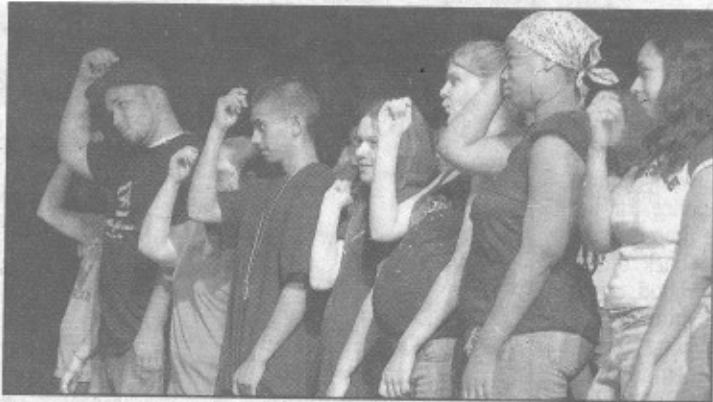


SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 2006

Tribune Star
 Terre Haute, Indiana


Tassel toss: Seniors at Washington High School practice moving their tassels from left to right during their ceremony rehearsal Thursday.

Tribune-Star/
Jim Avelis

Teen overcomes challenges, graduates from Washington

BY LAURA FOLLOWELL
 TRIBUNE-STAR

In the past year, Starla Campbell has experienced her share of challenges.

The Terre Haute teen was bedridden in a hospital for a week prior to starting school last fall. She gave birth by Cesarean section to a daughter 10 months ago.

She transferred to a different high school.

"It's been a little hard, but I think [having my daughter] was one of the best things that has happened to me," the 18-year-old mother said Friday, as she graduated from Booker T. Washington High School.

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TRIBUNE-STAR • Saturday, June 3, 2006 **A5**

Teen: Alternative school includes daycare

► Continued from A1

The alternative school includes a daycare that caters to students who have children.

Dressed in her maroon cap and gown, Campbell turned to walk across a small illuminated stage Saturday morning 26 Washington students participating in graduation ceremonies at Terre Haute South Vigo High School.

Principal Karen Andrews put a hand on each side of Campbell's face, sharing a moment of pride with her student after Campbell accepted one of two scholarships totaling \$1,250.

"She's a very unselfish person in the world of teenagers," Andrews said.

Living in a north Terre Haute home with nine other people, Campbell holds a job at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College,



Tribune-Star/Jim Avelis

Star student: Starla Campbell will continue her education at Ivy Tech State College, earning two scholarships during her time at Washington High School.

working to pay half of the rent.

Each weekday during her senior year, she arose at 6:30

a.m. to get herself and her daughter ready for a day at the alternative high school.

"I would leave school and go directly to work," Campbell said, "and I would work until midnight. Then I would come home and do it all over again.

At one time, Campbell used her paycheck to purchase a new bicycle for her 7-year-old cousin.

"I didn't tell him it was from me. I told him it was from all of us. ... I like to help people a lot. It makes me feel good," she said.

After transferring from West Vigo High School, Campbell maintained a 3.1 grade point average and had nearly perfect attendance at Washington High School.

"The teachers are very supportive, and they don't pick favorites," Campbell said. "They understand our situation, and

it's easier to manage the difficulties in life.

Campbell, who eagerly awaits classes this fall at Ivy Tech State College, plans to study neonatal nursing. In the mean time, she'll work full-time.

Despite the challenges Campbell has faced, Andrews said she's never heard the student complain.

"I tell young ladies that confidence is power, and I saw that with Starla," Andrews said. "I saw her head lift up and her shoulders broaden. She feels smarter - that came from learning. She's ready to go."

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