

Eichstadt takes his hockey career to UK
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The Bemidji Pioneer

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'I could do this the rest of my life'



Hannah Olson / Bemidji Pioneer

Lexi Fuglestad is a member of the Bemidji State University class of 2020. She is graduating with a degree in nursing and has accepted a position in Duluth.

Her proudest accomplishment was being selected to receive the Loris Westrom Nursing Scholarship, she said.

"I actually got to meet (Loris Westrom) at the scholarship breakfast," Fuglestad said. "Being able to sit down and meet with her and thank her for all her help and stuff, it was so cool."

Fuglestad is frustrated with the impact that COVID-19 has had on her senior year, but is excited to get out into the medical field to help the fight.

Transitioning into a nursing career can be tough without a global health crisis, Fuglestad explained, but during a pandemic, it's even tougher. "Of your entire nursing career, our teachers let us know, 'Yeah, the first year is going to be the hardest, it's going to be really hard while you're getting your feet under you,'" she said. "So adding a pandemic on top of all that is tough. Most of us are very eager to get out there, but also very nervous."

FUGLESTAD: Page A7



Tessa Solo is a member of the Northwest Technical College class of 2020. She is graduating from the early childhood program, and has already been hired as a lead teacher with KOOTASCA Head Start in Grand Rapids.
Hannah Olson / Bemidji Pioneer

'The biggest achievement of my life'

NTC grad to pursue career working with children

By Hannah Olson
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Tessa Solo didn't think she would ever graduate college.

Now, this spring she is graduating from the Early Childhood program at Northwest Technical College.

Unfortunately, like many members of the class of 2020, she's found herself in a situation where the meaningful event of commencement and celebrating her achievement with family and friends has been taken away.

This setback hasn't stopped her from leaping headfirst into a career field that has been flipped upside down by COVID-19.

Solo, originally from Williams, Minn., was an active, three-sport, high school athlete. After high school, she attended Northland Community and Technical College in Thief River Falls to play softball, but wasn't seeing a clear path for what she wanted to pursue for a career.

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A mix of apprehension and anticipation

COVID-19 means Minnesota fishing opener won't be business as usual



Pioneer file photo

Anglers fish from their boats at dawn on Lake Bemidji during Minnesota's fishing opener in 2019.

By Brad Dokken
Forum News Service

The Minnesota fishing opener traditionally is the premier event on the state's outdoors calendar, but this year's rite of spring promises to carry a fair bit of apprehension, as well.

COVID-19 – and all of the fears, risks and precautions that surround the pandemic – means this year's opener definitely won't be business as usual.

Minnesota's statewide season for walleyes and northern pike opens at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, May 9.

"People are champing at the bit to get outside, but again, I think everybody wants to be safe," said Joe Henry, executive director of Lake of the Woods Tourism and a voice for the area's 30-plus resorts. "You're going to have different perspectives. Some people won't go at all, some people would have never quit going if they had the chance, and there's people in the middle that might say, 'All right, I'm going to go, but I'm really going to take some precautions here.'"

"So I think that's where people are at."

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz last week loosened some of the state's stay-at-home restrictions. Resorts and hotels again are open to guests, and bait shops can resume business. But as of late this week, fishing guides and charter boats couldn't operate, and campgrounds remained closed under the stay-at-home order, which Walz on Thursday said will continue two more weeks.

That will put Minnesota fishing guides and charter boats on the sidelines for opening day, at least the way things stand for now.

"It appears everything is still in place as is until May 18," said Tom Neustrom of Grand Rapids, Minn., a 38-year fishing guide and member of the Minnesota Fishing Hall of Fame.

His reaction, in a word: "Disappointed." Neustrom said he had canceled his bookings for the first two weeks of the season regardless, just to be safe; there's more at stake than lost revenue, he says.

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