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A sign congratulating Placer High School's Class of 2020 hangs above Lincoln Way outside of Central Square in Downtown Auburn this week.

Graduating Placer seniors show 'resilience' while celebrating end of year



Traci Newell May 19, 2020 8:00 AM

There will still be proud parents. There will still be excited students. There will still be balloons and there will be messages of congratulations. The ingredients are the same, but the actual end-of-year commencement celebrations will look much different for local students this year.

Thanks to the statewide stay-at-home orders, which created months of distance learning, students graduating from high schools are finding new ways to celebrate the occasion this year.

At Placer High School next week, you can find students returning to campus to drop off their Chromebooks, text books and pick up caps and gowns. Parents and teachers have plans to celebrate the students with signs and

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"I've been trying to keep them involved but it is hard to do activities through social distancing," Sabins said. "We are trying to do the best we can to pull through."

The community is coming together to support Placer seniors as well. One local group is [collecting funds to decorate local businesses with balloons](#), and a sign congratulating the Class of 2020 hangs in downtown Auburn across Lincoln Way.

"The kids have been really positive and have taken it in stride," Sabins said. "They are being super resilient and are making the best out of a not-so-great situation."

The Colfax High School community has created special events to send off their students. On Friday, the school posted a 26-minute Senior Sunset video full of outgoing advice from teachers and staff and photos and videos celebrating the seniors' future plans.

Colfax's commencement is special because we can personalize so much of it," said Principal Paul Lundberg

The Falcon Foundation's Grad Night Committee plans a drive-through-campus parade next week to celebrate students' official last day of school.

"We wanted them to say goodbye to Colfax High School and feel a sense of closure for the year," said Julie Paul, whose son Wyatt is graduating. "When they were first sent home for COVID-19, there were a lot of unanswered questions. They did not know that was their last day on campus."

The Senior Send-Off Parade will include a drive through the middle of campus with lawn flags featuring photos of each senior, balloons, signs, music, teachers waving goodbye, picking up their yearbook and collecting a swag bag filled with prizes from the Grad Night fundraising event.

"We are encouraging seniors to wear their cap and gown as they drive by and stand out of a sunroof or lean out a window," Paul said.

The community is also showing its support. The city of Colfax donated the digital billboard off Interstate 80 for May and June to feature senior students.

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stage and having their photograph taken in cap and gown. The ceremonies will be live-streamed so families and friends can watch.

If the state allows ceremonies to be held earlier, or with limited family and friends in attendance, district officials will make those adjustments with a two-week notice for the new dates and times.

"We truly appreciate everyone's patience as we navigate the many ramifications of COVID-19," said Placer Union Superintendent George S. Sziraki in a letter to parents last week. "We are excited to give our Class of 2020 a graduation ceremony that honors their many accomplishments and thanks them for their resilience through these trying times. I couldn't be more proud of them and wish them all the best."



