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SPOTLIGHT Young entrepreneurs The student and the startup Carly Vandegriff is a lot of things: a scholar, a volunteer, a mentor, a kid, an avid reader ... and an executive.

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A Canandaigua Academy senior Carly Vandegriff and she will tell you she is reeling, caught up in the excitement of her many projects, not sure which one she enjoys the most, which one to turn into a career. Not that that's a problem. "I'm torn between a lot of interests right now," she says. Then, after a pensive pause: "But it's better than having none."

While Vandegriff waits to hear a decision from the University of Rochester on her early deadline application, she thinks a lot about those interests. Her intrigues, she calls them. She hasn't picked a major yet.

There are the kids. She loves the kids. The little ones especially. She volunteers with Big Brothers Big Sisters. "I love little kids," she says. "I love helping them." So, she could go with education.

But then there are her schoolmates and everyone else. Plenty of them need help, too. And even folks she doesn't know yet, with their brains askew, their personalities awash on the shipwrecked shores of life. So, she could opt for psychology. OK. Sure. Helping people is all good and well. It's rewarding. But what about making money, turning your ideas into products, your products into profits? What about being in charge, being at the top of the heap? What about- business?

A couple years ago, her brother, Evan, joined a class that helped you start your own business, for real, helped you learn all you needed to know to become an entrepreneur. In fact, that's what it was called: the Young Entrepreneurs Academy, a program sponsored by the U of R that helps kids launch their own businesses or social movements.

Her brother made some sort of Christmas light holder thingamajig. She didn't know then what she would do or make, maybe start some sort of charity, but she knew she wanted to join up.

"I knew it was a class that taught you all the fundamentals of business -the financials, how to do Quick-Books, the ethics as well as how to write a business plan, how to get money from outside investors, how to get notarized..."

Now she is a legal, bona fide chief operations officer for a four-person company called MagBagz. Last week, she filed the paperwork at the Monroe County Clerk's Office. Mind you, at this point, there are no Indians, just three other chiefs: executive, financial, marketing.

As the chief of operations, "I have to keep everything organized and keep everyone on task with what we need to do every week," says Vandegriff. "Right now, we are finishing our financials."

MagBagz wants to market tote bags decorated with magazine covers. But this is no paste-

and-papier-mâché afterschool art project. Vandegriff and company are researching how to professionally print the image directly onto the fabric. They know their target consumer. They have done their market research.

And they want the real thing.

"We are trying to use the actual magazine covers," says Vandegriff.

That means copyright permissions. That means "negotiations."

"We are trying for a target market of 15 to 24 years old, so we are calling Cosmo Girl and Seventeen, trying to get the copyright on those covers because they would be the most popular for our market," she says.

MagBagz still has a long way to go. But the experience of founding a company and achieving success has at least planted the seed for Vandegriff.

"The big hope would be to get a successful business," she says. "But I also hope to know everything about business to know if it's what I want to do with my life. And so far, it has been very intriguing."

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Caption: Just another high school senior? Not quite. Seventeen-year-old Carly Vandegriff is also the chief operations officer for a company she co-founded.

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