

Where Are They Now: Sierra Emery

By Madison Lackey

Three and a half years ago, a graduating class consisting of 30 seniors walked across the stage, beginning a new chapter of their lives. Among these students was Sierra Emery.

During her time at Sterling High School, Emery was involved heavily in the activities offered to her.

“I participated in Forensics, Debate, and theater, primarily as a part of the backstage crew and only a few times performing. I was also a part of various sports teams such as track, cross country, and basketball,” Emery said. “My last two years in high school I dropped most sports due to having two part time jobs and a weekend babysitting gig but I did stay a participant in the academic activities and theatre.”

Throughout her high school years, Emery wasn't quite certain what she wanted to do with her future after graduating.

“The decision for this career came out of nowhere,” she said. “But it was subtly present most of my adolescence. I didn't even consider doing it as a career, but every time there was a school dance, photoshoot, theatre performance, or anything that presented someone with the opportunity to be dressed up with makeup and hair, I was always being asked by peers, family, friends, or anyone really, to do it for them.”

Her decision came spontaneously with the help of a certain class.

“My senior year of high school when I took on Mrs. Prather's Career and Community Connections class, the lady I was shadowing at the salon asked what I was doing after high school and why I was considering going to school to do this for a living and that really had me thinking.” she said. “Eventually, I just decided that she was right and that I should have considered this sooner. I made my decision half way through my senior year.”

She decided on pursuing cosmetology.

“After high school ended, I took a few months off to travel abroad with some friends that I had made through the foreign exchange student program. Once I returned, I decided to attend cosmetology school in Manhattan, Kansas. I attended Bellus Academy which is a school not only for cosmetology, but also massage therapy, makeup artistry, esthetics, and nail tech.”

Her routine is pretty similar these days.

“My typical day just starts with me getting up and ready for work at 6:30 am, taking my dog on a long walk and then heading over to work at the hair salon,” Emery said. “I’m an assistant manager here and so I set up and open the store most days. I’m also a manager and bartender at a local bar and nightclub here in Manhattan called Tubby’s. So usually after work I have quite a few hours to go home and hang out with my boyfriend and animals and then get housework done. Then I head over to Tubby’s and begin setting up there as well. Then I get home around midnight and start all over again.”

As for anyone interested in following in her steps, Emery has some advice.

“My suggestions would be to let loose, be who you are, get as creative as you want, don’t be shy, and study and train hard, because regardless of what people say it’s not an easy career,” she said. “There’s so much science, technique, and aspects that others will never understand, but it’s by far one of the most enjoyable and freeing careers you could go into. Just go for it and live your life passionately.”



Emery celebrates with friends after her graduation.