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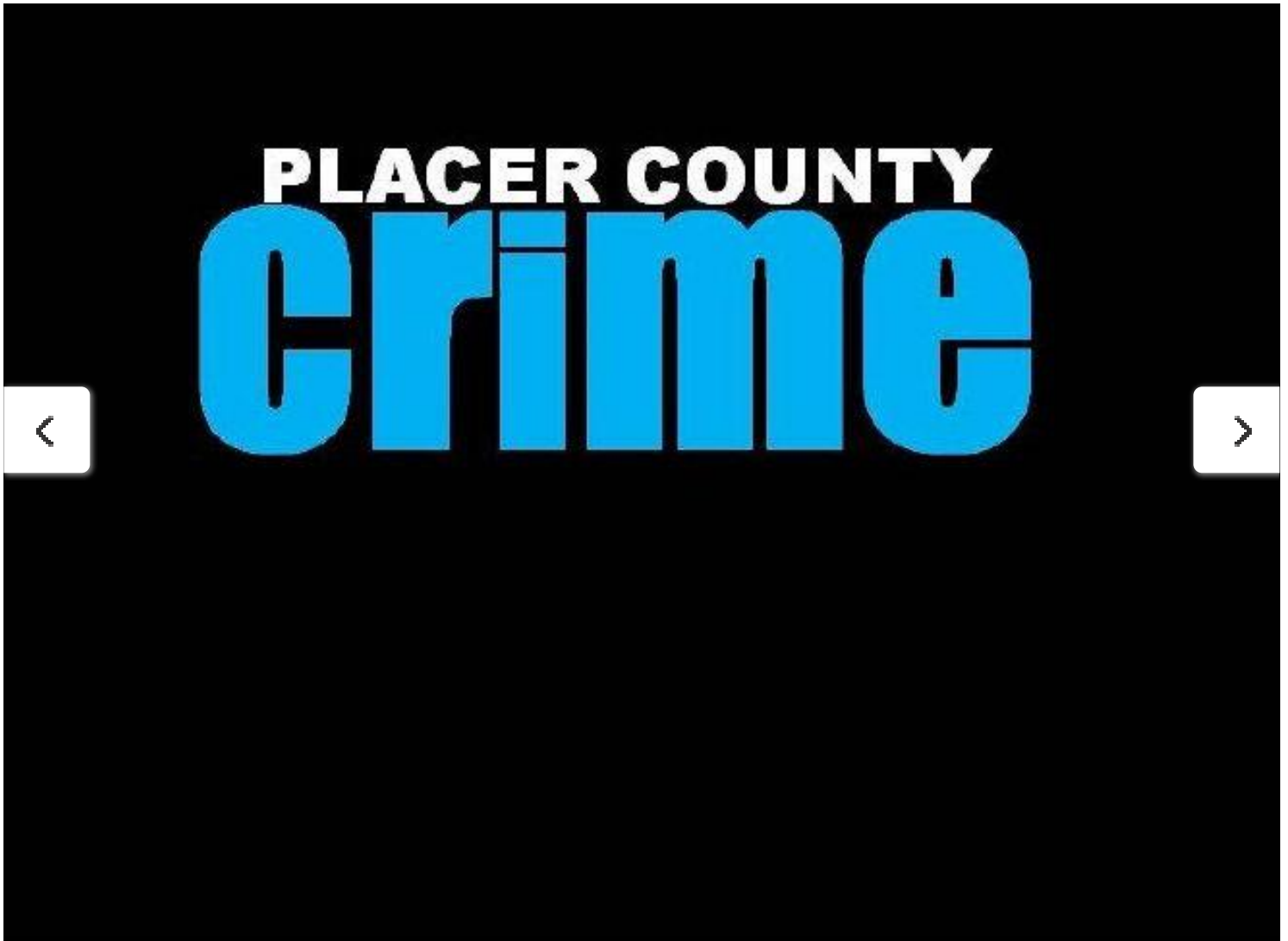
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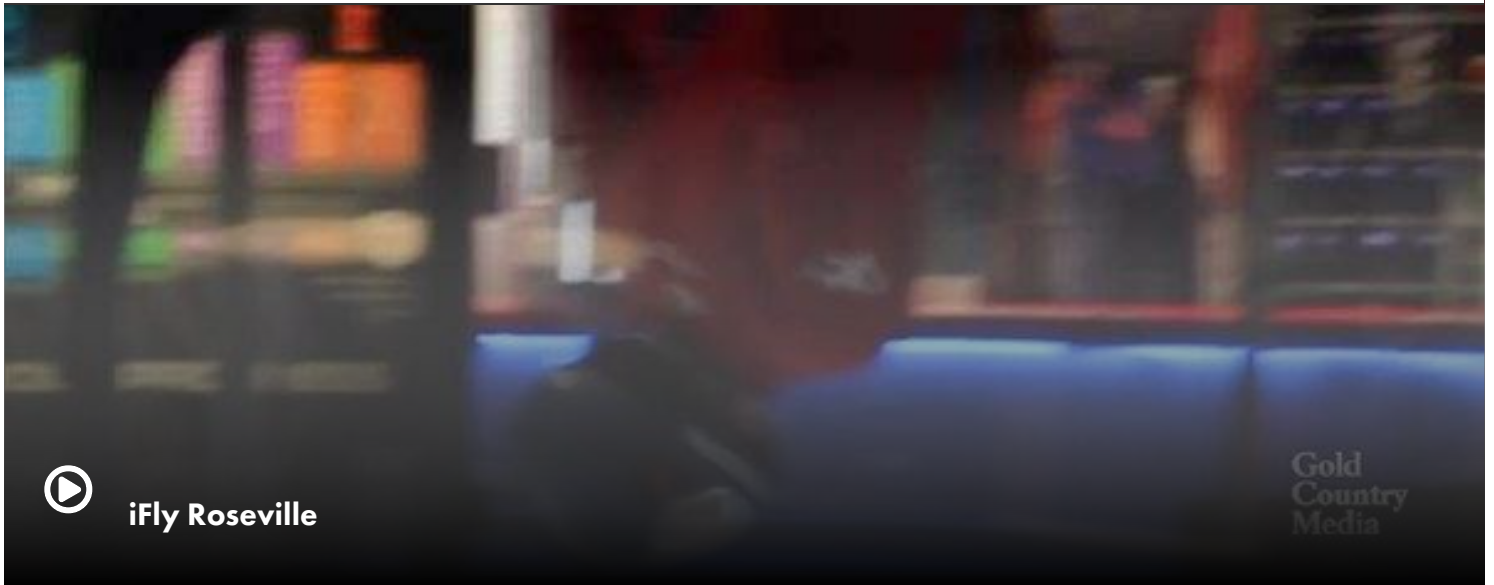
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