

# Grandmother urges alternative students, 'Never give up'

## FESTIVAL

FROM PAGE A1

BY SUE BUICK  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Public Schools officials congratulated 86 students in the adult education program Thursday.

The program includes the Farmington Community School, Farmington Alternative High School and two students from Miller School.

Farmington Public Schools Supt. Bob Maxfield lauded the students, who ranged in age from 17 to 78 years old, in a ceremony held at Farmington High School.

It was a special night for student and grandmother, Marian Yagoda, 78, of Southfield, who finally received her high school diploma after years of wishing. She should have graduated during World War II, when she was 16 years old.

"I didn't get a chance to graduate because I went to a trade school to become a dressmaker," Yagoda said. She went to work at a factory after that and never took the three subjects she still needed to graduate: English, History and Government. Instead, she sewed parachutes used by the men in the armed services.

Yagoda tried to finish her education in 1974 at Farmington Community School. "As fate had it I met my second husband that year and he didn't want me to finish school," Yagoda said. "He



Marian Yagoda, 78, was among the members of Farmington School's Adult and Alternative Education program graduates honored Thursday.



Heather Agar sheds a tear of happiness as she prepares to receive her diploma.

only wanted to marry me and take care of me." When she finally returned to Farmington Community School recently she learned her records were still on file and she was told she didn't have to take history because she lived history.

Attending school with younger students made her feel like a teenager again, Yagoda said. "You're never too

old to pursue your dreams and your goals. Never give up. I didn't."

Yagoda, who was last to step on stage because students queued up alphabetically, was the only graduate to receive a standing ovation.

### SECOND CHANCES

The students represented commitment, perseverance, resilience, and a willingness for second chances, Maxfield said.

"You have overcome a number of obstacles," Maxfield said. "You are in many ways a snapshot of the face of America."

"While the country was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, Maxfield said, many young people have lost their confidence in government.

Many also realize the limited access to the promises of the American Dream.

"What happens to a dream deferred?" asked Maxfield, who quoted from "A Raisin in the Sun." "Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?"

He made the point that adult ed program students have shown they could overcome problems that interfered with their education, problems related to family and problems related to the economic system.

"You've shown that you can close the gap between the real-

### FARMINGTON ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULT EDUCATION

#### Class of 2003

Heather Agar, Simon Assafa, Ramis Barani, Maria Bellotti, Tarrance Bedford, Jennifer Belonger, Michael Berger, Scott Berry, David Bishop, Cecily Blok, Corey Boulos, Adam Brown, Nicole Brown, Cristita Brown, Savanna Bryson, Giont Camaj, Nikolina Cernocki, Kevin Chambers, Ashley Cohen, Erienne Cope, Christina Cortez, Yuri Dado, Thomas Davies, Giuseppe DiNoto, David Drury, Bryan Eisenberg, Jonathan Faulkner, Samira Fournia, Albert Futrell, Brandon George, Gregory Ginter, Trevor Godfrey, Adrienne Colcal, Danielle Greenleaf and Elyse Hall.

Joseph Kelly, Kelly Klein, Matthew Krist, Danielle Kubin, Steven Kull, Gerard Kurzynski II, Kevin Lau, Shannon Levine, Nicole Levy, Nathleen Llorio, Joseph Locascio, Calhoun Loe, Colleen London, Ryan Lopez, Mark Lucas, Charlie McCaster, Danielle McElore, Corey Miller, Danielle Milson, Scott Morris, Larry Morris, Mike Musallam, Nikolina Nikolovski, Erica O'Neal, Jason Osborn, Shelley Osbourne, Catherine Oullette and Douglas Perry. Michael Rahn, Crista Roberts, Crista Robinson, Edmundo Robinson, Elizabeth Roelke, Andre Schoen, Jennifer Smith, Andrew Sharpe, Casha Sheppard, Nicolas Tiberia, Kellie Tounsel, Kyra Travis, Douglas Troyer, Matthew VanCamp, Hayler Varlone, Kenya Ward, KeJae Warr, Tjuan Washington, Margaret White, Ann Wright, Nathan Yageman and Jason Zimmerman.

ities I mentioned and the promise of the American Dream."

Terry Klenczar, director of adult and community education recognized teachers he described as creative, flexible and caring.

Students worked toward graduation by attending school either part-time or full-time, she said. Not all have cars, so some were dropped off and some took the SMART bus to get to school.

About 70 percent of the graduates began their education in Farmington schools. Six of our students come from other countries," Klenczar said. A January graduate now lives in Italy.

Some students may ask themselves whether they have what it takes to make it in the real world.

Board President Linda Enberg answered that question with an unequivocal yes. "You are graduating from a school which brought out the best in you and has given you a second chance," Enberg said. "You are successful every- thing because information

### FHS NFHS PHOTOS

#### DELAYED BY TECHNOLOGY

Due to a technical glitch with our digital photography equipment, there has been a delay in obtaining photographs of the Farmington and North Farmington High School graduations.

As soon as images are available, we will publish the list of graduates from those two schools.

doubles every 10 years, she commented. "My dad has taught you to do is to teach you how to teach yourself. Our hopes and dreams are on your shoulders."

She urged students to take time to value both their immediate and extended families. Elyse Hall and Kathleen Liparoto each received \$2,000 scholarships from the Akebono Corporation. The Michigan Alternative Education Organization gave Crista Robinson \$1,000.

Danielle Greenleaf and Ann Marie White each received a \$500 Boyle scholarship.

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