

CMR students avoid 'senioritis'

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At least 42 seniors at C.M. Russell High School seem to be immune to senioritis.

While some of their classmates were busy plotting an escape from high school, these students took on additional responsibilities and work by completing a senior research project.

Under the program, which was started three years ago by English teacher Jamie McGraw, students who choose to tackle a topic must write a research paper addressing some of the controversy concerned with their area of study and create a portfolio of their growth during the work. They also must commit 15 hours of community service somewhat related to their chosen topics.

The culmination of their research was a presentation to a panel of community judges Wednesday at the school.

"This topic chose me," said Tony Vielle, who did a photo documentary of Native American culture.

He spent time on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and worked picking up garbage.

Jessie Hardin, who spent two weeks volunteering as a certified nurse assistant in a village in Uganda, presented an overview of her trip and the work she did there.

Another young woman made jousting armor and a student built a boat, among many other interesting research topics, according to McGraw.

Heather Palermo, who works at Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology, volunteered to spend time as a judge for the second year in a row. She listened to three presentations Wednesday.

"I think it's something all seniors should do," she said. "At the end of the presentations, all of them said the senior project was totally worth it."

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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