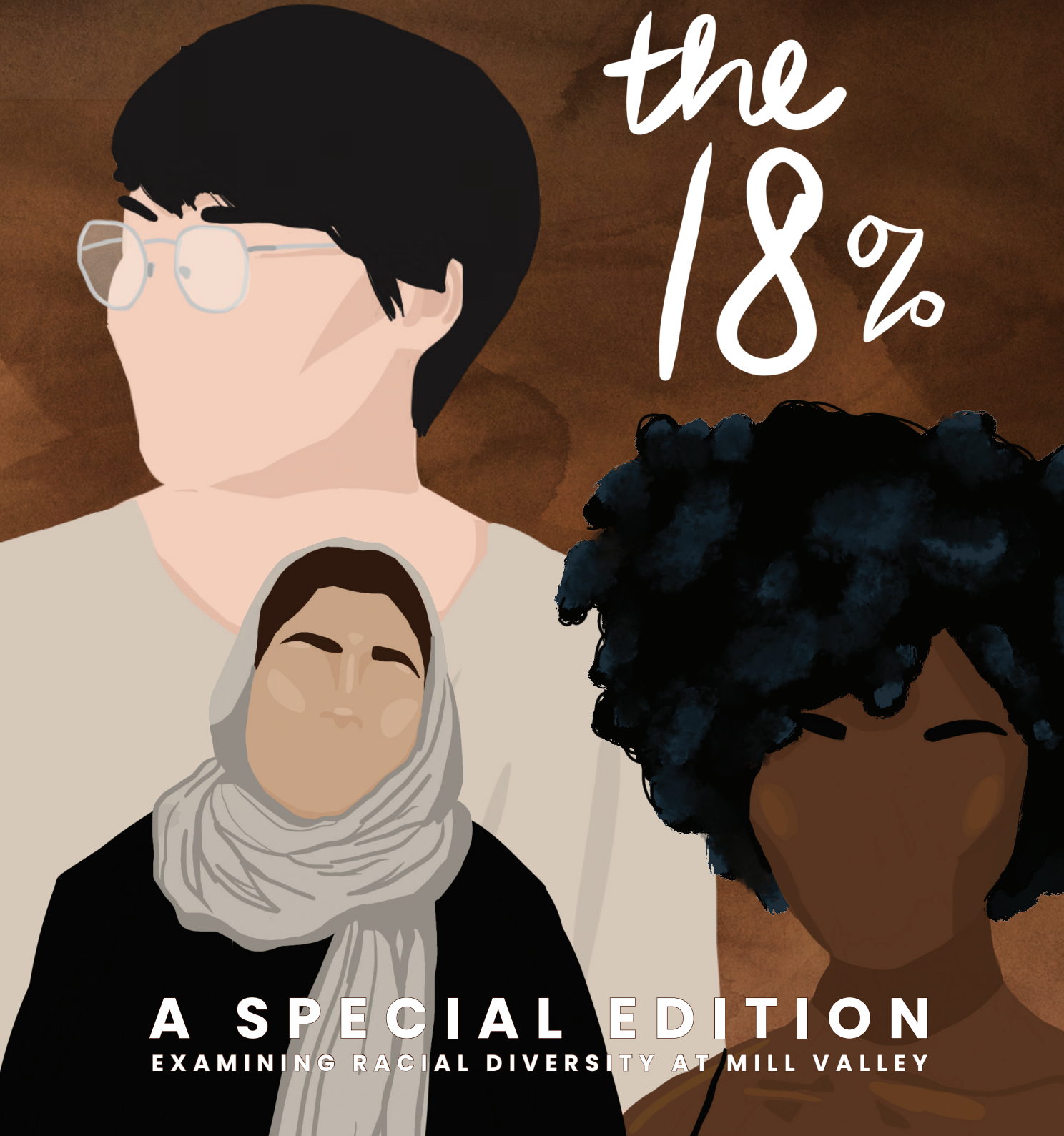


# JAGWIRE

MILL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL | VOL. 20 | ISSUE 5 | FEB. 6, 2020 | MVNEWS.ORG

*the  
18%*



## A SPECIAL EDITION

EXAMINING RACIAL DIVERSITY AT MILL VALLEY

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# letter from the editors

## hey mill valley!

Welcome to issue five of the Jag-Wire! Unlike the others issues we have produced, this issue is a special edition paper that revolves around the central theme of racial diversity at the school. Since its opening in 2000, Mill Valley has slowly become more racially diverse. Racial diversity at the school is something that no one can control, but we felt it was important to bring light to the different cultures and races that make up 18% of our school.

