Falcon Print





Meet the Flock: Get to Know Our Staff

As we begin the 2026-2027 school year, we would like to take time to introduce this year's journalism staff. These students will be working behind the scenes and on camera in the weekly broadcast as well as diligently working on the yearbook and this *Falcon Print* Newsletter. We are excited to have a wide range of students to bring you all you need to know throughout the year!

Please take a moment to read through their introductions, and keep an eye out for our monthly newsletters. We are here to keep you updated on all things Falcon so you can soar this year!

Seniors



Melanie Little

My name is Melanie Little, I'm in my senior year of high school at DC West high school. I'm from St.Louis, MO. I was in Missouri for most of my life, then at the end of sixth grade I moved to Nebraska. I was here from the end of my sixth grade until the beginning of my freshman year. I left and went back to Missouri until my sophomore year. At the end of summer, I came back to Nebraska.

I'm the eldest of three siblings. I have one that is two years younger than me and she just started her sophomore year. I have another sister who is in 7th grade, and I have a brother that is in 4th grade. I enjoy spending time with my siblings as well as hanging out with my friends. I like to go on walks and go on bike rides, and I like to drive around and listen to my music. It's fun when I meet new people, but I can be shy at times and very quiet.

I am really hoping that I go to college after high school and become a special education teacher. One of my goals this year is to try more new things and make sure to get all my work done on time. I'm a very outgoing, friendly person but at the same time, I'm very quiet. I used to not be able to speak up for myself but as I've gotten older, I've been able to stand up for myself. I'm very proud of myself for overcoming my fears and making it this far.

I hope this year is a great year for me and everyone else. I have always been told that life goes by fast and it really does. One minute you could be starting your freshman year, and the next you are starting your senior year. But at the end of day, enjoy even the minute you get in high school. "Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself "(George Bernard).

Juniors



Quinn Willmott

Hi! My name is Quinn Willmott and I'm a Junior at DC West. I'm from Arlington, Nebraska and this will be my second year of journalism!

I'm the youngest child and I have one older brother who's starting his sophomore year at Hastings college. I love watching shows and movies, reading, and crafting. My dad, my brother and I like to go golfing whenever we can in our free time.

I'm on the golf team and am a member of NHS, World language Club, Science Club, FBLA, student council, and one act. I want to keep good grades this year and stay on top of all of my work.

I'm very excited for this school year and all of the activities I'm involved in. I can't wait to start taking pictures and creating this year's yearbook!



Cole Bridges II

Hi, my name is Cole Bridges II, and I'm from Waterloo, Nebraska. I'm a Junior at DC West and I take mostly advanced classes with friends that make the classes fun. I have been going to DC West since preschool and plan to stay until I graduate. I enjoy hanging out with friends and lifting weights after school.

I am an only child and have a pet snake.
In December, I will be getting a Maine Coon cat. My mom is a respiratory therapist and my dad works for the city. I enjoy playing video games with friends and lifting weights after school as previously stated. I have red hair which is a rare trait to have along with central heterochromia in both eyes. I am also very smart and plan to go into the medical field

Some accomplishments I have included maintaining mostly A's my whole life. I also used to be a swimmer on the swim team and won a lot of races. My short term goal is to have a 4.0+ GPA this school year. My long term goal is to hopefully go into the medical industry, specifically anesthesiologist.

In the end, I believe I'm a good person who is *kinda* funny and just trying to finish high school. I am nice to everyone and love animals. I hope to accomplish a lot in life and enjoy it to the fullest. I hope to live a long and eventful life and have a nice family.

Juniors



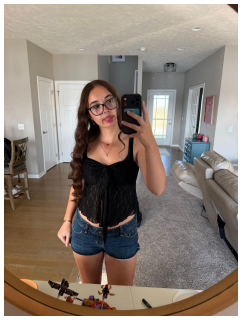
Peyton Casper

Hello! My name is Peyton Casper. I'm in 11th grade and I have been going to DCW since preschool. I have lived in Waterloo pretty much my whole life. I have a little sister and a little brother. My dad lives in Florida so I'm there a lot.

