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SENIOR SPOTLIGHT



Keegan Spears is the 2026 Millersport High School Outstanding Senior. JEFF BARRON/EAGLE-GAZETTE

Senior Spears stressed leadership as a Laker

Jeff Barron
Lancaster Eagle-Gazette
USA TODAY NETWORK

Millersport High School 2026 Outstanding Senior Keegan Spears is not a follower. Quite the opposite, in fact.

"I'm very involved in leadership and very good with guiding my classmates, my teammates," Spears said. "I'm cheer captain, student council president, sweet corn festival queen. So when they

told me I was the outstanding senior, that was the first thing that came to mind. It was just my sense of leadership and my guidance and my drive for our school and our community."

As for leadership, Spears knows what she wants to do.

"I want the best for my other seniors," she said. "I want the best for my cheer team. I want the best for our school. I don't necessarily have a set way to do things. I just have a lot of passion and a

lot of drive behind how I do things. And I think just really emotionally connecting with everybody and just trying to meet everybody in the middle, where I think is best and what they want to do. Then, trying to navigate that."

Spears earned a 3.7 grade point average. She said it was challenging to maintain high grades along with her activities, but that knowing what she

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'Dangerous' AI political ads raise alarm ahead of election

Haley BeMiller
State Bureau
USA TODAY NETWORK

A video from the Ohio Republican Party showed former Vice President Kamala Harris playing a game show with Dr. Amy Acton, the Democratic nominee for governor.

Spoiler alert: That never happened. It was AI-generated content intended to mock Acton's past comments. And it won't be the last time Ohioans see deepfakes on the campaign trail.

Experts say artificial intelligence is exploding in the political sphere as technology becomes more sophisticated. Generative AI in particular - which allows users to create text, photos, video and audio - is opening doors for campaigns and other groups that want to find efficiencies and save money.

But it's also sparked debate over the role of AI in elections and whether it will help or hurt democracy.

"Things like playing around with the boundaries of misleading content, things like borderline falsely depicting your opponents or trying to emotionally appeal to or manipulate people while technically following regulations, I don't think these are things that political campaigns should be lauded for," said Daniel Schiff, co-director of the Governance and Responsible AI Lab at Purdue University.

"It's a dangerous game they're playing."

How political campaigns deploy AI

AI in politics is not a new phenomenon.

Schiff's organization has been tracking examples since 2016. In 2024, for example, Donald Trump Jr. shared an AI image of his father riding a large cat, gun in hand, with the caption, "Save our pets!!!!" The post was a reference to false, viral claims about Springfield, Ohio's Haitian immigrant

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Part of Ohio could've been named Metropotamia

Jeff Suess
Cincinnati Enquirer
USA TODAY NETWORK

Before Ohio was a state, the vast, largely uncharted expanse between the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, up to the Great Lakes, was known as the Northwest Territory.

Many parties, including the British, French, Spanish, Native American tribes and Eastern states, had previous claims to portions of the territory.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 settled the matter by organizing it as the Northwest Territory and laying the groundwork for the expansion of the United States.

The ordinance was among the most

significant legislation created by the Congress of the Confederation of the United States, which governed the U.S. from 1781 to 1789, before the federal government was established by the U.S. Constitution.

Jefferson's plan for westward expansion

Prior to the American Revolution, to strengthen British and Native American relations, King George III issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which forbade expansion of the colonies west of the Appalachian Mountains - an area considered an "Indian reserve."

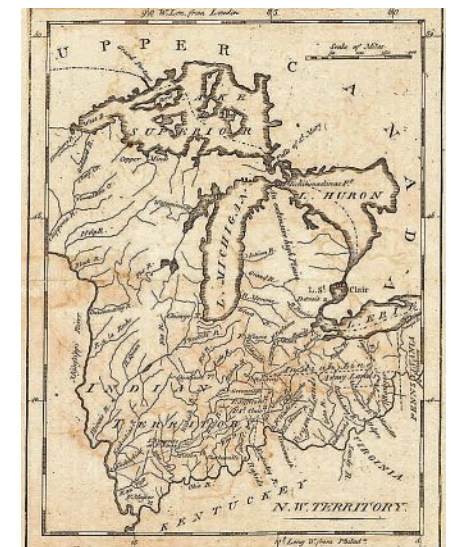
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The British ceded that land in the 1783 Treaty of Paris following the Revolutionary War, and the new nation was ready to expand west.

The Confederation Congress pressured other states to relinquish their claims on the territory, such as Virginia's declared boundaries extending "from Sea to Sea."

Thomas Jefferson proposed the lands west of the Appalachians be divided into 10 states that would be equal to the original 13 colonies.

He suggested interesting names: Sylvania, Michigania, Cherronesus, Assenisipia, Metropotamia, Illinoia, Saratoga, Washington, Polypotamia and Pelisipia. What is now Ohio would have been part of Metropotamia,



An 1801 map of the Northwest Territory.

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