Race is a factor that defines who we are. No matter what race someone is, we believe that being open to learning about other races and cultures is im-

portant and something worth discussing.

By sharing students' personal experiences with racism, to cultural differences, our goal is to dive into the matter of diversity at the school in a way that is meaningful and eye-opening for all of our readers.

We hope the collection of stories in this special edition of the paper will give you insight into the lives and experiences of Mill Valley's 18%.

## your editors,

*Hannah Chern*  
*Tatum Elliott*

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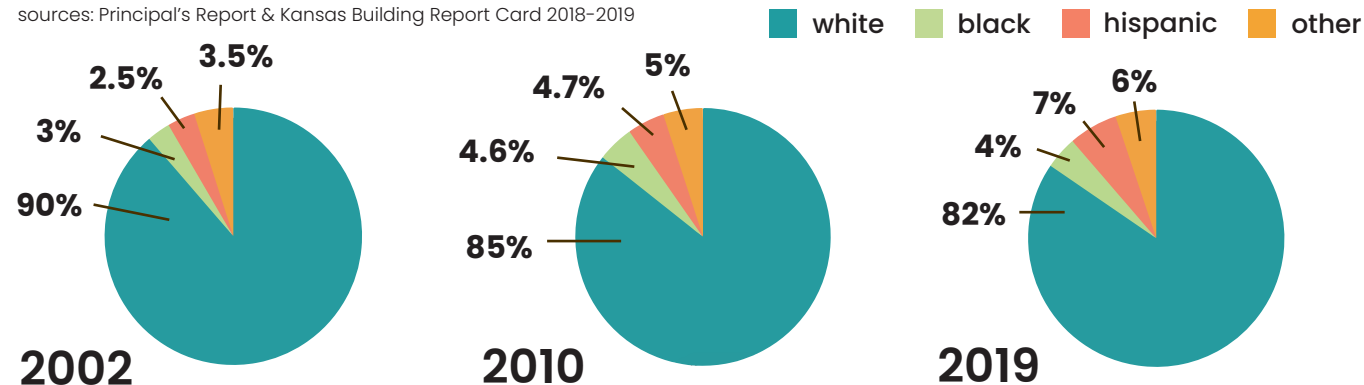
# DEFINING THE 18%

A graphical depiction of the racial makeup of the school, county, state and nation

## MILL VALLEY

Each year, every public school in Kansas must publish basic information about its student body, including the breakdown of certain racial groups. The school's percent of non-white students has increased by almost 10% since the school opened in 2000.

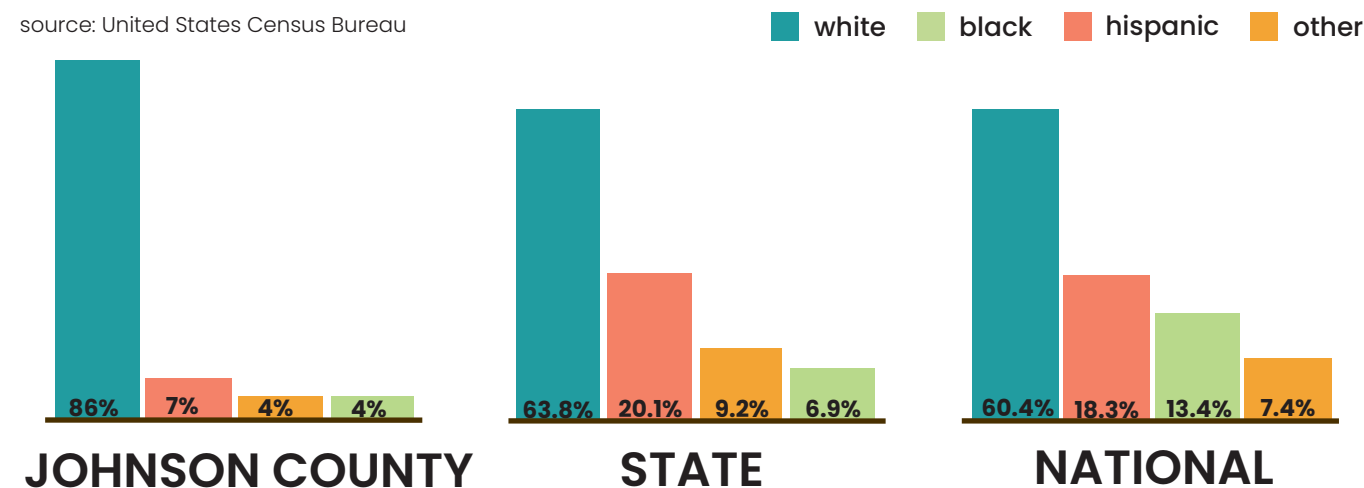
sources: Principal's Report & Kansas Building Report Card 2018-2019