My family is really big. I have two little cousins that I babysit all the time. My family is always around each other, whether it's swimming at my grandma's house or just hanging out in my kitchen. I enjoy traveling and golfing, my favorite places are Florida and Arizona. I have been to Florida every year since I was six, and Arizona twice. I really enjoy spending time with my friends. I especially like going to Taco Bell with Aurora.

I have worked at Farmer Browns since 6th grade, I am now a hostess. I really enjoy working there and I like the extra money. I love meeting new people and making new friends. Last year, I was voted on to the student council as a freshman representative. I love spending my Wednesday mornings at student council meetings. I would love to attend a 4 year college somewhere in Arizona, and maybe move on to practicing law.

I'm a very friendly person and am always interested in making new friends. I'm very excited to be a part of journalism and working together with new people. I would like people to remember me as kind and funny. "Believe you can and you're halfway there"-Theodore Roosevelt.



Aurora Harris

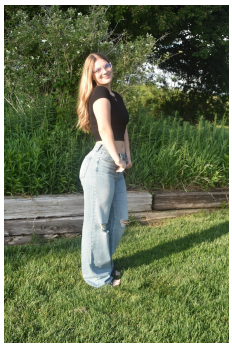
Hello! My name is Aurora Harris. I am a junior at DC West High School. I came to DC West in kindergarten and went to preschool at Trinity Lutheran Preschool. I love to read and have read over 20 books already this year.It's my second year in digital journalism.

Outside of school I love to spend time at my Grandma's farm. Being with family and friends is also one of my favorite things to do. Driving to Taco Bell with Peyton is a highlight of my week. I love animals so I have four cats, a dog, and multiple fish. Another thing I spend my time doing is golfing.

Another thing is in the future I would like to go to college in South Carolina. I really want to go to the University of South Carolina and become an English teacher. My dad just got a house in SC so it will be very fun to still be living close to him. Another goal I have for the future is to travel around the world.

Overall I am very excited for digital journalism this year and to make fun memories. I love photography and I'm excited to take a lot of pictures this year. I love Harry Styles and he is my favorite artist. A quote a live by is " Treat people with kindness" by Harry Styles.

Juniors



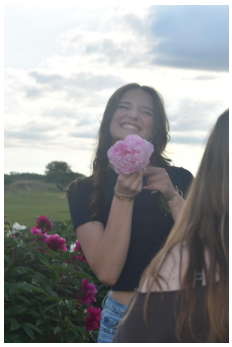
Austyn Dye

Hello! My name is Austyn Dye. I am a Junior at DC West. I have been going to DC West my whole life and grew up in Valley.

I have one older brother that also went to DC West. My family has three dogs and one cat. Some of my hobbies are taking pictures and acting! In my spare time, I love to hang out with my friends, go to concerts, go shopping, and go to fairs. This school year I'm participating in one-act, speech, track, dance, and the spring play. This year, I'm also in a couple of the school clubs such as World Language Club, HOSA, Choir, FCA, and SALT.

Some of my goals are to make it to state in one of my clubs. Some accomplishments of mine are that I lettered in multiple different activities last year and got some awards from some clubs and some of my academic achievements!

As a person I would describe myself as hardworking, a leader, and the type of person to always stand up for what I believe. I'm very excited for this school year and I can't wait to see what accomplishment I get this year!



Addie Klawitter

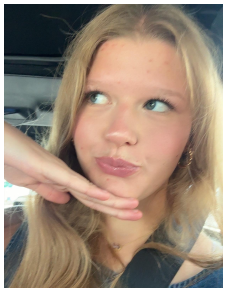
Hi! I'm Addie! I'm a junior here at DC West and I've been going here since kindergarten! This is my second year in journalism and I'm very excited!

