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Stafford High School senior Kamron Panyard (55, front right) gets a hold of a Brooke Point High School player earlier this year. Kamron has been a starter on the Indians' offensive line for three years.

Panyard

From A1

He didn't always know how to put them back together, and his mom found pen parts everywhere.

"You were always a very precocious child," she said to Kamron during an interview with The Free Lance-Star, "but sometimes that would get you into trouble. I wasn't sure how that was going to go academically as we moved on."

She needn't have worried.

There's nothing below an A- on his high school transcripts, which include eight Advanced Placement classes and one dual enrollment course that earned him eight college credits. He took calculus, parts 1 and 2, in his junior year.

At a summer event called SMART Community STEM Camp, where participants learn the ins and outs of flying drones, he earned the "Top Gun" award and a \$2,000 drone — then became a paid intern for the program. He goes to Stafford middle schools with program sponsors, demonstrating the flying robots.

"He's very smart, and he's a great mentor," said George Hinkley, a retired Marine captain who's president and CEO of the program. "He really cares about the younger kids so he's perfect in the middle schools."

Kamron's homelife has helped with that as well. The blended Dwyer-Panyard family includes an older sister in Pennsylvania and five siblings from age 17 to 11, all under the same roof.

While his mother, a physical education teacher who coordinates several other programs at Brooke Point High School, always encouraged activity, she wasn't keen on tackle football too soon. And Kamron wasn't exactly suited for the tough offensive line.

As a freshman, he was maybe 5 feet, 7 inches and weighed 160 pounds.

Then, he got bitten by the weightlifting bug and bulked up his frame. He's currently 5-foot-9 and 245 pounds, built like a strong tree trunk — "wide like a square with just muscle, hard to move because of strength and low center of gravity," said Coach Druzatz.

Kamron has been so determined to keep his physique intact that he didn't even take a break when the family went to the beach. His mom found a weeklong membership at a gym, and Mike Dwyer, her husband and Kamron's stepfather, volunteered to take him so the two could work out together.

"He had to keep up with me," Kamron said, smirking. And could the stepdad?

"Yeah, he could," the teenager admitted.

The stepfather later laughed at that.

"I'm pushing 50 years,



PROVIDED BY DESIREE DWYER

Kamron Panyard, seated, is a mentor to younger students with the SMART Community STEM program which teaches drone-flying skills to middle-school students in Stafford County.



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Even with his busy school schedule, Kamron Panyard didn't take time off during the summer. He worked more than 50 hours a week, refueling and washing machinery for a highway construction company.

and he's pushing 350 pounds," Dwyer said.

On top of all those achievements, Kamron recently received the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute award, which includes a \$40,000 scholarship per year to the prestigious upstate New York university.

He's already been accepted by a dozen schools — some without even applying — and hasn't decided if he'll take the Rensselaer offer which covers half the tuition costs. He likes the program and the location, because he'd prefer to live in a cooler climate, but doesn't want to get saddled with a huge student debt.

The family found out Friday night, the same evening as the Indians won their eighth regular season game this year, that he's been invited to interview at the Webb Institute, also in New York. The university bills itself as an exceptional school of engineering and accepts 28 freshmen each year — and covers their full tuition. He's one of 23 students selected for an interview, and up to 12 will be picked for early admission. Webb students graduate

with degrees in marine engineering and naval architecture.

Kamron and his family will visit Webb, and other college possibilities, after football season. By the first of the year, the busy senior also will be able to spend more time with the drone program, coaching a youth basketball team and completing a capstone project, the culmination of his four years in the STAT engineering program which is held at North Stafford High School.

There are times when the

various interests of Kamron Panyard come together, such as when he's leading the after-school drone club at Stafford middle schools and a kid asks how much he can bench press.

He likes that he's not pigeonholed into one category, but can apply what his mom calls an amazing work ethic in many fields.

"I'm a unicorn," Kamron said, laughing. "I'm everything."

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