## OUTSIDE THE VALLEY

Results from the 2019 census of different racial groups shows Mill Valley closely mirrors the state of Kansas in these areas.

source: United States Census Bureau



## professional associations

Kansas Scholastic Press Association  
National Scholastic Press Association  
Journalism Education Association  
Journalism Educators of Kansas City  
The 2018 JagWire earned an All-American rating from NSPA and an All-Kansas rating from KSPA. It is also a member of the NSPA All-American Hall of Fame.

## censorship policy

The Kansas Student Publications Act guarantees the same rights for student journalists as are guaranteed for professional journalists. These rights include, but are not limited to, all First Amendment rights, including the rights of freedom of speech and the press, insofar as published items may not contain libelous, slanderous or obscene statements, may not incite or promote illegal conduct and may not cause a substantial disruption to normal school activity. This law also prevents censorship of any kind by the adviser, building or district administration.

## editorial policy

We value your opinions. If you wish to submit a column or a letter to the editor to the JagWire, you can do so by handing it in to a member of the staff or to the print journalism room (C101). Additionally, you may email any member of the staff with opinions, as well as tweet us at @millvalleynews. Anonymous content will not be accepted. Please understand that we have the right to edit all copy that runs in this publication.

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Mill Valley News



# PIONEERING POLITICIANS

The portrayal and representation of minorities in the confines of modern day politics



Sharice Davids gives her victory speech after winning the state's third congressional district race Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018, at her watch party in Olathe, Kansas. | John Sleezer/Kansas City Star/TNS

**TANNER SMITH**  
assistant editor

Imagine looking up at your community leaders, at your representatives or even looking at the president and seeing someone who doesn't look like you. Think of how discouraging that would be, and how throughout your

entire life you would see politics dominated by people who don't look like you, don't talk like you, don't think like you and don't have the same priorities as you. That is what people of color face every day.

History teacher Aaron Cox sees the fact that elected officials in the U.S. do not represent the country's de-

mographics as a major problem that needs fixing.

"When you look at politics ... and at our demographics, there's a lot of categories that are underrepresented," Cox said. "It's no secret that most politicians are white and they're male."

While, according to Vox, Congress is the most diverse it has ever been, it

is only 22% non-white compared to 39% of the total population that is non-white. Although Kansas has also improved in terms of representation with the election of Sharice Davids, the other five congressional representatives are white, leaving the majority of the state without minority representation in Congress.

**"CONGRESS IS MORE DIVERSE NOW THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN, SO I THINK WE'RE TRENDING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."**

history teacher aaron cox

In addition to Cox, junior Adam White feels that government organizations are not sufficiently representing people of color.

"I think from both a numerical standpoint as well as a power representation standpoint, neither metric is fulfilled by the amount of representation within government for underserved minority groups," White said. "Congress ... doesn't represent a lot of the interests of minority groups."

Senior Tripp Starr feels that the lack of diversity in the political realm discourages people of color from being involved in politics.

"It's kind of disappointing," Starr said. "You want to see people in the



House Democratic women, including Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), middle, are dressed in white for President Trump's State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2019. | Olivier Douliery/Abaca Press/TNS

light that look like you, especially in the political realm because it has some deeper meaning."

While not perfect, Cox feels that Congress and other government organizations are becoming more inclusive.

"When we look at the demographics, there's more diversity," Cox said. "Congress is more diverse now than it has ever been, so I think we're trending in the right direction."

While White concedes that representation in Congress has gotten better, he still feels there's a lot that needs to be improved, especially in the realm of voting rights.