My family is pretty small. I have one brother and both of my parents live with us. I also have two cats and one dog. School wise, I am pretty involved at DCW. I am in Dance, One-Act, Spring Play, and Speech. For clubs, I'm in FCA, World Language Club and S.A.L.T. It can get pretty busy, but I love it. I also have a tooooon of hobbies. I love baking, reading, playing piano, singing, painting, and watching rom-coms.

I have many goals that I work towards each and every day. A life-long dream of mine is to have my own business. After graduation, I want to pursue a career in massage therapy, specifically in lymphatic drainage. I also would love to pursue a career in the music industry. I started learning piano and music theory for that very reason. I take pride in my grades during the school year and strive to be in as many honors and metro classes as possible.

As a person I would describe myself as outgoing and bubbly. My favorite quote is "Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind." - Bernard M. Baruch.

Juniors



Brooklyn Stover

Hi everyone! My name is Brooklyn Stover. I'm 16 years old and a junior at DC West. I'm originally from Omaha, Nebraska and moved here in 7th grade. This is my first year in Journalism and I really enjoy taking pictures.

I'm the youngest child with two other siblings. My sister is 26 years old, getting married next year, and has a three year old son. My brother is 23 years old and is in school to be an electrician. I play softball for DC West on both Varsity and JV and I am a left fielder. I am also involved in S.A.L.T, but I do want to join other things. I enjoy reading, going on walks with my dogs, hanging out with my friends and family, being around animals, and playing softball.

Some of my goals for this year are to get straight A's and be on the honor roll, for the softball team to make it and win state, making a lot of new friends, and to be more outgoing. After I graduate, I want to go into Wildlife Conservation. I would also like to do anything with animals that doesn't include being a Veterinarian. I'm looking at going to either Northwestern Missouri State or K-State for college.

As a person I would describe myself as funny, caring, and empathetic. Overall, I am really excited for journalism this year and taking lots of pictures of the school activities! I really love photography and taking photos. I love the band Deftones and they are my favorite artists. A quote I live by is "I've always believed that you should never, ever give up and you should always keep fighting even when there's only a slightest chance." - Michael Schumacher.



Jaxon Lopez

My name is Jaxon Lopez. I am from Waterloo, Nebraska. I am a junior at Douglas County West High School. I've gone to DC West my entire life. I am also involved in wrestling and baseball. I used to play football my freshman year. However, I quit because it wasn't for me, and I am a guy who knows what I like.

I have a very big family including 7 brothers and 2 sisters. So our family get togethers are very big. I currently I have 2 siblings that are in this high school too. And I like going golfing with my brothers. We also like to go bowling. Everybody is different but what makes me unique is that I am interested in science.

I am proud of the achievements I have made as a student and athlete. One achievement I am proud of is 520 solitaire wins in a semester. I have never failed a class in high school, and I have dropped a 20 bomb in fortnite.

I see myself as a hardworking, reliable, good, student. I am excited to take sports photos. I think it is fun to take sports pictures because, when you get a good one, you feel proud about it. I want people to remember me as being nice and helpful.

Juniors



Sadie Sibbernsen

Hi, my name is Sadie Sibbernsen. I am a junior at DC West. I started going here freshman year after I moved to Nebraska from Weatherford Texas. I am super excited to be in Journalism this year! Before I came here I lived on a 64 acre ranch, had 20 chickens and I sold puppies.

I went to DC West for one year in kindergarten before I moved to Texas, so I'm not super new. I have 3 pets, two Australian Shepherd dogs, and one Holland lop rabbit.

I currently live in Valley Nebraska with my mom, my dad, and my brother who is a freshman at DC West.

I currently work for my dad's construction business which has worked on various projects around Valley like Loves truck stop and DC West elementary school.

I like traveling, making art, wakeboarding, tubing, cooking and baking. My favorite place to go is the beach or the mountains.



Cozmo Rehberg

My name is Cozmo Rehberg and I'm a part of the digital journalism team. I'm a junior at Douglas County West High School and I enjoy things like welding and golf. I have potential plans of working for my dad in construction to learn the business. The other possible route would be going to trade school for welding and getting certified to either go in the field or be a solo practitioner.

