

Heath High valedictorian Darara Borodge to attend Harvard U.



By Mary Thacker. HEATH – This year’s valedictorian from Rockwall-Heath High School is a poised young man named Darara Borodge.

Although he was born in Dallas, Darara’s parents were both born in Ethiopia. His father, Bediso, was a journalist who had to flee the country to escape imprisonment and possibly death.

He was writing stories to try to rally the people against the government, Darara explained. Basically there was no freedom of speech, and someone found out about what he was doing. If he had been caught, he would have been thrown in prison. Most of the prisoners were later executed. •

After traveling from Ethiopia to Kenya, an arduous 19-day journey, Bediso arrived at the home of a friend who flew him to America. Darar’s mother, Maria, came to the United States as a foreign exchange student. The pair met for the first time in Dallas, and after a 2-year courtship, they married. Darara was born a year later. He has two younger brothers, Lalo, who attends Utley Middle School, and Galata, a student at Jones Elementary.

Darar’s father currently drives a taxi in Dallas, and his mother is a caregiver at Summer Ridge Retirement Center.

Darara has always been an excellent student and an avid reader. He was accepted into the SAGE gifted/talented program in second grade. In seventh grade he picked up the trumpet, because he heard that the band got to go to Six Flags amusement park.

He played the trumpet throughout middle school but switched to euphonium when he began attending Rockwall-Heath High School. He made the freshman All-Region Band his freshman year, All-Region Concert Band sophomore year, All-Region Wind Symphony his junior year, and All-Region Wind Ensemble \hat{A} and First Chair in the All-State Band \hat{A} his senior year. In fact, one of his favorite high school memories was of playing in the All-State Orchestra. It was my first time to be with a group of kids who could get their music and play it all the way through completely and perfectly, he remembered.

There was a moment when we were playing Whitakers *Lux Arumque*, and the rest of the group went silent while the euphoniums played a concert B flat. It was beautiful and moving. I've never considered myself an amazing musician, but it was amazing to be in a room with great musicians.

He was also a member of the RHHS Robotics Club which placed 50th in the FIRST National Robotics competition in Georgia.

There were teams from South Korea, Germany, Israel, and Mexico, Darara remembered. A We made robots that played soccer. We had a goalie and three players on each team that worked together.

Ironically, Darara was kicked out of the math honor club Mu Alpha Theta, and the Spanish Honor Society, because he didn't attend their meetings.

I had other things I had to do, he admitted with a laugh. Besides taking all advanced placement classes, playing in the RHHS band, and running to keep in shape, Darara works 12 hours a week at Best Buy.

Recently, Darara was offered the Quest ridge Scholarship to Yale University. However, he is planning to send in his acceptance letter for a full scholarship to Harvard instead.

I talked to a lot of people at the Harvard admit party, and they offered to help me with their music program, so I can keep playing euphonium. They have chamber ensembles and residential groups. I'm not going to be a music major, but I enjoy playing, he commented.

In addition, he feels there will be more to do in Boston than in New Haven, CT, especially during the long winters.

Boston has the Celtics, the White Sox, and the Boston Symphony, he stated.

After attending Rotary Youth Leadership, Darara made a list of his goals.

It makes your goal more tangible. If you look at it, you can do it, he remarked.

His goals included becoming valedictorian of his graduating class and making All-State in euphonium, both goals he has achieved. However, he is reluctant to make a list of goals for Harvard, opting to wait until he settles in.

At Harvard, *everyone* was the valedictorian of their high school, he said realistically.

Instead he plans to focus on his goal of becoming a cardiologist.

My father has diabetes and has always had kidney and heart troubles but hasn't been able to get the help he needs. I'd like to be able to give him that help, he commented.

Darara would like to return to Dallas and work at Parkland Hospital some day.

I was born at Parkland, and it's a hospital that is open to people regardless of whether or not they have money. I grew up without much money. For me being a doctor is not about making money, it's about helping people.