definitely been an exciting year," Kuzatko said. "So many things have happened and I'm glad it's all happening during my last year as a high school student and Richmond."

"I love knowing that they look up to me as a role model. I hope they see how much fun it is to be a part of and someday be able to get this opportunity."

- A. Kuzatko

Makenzy Gaigalas



1. **Role Model:** Her Mom
2. **Greatest Accomplishment in High School:** Winning BWAC for tennis
3. **Favorite After School Activity:** Hanging out with her boyfriend, Brandon
4. **Favorite Year of High School:** Senior year because high school is almost over.

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