"Improved" is a relative term," White said. "Since, you know, our good old days in the late 1700s, when literally everybody was a white straight male, I think it's fair to say that we've added in a couple of people of color

to Congress, but we still have a lot of room to grow."

This increased representation that White and Cox argue for is meant to increase minorities' influence in Congress.

"They need [a] voice," Cox said. "You're not going to have a voice if you're not represented ... and you have to have that representation with people that are similar to you."

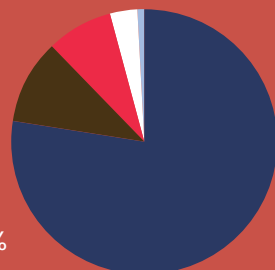
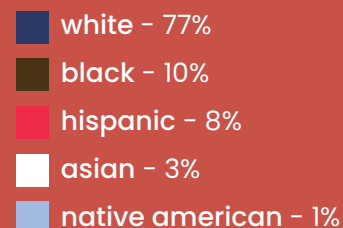
The solution to the problem for Cox is to get the younger generations involved through government or civics classes.

"I think we need more involvement," Cox said. "We want a younger generation to get involved, and I think that starts with education ... getting kids interested in politics and teaching them how to get involved ... will start to increase the diversity of the people running for public policy."

## few in numbers

Despite recent improvements, Congress still remains largely white; with 25% of members are minorities

source: Pew Research



## the squad

These Democratic representatives, all women of color, were elected to Congress in 2018



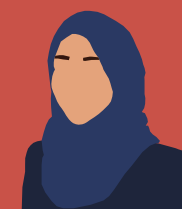
Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of NY



Rep. Ayanna Pressley of MA



Rep. Rashida Tlaib of MI



Rep. Ilhan Omar of MN



# MINORITIES in the MEDIA

The representation of minorities in entertainment

**BEN WIELAND**  
mill valley news editor-in-chief

## people of color make up:

39.4%

of the U.S. population

21.5%

of broadcast TV leading actors

19.8%

of film leading actors

12.6%

of film directors

7.8%

of film writers

5%

of Oscar nominees

source: UCLA Researchers

## Q&A with senior Anna Paden

Drama department member answers questions on diversity in entertainment

**JagWire:** Do you make an effort to seek out television or movies where you can see people like yourself?

**Anna Paden:** Representation is important. If you don't see yourself represented in the media, then you have ideals of people who don't look like you who you can't relate to, so then you don't know where you fit in the world.

**JW:** How do you feel about the entertainment industry's attitude toward diversity?

**AP:** There is such a huge disparity, but I feel that we are in a black Renaissance where we are being seen in these places of power like directing and producing. We are coming. We are getting toward better places, but we

still have a long way to go.

**JW:** What should white people do in order to be more accepting of minorities?

**AP:** Listen to us. Just listen to our stories and listen to our ideas because they're extremely valuable and they have meaning. There's a huge audience that has been untapped that you can complete. You can access it; you just have to listen.



## pioneering progress

source: UCLA Researchers

Efforts are being made to increase diversity in entertainment

- the **highest grossing films** last year, on average, featured casts composed of **31-40% minorities**
- the **number of minority leading actors** in TV shows has **quadrupled** since 2011
- 28 of 2019's top 100 films featured minorities** in leading roles

## entertainment industry success

source: Deadline, Grammys

### bong joon-ho

- South Korean director
- His film "Parasite" was nominated for Best Foreign Film in the Academy Awards and won Best Foreign Film at the Golden Globes
- He was nominated for best Director at the Golden Globes

### jordan peelee

- African American director
- His 2017 film "Get Out" features race relations
- It was nominated for three Academy Awards: Best Picture, Best Director and Best Original Screenplay
- He won Best Original Screenplay

### beyonce

- African American singer
- All 12 songs in her 2016 album "Lemonade" cracked the Billboard Top 100
- She starred as a voice actress in Disney's reboot of "The Lion King"
- Nominated for 70 Grammy awards and has won 34

## success in minority characters

source: Deadline

Highlighting minority characters seen in recent entertainment releases



### t'challa

first black character to headline a Marvel film



### rose tico

first Asian American Star Wars character



### finn

first black lead in Star Wars



### miles morales

first Afro-Latino Spider-Man

## Make a SPLASH at the City of Shawnee! 2020 Summer Aquatic Center Positions

The Shawnee Parks and Recreation Department is looking for energetic individuals wanting to join our team next summer. We are hiring **NOW** for the 2020 pool season! Cashier, Lifeguard and Swim Instructor positions are open to individuals ages 15 and older. Concession attendant requires a minimum age of 16.

