



Twin students pose for a group photo during rehearsal for Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School's graduation ceremony at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y., on Tuesday. (AP PHOTO/PHILIP MARCELO)

# 15 sets of twins graduate from one high school

By PHILIP MARCELO  
Associated Press

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. (AP) — A high school in the suburbs of New York City will be seeing double on graduation day this weekend: Among the nearly 500 students in its graduating class, 30 are twins.

It's a tight knit group. Some of the students at Long Island's Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School have known each other since kindergarten, their parents meeting through a local twins club. Some even still plan family vacations together.

These days, some of the twins are on a group text chain, which has helped them cope with their newfound notoriety as graduation day approaches.

"Honestly when we're together, the room is electric," said Sydney Monka, as she attended graduation rehearsal with the other twins earlier this week. "We're all very comfortable around each other and we all have these shared experiences so we're all bouncing off each other. It's really cool."

They're twins but not identical

Save for the shared last names, though, the pairs may be hard to spot as they walk the stage Sunday at their high school graduation, held at Hofstra University in Hempstead.

The students are all fraternal twins — meaning born from different eggs and

sperm — so none of them are identical. Many of the twins are different genders.

That doesn't make the bonds any less tight, says Bari Cohen, who is attending Indiana University in the fall.

"Especially for boy-girl twins, a lot of people think it's just, like, siblings, but it's more than that, because we go through the same things at the same time," she said of her brother, Braydon Cohen, who is headed to the University of Pittsburgh.

Most, when prodded, give a playful shrug at the curious phenomenon in the high school, which is located in an affluent, largely white district about 35 miles east of Manhattan.

"I guess there's just something in the water," said Emily Brake, who is attending the University of Georgia, echoing a common refrain among the twins.

"We're all just very lucky. I think it's just a coincidence," added her sister, Amanda Brake, who will be attending Ohio State University.

Others acknowledge there's more than Mother Nature at work.

Arianna Cammareri said her parents had been trying for years to have kids and in vitro fertilization was their last option. Back then, it was more common than it is now for IVF babies to be twins or triplets.

There also may be a genetic component at play.

"There's a few twins

in our family, like I have cousins that are twins, so I guess that raised the chances of having twins," added the incoming freshman at Stony Brook University, also on Long Island.

Other schools with large sets of twins

Large cohorts of twins are not unusual at Plainview-Old Bethpage. The high school had back-to-back graduating classes with 10 sets of multiples in 2014 and 2015, and next year's incoming freshmen class has nine sets of twins, according to school officials.

Among the other schools around the country with big sets of graduating twins are Clovis North High School in Fresno, California, with 14 pairs, and Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt, Maryland, with 10 pairs.

Last year, a middle school in suburban Boston had 23 sets of twins in its graduating class, though that's still far shy of the record for most multiples in the same academic class. New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois, had a whopping 44 twin pairs and a set of triplets in 2017, according to Guinness World Records.

After graduation Most of the twins at Plainview-Old Bethpage are heading off to different colleges.

An exception is Aidan and Chloe Manzo, who will both attend the University of Florida, where they'll live in the same dormitory on campus and both study business, though

with different majors.

"We're going to see each other a lot," Chloe said wryly.

"Deep down, my mom knew it would be easier if we went to the same school," she added. "You know, like moving in, graduation, going to sports games."

Some were apprehensive about living far from their longtime partner in crime.

Emma and Kayla Leibowitz will be attending Binghamton and Syracuse University, respectively. The fifth generation twins say they're already making plans for frequent visits even though the upstate New York schools are some 80 miles apart.

"I think it's gonna be really weird because we really do everything together. She's my best friend. I really can't do anything without her," said Emma.

"We're sleeping over every weekend. I'm coming for football games — like all of it," said Kayla.

Others were looking forward to getting some breathing room.

Sydney and Kayla Jasser said they're both studying fashion design — but at different colleges. Sydney is attending the University of Delaware while Kayla will be attending Indiana University.

"We could have went to the same college, but we just wanted to be able to be independent since we've been with each other forever," Kayla said. "It's good to get out there and have our own experiences."

# 'The Chosen' swaps Texas for Italy



Showrunner Dallas Jenkins appears during the filming of season six of the series "The Chosen" in Matera, Italy on June 3. (VITALIANO NAPOLITANO/VIA AP)

MATERA, Italy (AP) — Matera, in the south of Italy, is known as the "City of Stones" for its architecture. For the next season of "The Chosen," it'll be known by another name: Jerusalem.

With its ancient caves, breathtaking scenery, dramatic cliffs and houses made of stone, Matera is doubling as the ancient city for the hit religious drama's sixth season, which focuses on the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This month, the cast and crew traded their Texas studio for three weeks in Italy, during which The Associated Press visited the set.