I believe that hard work is what matters and gets you far in life. It is possible to have something handed to you, but when you work for something and achieve it, it'll always feel better than something handed to you. Even though it may be tough to do, it'll also be more rewarding teaching you more along the way. I think, as a person, I respect people that can sit down and get things done rather than being "all bark and no bite". That is a quality I like to think I have, but I would like to be remembered by my hard work and where that WILL get me. I firmly believe in living your life but remember that there are times to have fun and times to get things done.

I also enjoy getting food with my friend and going to school events like football, softball, and basketball. The only problem is that parking is an absolute nightmare when everyone tries to leave at the same time.

I know I mentioned this, but I love golf. Although it's more of a love-hate relationship than anything. When I go out to the golf course I truly wonder why I play sometimes. The problem is I paid to be mad so I really don't know why I keep going back. Also sometimes I really really enjoy it as long as you don't snap a club I think it's a good round. On the other hand, welding takes a lot of concentration and knowing what you're doing, it is easy to be good at but hard to master.

Juniors



Grace White

Hi everyone! My name is Grace White and I am a Junior at DC West.I grew up in Elkhorn,Nebraska, and I moved to Valley two years ago.I went to Elkhorn schools my whole life until my freshman year when I came to DC West. I enjoy going to DC West because the community is great.

I love to play softball and I am very excited for this year's school season.I am the youngest sibling and I have two older sisters. I love to read books and watch movies. My favorite TV show is Criminal Minds, and my favorite movie is *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. I also love to build Harry Potter LEGO sets.

I am a member of the softball team.I enjoy playing with everybody on the softball team. I am working towards Honorable Mention for Class C Softball. I am also working to get good grades this year.

I am very excited to be a member of journalism this year. I can't wait to take photos and be a part of the journalism environment. As Albus Dumbledore said, "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times if only one remembers to turn on the light."



Abir Aljdaih

Hi! My name is Abir, and I am a junior. I'm originally from Syria. I used to live in Omaha, and I went to Westview High School in 9th and 10th grade. This summer, I moved to Valley to DC west high school. The school system was different, my classes were different, and I met new people. Arabic is my first language, and I have been learning English too. I went to many schools in my life, so I got used to changes. These experiences helped me learn how to deal with new situations and challenges.

My hobbies are drawing, watching Arabic and Turkish shows, and walking. I love the ocean and green places, especially parks. I also enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I am a calm person, and people always tell me that. I am patient, I try to treat everyone with kindness, and I like quiet places. Being with the people I love and doing things I enjoy makes me happy.

My academic goals are to get good grades and finish every school year with A's. I always try my best and want to be a good student. I also want people to know me in a good way, especially my teachers and classmates. After high school, I want to go to college, work on myself, and become more successful. I know it takes hard work, but I want to keep improving.

I am proud of the achievements I got in school. In 8th grade, I received 5 Stars, and in my freshman year, I also received 5 Stars. In 10th grade, I got Student of the Year. These achievements make me proud because they show that my hard work is noticed by my teachers and the people around me. I believe success is not only about grades or awards, but also about being a good, respectful, and kind person. I am proud of myself, and I hope to keep working hard and achieving more in the future.

Sophomores



Whitney Bruckner

Hi, I'm Whitney! I'm a 15 year old sophomore in high school. I play softball, basketball, and I throw in track. I start at third base for varsity softball and it's going to be my first year throwing in high school. I've been playing softball since I was 7 years old and basketball when I was 8.

I live in Valley, Nebraska with my parents and little brother named Lucas. Luke is going into kindergarten this year. I also have a tabby cat named Gee who is around 17 years old. In my free time I like to draw, play video games, and watch shows. I'm mostly busy with softball everyday though.

In the future I'm aiming to be an environmental engineer or children's therapist. The reason I want to be a therapist is because I feel like I'm good at calming people down and I want to help many people. One of my short term goals is to make first team all state for softball. I'll have to work hard to make it but I believe I can make it happen. I made first team all state for freshman state though this year and it's one step closer to my goal.

