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# TRIPLE THREAT

The public high school in Blue Springs, Missouri, just outside Kansas City, graduates more than 500 seniors each year. Remarkably, the valedictorian in 2015 was the younger sister of the valedictorian in 2014—who was the younger sister of the valedictorian in 2013.

And all three are now Caltech undergraduates.

These are the Butkovich sisters: junior Slava and sophomore Nina, both majoring in chemical engineering, and freshman Lazarina (“Laza”), currently deciding between chemical engineering and chemistry.

The sisters represent “a three-peat,” says Caltech admissions director Jarrid Whitney, not a package deal. “All our applicants are reviewed independently and without regard to siblings, parents, or other legacies. For three family members to receive consecutive offers of admission indicates how tremendously talented all three of them must be.”

For their part, Slava, Nina, and Laza (pictured right to left, below) find their own nearly identical trajectories unsurprising. “We were taught at a young age that science majors can do a lot of good for society,” Slava says.

In fact, according to all three, one of the biggest challenges since leaving high school has been learning to rely on something they had honestly never needed before now: study groups. —DZ

