It was mid-July and it was really hot outside—a typical summer day in Bayside. Cardozo senior, Nalesha Narine, left her house and was crossing the street a few yards from her home when she was struck and run over by a moving truck.

Reluctantly, Nalesha recounts what happened that day. “I had the walk sign and a FedEx truck was speeding. He didn’t see, and he hit me. He dragged me under the truck and left the two back wheels on my stomach.” She recalls hearing her ribs crack under the pressure of the truck’s tires.

“I couldn’t walk for three months. I couldn’t eat. I lost thirty pounds and would wake up crying.”

When the dust settled, Nalesha suffered lacerated kidneys and lungs, two bulging discs in her back and damaged intestines. Her liver was cut and smashed in half and all the ribs on her right side were broken. She underwent surgery and got two metal coils implanted in her torso to support her liver.

“They didn’t think I’d be alive.”

What they didn’t know is just how strong Nalesha is. Perseverance is a weak word for Nalesha’s approach. Rather than feeling sorry for herself and watching television all day, she decided to work on focusing on school work to be where she is now: graduating on time with this year’s senior class.

“I was home-schooled for six months. I started school in the hospital and teachers came up and taught me because I didn’t want to fall behind.” She pushed through her injuries to get early enrollment in Berkeley College. She has already completed a math course and has her eyes on a bigger prize.

“I’m going to major in criminal justice at school. I want to be an FBI agent.”

She beams with a grin from ear-to-ear as she discusses her future goals. “I’m going to study psychology and forensics and get an internship with the government.”

Nalesha’s drive for success is inspirational for everyone that comes across her heartwarming story. Ms. Christina English, her Social Studies teacher, said, “I see a kid who wants to succeed. She has a quiet determination, gets her work done, and has a sense of humor. She is always smiling.”

When talking about her work ethic, it really is quite simple to Nalesha. “I wanted to get my work done and do everything I had to do.” Be it physical therapy or school, Nalesha has conquered it. She took care of business and now, she is graduating on time. Nalesha is still going through a lot today, but has gotten back on track from where she was eleven months ago.

Nalesha is synonymous with words like ‘warrior’, ‘hero’, and ‘amazing.’ The one thing that she is excited about before graduating from high school and going out into the world is prom. “I really wanted to go to prom and be with my friends. I had a custom dress made that won’t show my scars,” Nalesha said, giddy with pre-prom fever.

With all that she’s been through, it’s tough to remember that we’re still talking about a high school kid. Ms. Pat Alati, a business teacher, said, “For a young girl who’s been through so much, she is very conscientious and has a renewed sense of what’s important.”

Prom!

Yanna Papadopoulos  Contributing Writer

With clouds in the sky, and flood warnings in effect, it was finally here: June 6th, the day seniors had been waiting for, the day we have been dreaming and stressing about all year: prom.

The outfits and hairstyles were picked months in advance, and the celebration was on everyone’s mind.

The Crest Hollow Country Club “was amazing and everyone looked stunning,” said senior Jelia Walters.

The room was large and bustling with dancing, laughter, and smiles.

“It felt like it was a red carpet event,” said Joaly Trinidad. Everyone was happy and smiling, taking pictures, talking to friends, and dancing.

Senior coordinator, Erica Dellabonta, who organized the event that included 773 guests said, “Prom is the grand finale of your senior year, a time to laugh at the good times and share memories with friends, celebrate the success of your high school career, and enjoy one night that will be embedded in your mind forever.”

Alyssa Navas looks out at the class of 2012, at Prom!