George Harrison Xanthis, who plays the apostle John, says that filming in Matera has helped his performance by immersing him in the world of the show. On the show's sets in Texas and Utah, "you do step from civilization into the ancient world, whereas here you are just always in the ancient world," he tells the AP. "It's amazing."

Director and showrunner Dallas Jenkins explains he wanted authenticity with the crucifixion on the backdrop of a real horizon. While the city of Matera — which has also provided the setting for "The Passion of the Christ," "Mary Magdalene" and even "No Time to Die" —

does most of the work, the tingly and warm smell of spices in the air, coming from a prop cart, adds to the atmosphere.

Starring as Jesus is Jonathan Roumie, beloved by the show's fans who blush around him like he's an actual religious figure, revealing he's part of their daily prayers. This observation was confirmed by Jenkins, who has witnessed people crying, touching his hands and calling him Jesus.

"Seeing Jonathan reminds them of the experience they have with Jesus. So, there is a lot of tears. But they know the difference," says Jenkins. Apart from a friendly hello, Roumie was not available to the media during the set visit, so he could stay concentrated for the demanding scenes that saw him covered in blood with a swollen prosthetic eye closed shut.

Other members of the cast have experienced emotional encounters with the audience, albeit with perhaps not the same intensity as Roumie's. Vanessa Benavente, who plays Mother Mary, recalls being recognized during school drop-off.

"It was kind of out of nowhere. And I was very surprised because I was wearing a hat, it was very hard to even see my face," she remembers.

## PSU

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University of North Texas, an M.S. in Higher Education from Texas A&M-Commerce, and a B.A. in Business Administration from Austin College.

He and his wife, Vicky, a teacher, have three children, Will, Katie, and John.

Newsom succeeds Dan Shipp served as president from 2022 until this year. Shipp succeeded President Steve Scott, who served from

2009 until 2022.

Newsom will be introduced to the campus and community on Monday, June 23. At 1 p.m. in the Linda and Lee Scott Performance Hall of the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts, Newsom will make brief remarks. That will be followed by a press conference in the center's Green Room. At 2 p.m., Newsom will come to the center's lobby for a meet-and-greet with the public.

# Husband dismisses calls to help out more at home

DEAR ABBY: I was once a stay-at-home wife. I did all the cooking, housekeeping, etc. Due to a downturn in the industry where my husband was a highly paid executive, he returned to a health-care career using his bachelor's degree. I returned to work in a well-paying but demanding job.

So now I cook, we eat. He sits down to watch TV, and I clean while watching TV. When I ask for help, he accuses me of being a nag. I'm growing more and more depressed over this. Advice, please. -- FEELING DOWN IN THE SOUTH

DEAR FEELING DOWN: You married an



DEAR ABBY  
Abigail Van Buren

old-fashioned guy. He worked while you "kept the home fires burning." When reality hit and you needed to rejoin the workforce, he forgot the principle of "each according to his ability, each according to his need."

Your darling needs a cold dose of reality. Times have changed, and he's not doing his fair share. Remind him so you can work out a more equitable agree-

ment.

P.S. You may be more tired from doing double duty than depressed. Think about it.

DEAR ABBY: I am a giver by nature. This is how I show my love. I like to cook, knit, sew and buy gifts for the people who matter most to me. I have recently noticed that when I buy gifts for my fiancée, he looks them up to see how much I paid for them. He isn't doing this to say I spent too little, but rather to say I spend "way too much" on him.

I consider what he's been doing to be rude, and I told him so. I also told him it is none of his business how much I spent on him. Am I

wrong? -- GIVING OF MYSELF IN ILLINOIS

DEAR GIVING: I think you overreacted by becoming defensive. Rather than scold your fiancée because he chided you for spending the amount you have on his gifts, it could have been handled more delicately. All you needed to say was, "To me you are priceless. I get great pleasure when I find something I think you can use and will enjoy. Please stop looking a gift horse in the mouth."

P.S. Make sure you are both on the same page regarding finances BEFORE you are married.

DEAR ABBY: My 19-year-old son, who

is on the spectrum but high-functioning, has left home. He's legally an adult but wouldn't allow me to teach him normal survival skills, such as balancing a checkbook, paying with a debit card, etc. He knows very little about the world; he learns from his online friends.

It has been four months, and he has now changed his phone number and won't call, email or text. He moved across the country to live with an online friend. I'm very concerned about him. What should I do? I don't email him often, but when I do, I just tell him I love him, and I never say anything negative. -- LOST IN

CALIFORNIA

DEAR LOST: Four months, you say? Assuming you have his current address, perhaps it is time for you -- and his other parent, if he or she is in the picture -- to pay the young man a visit to see how he's doing. Because he won't respond to phone calls, emails or texts, I don't think you have a choice other than that.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.