All in all, I'm excited for what my future brings! Don't forget to stay positive and light up someone's day!! I hope everyone has a great day! Go Falcons!!!



Naomi Samuelson

Hi my name is Naomi Samuelson and I was born in Lincoln Nebraska. I lived in Lincoln for 10 years then moved to Elkhorn Nebraska and lived there for 5 years and then I moved to Valley Nebraska. I'm in 10th grade aka a sophomore at DCW high school. My role here is being a light for others and trying to participate in everything I can. I love playing basketball and I'm hoping the season goes well.

I have a family of five, my mom Jessica who is also a school nurse, my dad Matthew who is a partner in an engineering company, my little sister Jolie who is 5, and my brother Asher who is 10. My family and I all love to go tubing and spend time with friends up at the river. Most days I spend hanging out with my friends from church and going to concerts. Music is my everything, especially Jessie Murph and Jon Pardi. I help serve at my church for the middle school industry and 1st graders. I'm also the sophomore leader for the summer program at my church.

I have played basketball since I was in kindergarten. I was on A and B in middle school and had the highest average points per game for both teams. I was a part of destination imagination and my team qualified for state. I have a goal of becoming an accountant for a few years and reaching enough money so I can stop doing that job and then become a Pilates instructor.

A quote I live by is, " You are too concerned with what was and what will be. There is a saying: yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift that is why it's called the present.".

Sophomores



RJ Lucas-Islas

From Omaha Nebraska, I arrived in this world in 2011. I was born in Omaha, which is where I stayed until I turned 11, which is when I came to DCWest, I have learned a lot, including the ability to take photos with a camera. My family is large, with me being the youngest in the main group. Despite popular belief, having all sisters might be worse than having all brothers.

For many years, I searched and searched to find something that I enjoyed, like most I enjoy video games, baking, and of course, doing nothing. But unlike most, I found an appreciation for writing, which changed nothing about my writing skills. I do also enjoy being with friends, mostly the close ones.

As for achievements, I have been to most of the continental US, been outside of the country many times, climbed a mountain, rode in a helicopter, made honor choir, and many honor classes many times. I have done a lot, and don't really know what else I need to do. Maybe one day, I'll shoot for president or something.

So, in simple terms, I am a somewhat interesting person and likely going to college one day. For, why this introduction is so *very* humble, it's because confidence is incredibly important when it comes to first introductions. The one thing I'd want people to remember me for, is either my humor, or this article.



Jackson Genereux

My name is Jackson Genereux and I am a sophomore in high school. I'm from Omaha, Nebraska and was born on December 27th, 2010. Something interesting about me is that I have no siblings so I am an only child.

Some things about me is that I love playing Baseball and Football. This is my second year in the district and I think that I have adapted well to the small school compared to Millard South. I play catcher for baseball and outside linebacker for football. I love to read and draw when I have the time.

Some short term goals I have is to letter in Football and baseball and graduate high school. Some of my long term goals are to have a successful career and play college baseball.

So as a little reflection of me, I am a sophomore in highschool, I play football and baseball, and I wanna have a successful career and play college baseball.

Sophomores



Drake Thiessen

What's up Falcons! I'm sure by now you all know me, My name is Drake Thiessen and I'm a sophomore at DC West. I've played football since I was a little kid and it's one of my favorite things. One goal I have is to letter for varsity football this year.

One thing about me that doesn't show on the surface is that I have a very wide music taste, I will listen to almost anything. So if I don't like your music taste, that says a lot. Another thing I take a lot of pride in is being a part of FCA leadership, FCA stands for Fellowship of Christian Athletes and we talk about how we can transfer our faith into sports.

Earlier I mentioned I have a goal to letter on varsity football this year, another I have is to bench 225lbs by the second semester of junior year. A long term goal I have is to eventually buy a house and have a few kids but that hopefully won't be for a while.

Wish me luck this upcoming football season, or better yet pack the stands and cheer us on. I look forward to another school year with all of you. Fly high Falcons!



