



Friday, June 8, 2012

AAE to stream graduation online

93 seniors to cross the stage — and computer screens — tonight

BY BROOKE EDWARDS STAGGS / CITY EDITOR

APPLE VALLEY • Out of-state relatives, not enough tickets and young children who can't sit still are just some of the obstacles that might keep family members and friends from being there as their loved one walks across the stage to collect that hard-earned diploma.

That's why the Academy for Academic Excellence will be broadcasting its 15th graduation ceremony live online tonight.

It's a fitting step for the Apple Valley charter school that's often on the forefront of integrating technology into its programs.

"We do a lot of streaming with the stuff we do with NASA," noted Rick Piercy, founder and CEO of the academy's parent organization, the Lewis Center for Educational Research. So when his IT staff approached him about streaming graduation, having seen it done at universities and some out-of-area high schools, Piercy said it just made sense.

AAE staff worked hand-in-hand with the staff at High Desert Church in Victorville, where the ceremony will be held tonight, to set the broadcast up, according to the school's IT director, David Kenneally. While the streaming can be done for free, Kenneally said they opted to pay \$99 so they could broadcast the ceremony commercial-free.

"I think we'll try to do it more with other events," Kenneally said, with positive feedback from parents since they announced the move Wednesday.

"Some of the seniors have sent out Facebook notices to all their friends and family letting them know they can watch it online," said Charlotte Wilmeth-Street, assistant principal at AAE.

Those 93 graduating seniors are also touting some impressive plans, with the four valedictorians — all females, as are the three salutatorians — heading off to Pepperdine; University of California, Irvine, and rival schools University of California, Los Angeles, and University of Southern California.

"We have one student who got her AA degree from Barstow Community College last week," Principal Gordon Soholt said, praising the work of graduate Alexandra Flores.

"It's a good class," Piercy said. "They're going off to some amazing places."

The ceremony will be broadcast starting at 6:30 p.m. today. To view the ceremony online, go to www.ustream.tv/channel/lcer-live/. *(No longer available- only live showing)*

The broadcast will also be recorded and available for viewing after the ceremony. Visit www.LewisCenter.org for more information.

Brooke Edwards Staggs may be reached at (760) 955-5358 or at bedwards@VVDailyPress.com.

Used with permission by Freedom Communications, 2012