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# RACISM

## IT'S STILL A PROBLEM

How racism continues to impact the lives of minorities in the community



# SHARING HIS STORY

An African American student's experience with racism

**ANNA OWSLEY**

*mill valley news editor-in-chief*

**AIDEN BURKE**

*reporter/photographer*

**A**n elderly, white man approached the baseball field concession stand. He stopped to stare at sophomore Drew Morgan who was busy preparing a large order of Icees. After finishing his task, Morgan greeted the man and apologized for the wait.

"You're lucky your people are allowed to work here," the man said.

Ignoring the comment, Morgan asked again if he could help the man.

"Back in my time, your people wouldn't even be allowed to be in this certain section," the man said.

Not wanting to lose his job, Morgan replied that he couldn't help the man if that's all he was going to say; without another word, the man walked away.

This blatant racism wasn't the first time Morgan's African American ancestry played a role in how people treated him. Adopted into a white family, the color of his skin began shaping his world before he even understood what race was.

"I remember when I was growing up ... a lot of people would stop and stare at my family in public, and it was something that I didn't understand at the time," Morgan said. "[I thought], 'Why are they staring at me?' I was just staring at my parents."

While Morgan recollects the discomfort that dominated these moments, he recognizes that it's natural for people to do a double-take when they notice his family's dynamic.

Race grew to be a larger aspect of his identity upon entering grade school, and not always in a positive way; Morgan often felt disconnected from his white peers who didn't share the same race-related experiences that had become increasingly prevalent.

He feels these problems have been partially alleviated since he started

high school. The increased diversity allowed him to find students who are "really vocal about how they feel about being black, how they feel about how they're treated."

Morgan is no stranger to the notorious history class situation that countless black students experience throughout their education: the room full of non-black students that inevitably turn toward the single black student when it's time to discuss the Civil War or the civil rights movement. While Morgan doesn't blame others for this reaction, he sheds light on why this kind of occurrence creates an unpleasant environment.

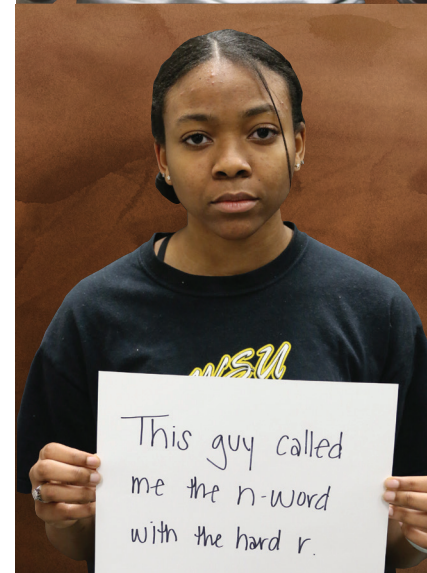
"A lot of people will turn around and look at me or turn toward me," Morgan said. "It's extremely uncomfortable for me. It's just a lot of eyes on you for something that you can't really control."

A stereotype often tied to black people is that they are inherently more violent than white people. Morgan thinks this ill-founded stereotype is misunderstood when people only look at shallow statistics and don't address underlying causes behind those issues.

"[The stereotype] that all black people are ghetto... irks me a little bit, because there are a lot of black people who don't act ghetto. No one wants to act ghetto; it's the situation that they're in," Morgan said. "A lot of people don't grow up in great places ... in order to cope with that, they get into violence. And it's not the right thing to do, but it's the only thing they know."

Going to a school with a primarily white staff has limited the number of adults in Morgan's life that are fully capable of understanding race-related aspects of his life.

"It's a little bit hard, because when you're trying to explain a situation that you're going through, or something that's happened to you in school, or maybe someone's saying something," Morgan said. "It's hard for them to put themselves in your shoes, and vice versa."