Vinny White

What's up Falcon Nation it's Vinny White. If you don't already know me, I'm a sophomore at DC West. I also take the best photos in journalism class. I am also not left handed.

Here's some personal information about me. I have one brother and a sister which are both older than me. The sports I do are wrestling and track. In track, I compete in pole vault. An activity I enjoy doing is working out, but I hate hitting legs.

Here are some of my goals and accomplishments for this year. My first goal is to try every flavor of Ghost Energy Drinks.. I also have the goal of taking the best pictures in my journalism class. My last goal is to find a new hobby.

So, who really is Vinny White? I'm a DC West sophomore that is excited for this year. I'm also going to be the best journalist this year. So to end this, remember Falcons, a fly with no wings is just a walk, so fly high.

Sophomores



Ali Aljdaih

Hi! My name is Ali, I am originally from Syria.I'm a sophomore this year. It's my first year in this school, so everything still feels new. Before I came here, I lived in Omaha, and it was a very different place with its own style and people. Moving to a new school was a big change for me, but it helped me learn how to adapt, meet new people, and understand a new environment. I'm slowly getting used to things.

I always enjoy being outside and going to nature places. When I visit parks, forests, lakes, or the beach, I feel calm and relaxed. I really love the ocean because the sound of the waves helps me clear my mind and forget stress. Nature gives me a peaceful break from school and daily life, and it makes me feel connected to the world. Exploring new places and seeing different landscapes always makes me feel better and helps me stay positive.

Soccer is a big part of my life, and I like playing it, watching it, and supporting my favorite team. It makes me happy and keeps me active. But soccer is not the main thing in my life. I enjoy it, but I don't let it take more space than it should. For me, soccer is something fun, not something that controls my priorities. I like it, but I know school and my future goals are more important. Keeping a balance between hobbies and responsibilities helps me stay focused.

My goals in school are very important to me. I want to get the best grades in all my classes and improve every day. I try to stay organized, finish my work on time, and ask questions when I need help. I also want to challenge myself and learn new skills to become a better student. Working hard now will help me reach my future dreams and build a strong future for myself. I believe that effort and discipline today will open more opportunities for me later.

Freshmen



Nyana Hayner

Hi, my name is Nyana Hayner, and I am in 9th grade. I have lived in Valley, Nebraska my whole life but in three different houses. A fun fact about me is that I have been going to DC West since preschool. I think that it's cool because I got to experience all that DC West as a school has to offer.

I have three older siblings. Two are going to UNO, one is going for forensic psychology and my other sister is going for Elementary Education. My brother is going to Metro for Robotics . Some hobbies I enjoy are kayaking, hiking, and playing pickleball. Something unique about me is that I live on a farm, my favorite part is playing with the baby ducks.

Some achievements that I have had was whenI had my holocaust drawing from art displayed. Another achievement I had was that I made it into an honor roll for all years in middle school. A short term goal I have would be to get all A's this school year. A long term goal I have would be to go to UNO for college after high school for children's psychology.

In conclusion, my goal is for others to feel included and make everyone feel important. I am excited for new opportunities during high school. I would like to be remembered as a kind and helpful peer.



Adilyn Thompson

My name is Adilyn Thompson, and I am a freshman here at DC West. I have been attending DC West since kindergarten, so this is my 10th year as a Falcon.

For the Falcons, I play volleyball and run track. I also play volleyball on a national level at Club Legacy. Something that makes me unique is that I love to help out others. I managed Volleyball all of middle school, and I plan on helping out as much as I can this year and the years to come.

I am a member of S.A.L.T and FCA, I hope to also be a member of HOSA (Health Occupations Student of America). Going off of that, a long term goal I have is to go into sports medicine and become a physical therapist. I have always been interested in medicine/nursing.

I am a student, friend, and athlete. This year I am excited to participate in high school sports, have different classes, and make friends with people who might not be in my grade. A quote I live by is "Be where your feet are." What this quote means to me is to live in the now because high school is going to go fast, and I want to enjoy every moment.