

Hannah Shumsky is a 2017 graduate of Freedom Area High School where she participated in the “Big Red” Marching Band for 5 years as part of the Woodwind section and served as the clarinet section leader. She also played the alto saxophone in the Jazz Band. Hannah was a member of the Drama Club and served on the stage crew for *The Wizard of Oz*, played in the orchestra for *West Side Story* and *The King and I* and performed in the ensemble cast for *Grease*.

Hannah was a member of the FHS Press and in her sophomore year she was Assistant News Editor, junior year she was News Editor (and reference editor for Shawnee Yearbook), senior year she was Editor-in-Chief of FHS Press. With the FHS Press, she covered some of Freedom’s most important events for the school, some of which included the opening of the new Freedom Area Elementary School, shifts in administration roles, a national substitute teacher shortage, and the agreement of a CBA between FASD administration and the teachers union. Being part of Print Media Workshop opened her eyes to many stories that would never have been covered unless Freedom’s own students told their own stories. She was thankful for this outstanding program at Freedom.

Hannah received several awards and scholarships including: Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizen Award, Freedom Area Education Foundation Scholarship, John Traverna Memorial Scholarship, English and Social Studies Department Awards her senior year, Pennsylvania Music Educator’s Association participation in the honors, district, region, and state level band festival. She was also the state champion in the News Writing category in spring 2017 for the Pennsylvania School Press Association.

Hannah graduated from Slippery Rock University in 2021 with a bachelor’s degree in Secondary English Education and a minor in Communications. While at SRU, she was Editor-in-Chief of “The Rocket” (2019-2021), participated in the Teacher in Transition Achievement Program, and was part of WSRU-TV (student-run television studio). Hannah was a member of the SRU Honors College and was inducted into Sigma Tau Delta (English Honorary) and served as an officer for two years. While at SRU, she attended multiple conferences, including the College Media Association conferences in Louisville (2018) and Washington DC (2019). Hannah was inducted into the National Broadcast Society and was recognized as SRU Student Leader of the Year in 2020. She was a Senior Presidential Scholar and graduated in the top 20 of 2021 SRU graduates.

During the 2020-21 academic year, “The Rocket” earned over 30 honors under Hannah’s leadership which included to name a few: College Media Association – Best in Show, Columbia Scholastics Press Association awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place for Personal Opinion and 1<sup>st</sup> place for Editorial Writing, and Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association Keystone Media Awards with 1<sup>st</sup> place for Ongoing News Coverage and 1<sup>st</sup> place for Layout and Design.

Hannah completed her student teaching at Hampton High School the spring of 2021 and also briefly served as building substitute at Freedom Area High School from May-June 2021. She was hired by State College Area High School to teach 10<sup>th</sup> grade English and co-teach Journalism. Hannah teaches roughly 120 students and gets to empower them to use their voices in their creative pieces and various leadership roles in the State High community. She co-advises two of

the journalism programs, the Lions Digest online newspaper and Little Lion Yearbook. Hannah's journalism students compete at PSPA at the regional and state level, just like she did while at Freedom. She also co-advises Best Buddies and No Place For Hate, which is a student-led initiative sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League. In addition to her teaching duties, Hannah also serves as a representative on the ELA Leadership Committee.

Hannah resides in State College, PA with her fiancé, Aaron Marrie, who she met through WSRU-TV at SRU.

Freedom was where Hannah grew out of her comfort zone, especially in high school. Because of the small size of the school, she had a multitude of opportunities to try out new and different things and learn what she enjoyed the most. For Hannah, that was being part of the FHS Press and Shawnee Yearbook with Aaron Fitzpatrick leading these staffs. She would've never found her love for education, communication, writing, and teamwork if it hadn't been for Mr. Fitzpatrick and the opportunities at Freedom. Hannah is beyond thankful for all the English faculty at FHS as well as Nate Langelli, Keith Kovalic, Rob James, and Ruthanne Gudzan for being an integral part of her high school experience.

Hannah says, "Because of the smaller enrollment, I felt my teachers truly got to know me and helped me to succeed well after high school. They encouraged me to challenge myself and take risks. They helped me to build confidence in my work and my skills, and they led me to succeed at SRU and now in my teaching career. Because I got a chance to try out a variety of classes and extracurriculars, I found my passions for leadership, language, and art."