# RACIST REPERCUSSIONS

Experiences of racism through the form of racist language and slurs are reflected on

**STEVEN CURTO**  
assistant editor

**BEN WIELAND**  
mill valley news editor-in-chief

While sitting through another day of AV Production Fundamentals last year, junior Beth Desta got into a heated argument with a boy sitting next to her in class. Desta doesn't remember what instigated the conflict. What she does vividly recall, though, is the boy's response. "He disagreed with me. He just looked at me in the eyes and called me the n-word," Desta said.

According to Desta, the use of racial slurs, including the n-word, is commonplace at Mill Valley. In her experience, white students callously use the word while joking with their friends or singing popular songs; however, they lack an understanding of the racist roots of the word and don't receive consequences for its usage.

While Desta described principal Tobie Waldeck as extremely upset about the incident, the student who called her the n-word to her face received one day of in-school suspension, which she perceived as a sign from the school that "the administration doesn't really care."

Sophomore Rhyan Lucas shares Desta's disappointment in the response to the use of racist slurs at school. After a student in Lucas's World History class called her the n-word and Lucas reported it, the student received a three-hour detention. To Lucas, the punishment was inadequate.

"With all the history of that word, with slavery and Jim Crow and all of that, it should have been a lot more than just a three-hour detention," Lucas said.

Desta has the same sentiments as Lucas regarding the inconsistency and lack of severity in the school's punishments for racial slurs. She references a black student who received a punishment of two days of out-of-school suspension; the student who called Desta

the n-word received only one day of out-of-school suspension, and Lucas's received zero days of out-of-school suspension.

"I just don't think they handle it seriously enough when it comes to non-black people saying the n-word. A black kid got suspended for even longer for saying it," Desta said.

Waldeck, on the other hand, believes that he and other administrators

**"IT'S STILL LIKE, 'OK, THIS IS THE SCHOOL I GO TO WHERE PEOPLE DON'T KNOW OR UNDERSTAND THEIR LIMITS.'"**

junior beth desta

are concerned about the issue of racial harassment.

"Everybody should be able to come here to school, work and be comfortable regardless of race or religion," Waldeck said. "Students either need to report it to an adult, or they're going to have to deal with it themselves internally. We do take it very seriously."

The school's official policy, found in the student handbook, indicates that any reported racial harassment incidents are addressed as "serious disciplinary infractions." The policy also says that all racial harassment allegations will be "thoroughly investigated and resolved in a prompt and equitable manner."

Waldeck says he evaluates every

occurrence of racial harassment on a case-by-case basis. He takes into account interviews with students and witnesses as well as physical evidence of the incident. Ultimately, he says, he decides upon a resolution based on "what is best for the student that is the victim, and also what is best for the person that actually did it."

What Waldeck, Lucas and Desta can all agree on, though, is that racial harassment is incredibly harmful to its victims. After being racially harassed, Desta wanted to transfer. Even when she isn't individually attacked at school, the atmosphere of rampant racist attitudes affects her.

"I come back from school in a bad mood most days. There are some days where I come to school in a good mood, and I also leave in a good mood," Desta said. "There are other times where it's like, even if no one's saying anything to me, or to anyone, in a derogatory way, it still kind of hits. It's still like, 'OK, this is the school I go



Racial slurs and derogatory remarks have a long-lasting impact on people of all different races and ethnicities and can lead to increased tension within society. This demeaning language creates a prejudice environment that can make individuals feel uncomfortable. | Jordin Harris

to where people don't know or understand their limits."

Lucas believes that despite the prevalence of racist language at Mill Valley, the school hasn't taken enough steps to raise awareness about the is-

sue; to her, that's something that needs to change.

"There definitely needs to be some type of awareness. It should be common knowledge not to use the n-word," Lucas said. "I don't under-

stand why it's not, especially with all the history behind it."

## daily difficulties

In a survey of 133 students, 18 non-white students and 115 white students share their encounters with racism

### How often do you hear racial slurs?

white students	non-white students
26% never	6% never
34% monthly	17% monthly
24% weekly	39% weekly
17% daily	39% daily

### Are Mill Valley students accepting?

white students	non-white students
57% very	28% very
39% somewhat	50% somewhat
4% not at all	22% not at all

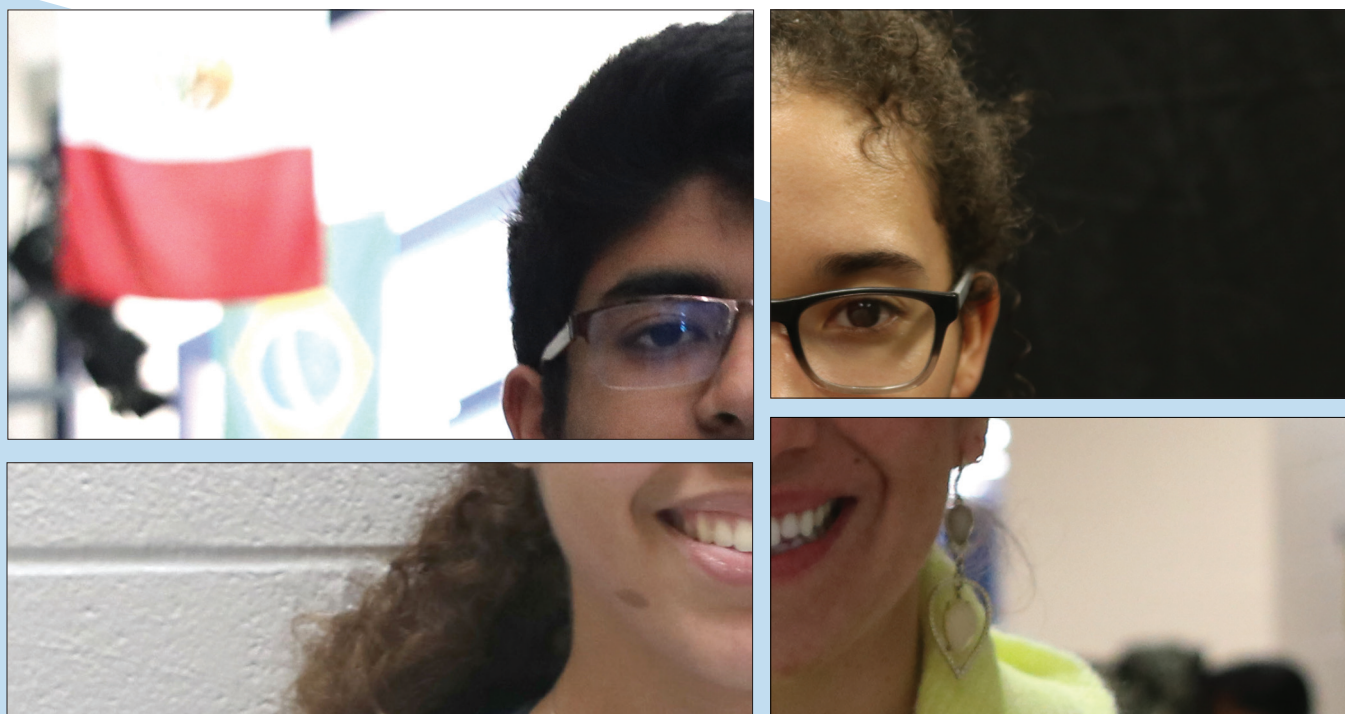


# STUCK ON STEREOTYPES

ZACH SHRADER  
reporter/photographer

ANNA OWSLEY  
mill valley news editor-in-chief

Though they can be taken as jokes, stereotypes are discriminatory and harmful



Since moving from Puerto Rico to the U.S. when she was four years old, English teacher Coral Brignoni has been unable to escape the racial stereotypes tied to her race. She may have been born a U.S. citizen, but her dark hair and skin color have influenced how the world perceives her.

As a major sector of racist remarks and a common reinforcer of discriminatory beliefs, racial stereotypes are constant reminders that race remains a source of division between people everywhere. From joking among friends to malicious statements meant to cause pain and exclusion, the ways in which stereotypes affect minority individuals are diverse.

Being Hispanic, Brignoni is often incorrectly identified as Mexican; she often hears comments that reflect stereotypes about Mexicans, and witnesses the stereotyping of her native country.

"Mexico and Puerto Rico are two

different countries. I always have people ask me if I speak Mexican, or if I like tacos, [but] there's a distinctly

**"YOU CAN MAKE A HECK OF A LOT OF FUNNY JOKES WITHOUT STEREOTYPING SOMEBODY."**

english teacher Coral Brignoni

different culture between Puerto Rico and Mexico," Brignoni said. "They are not even close."

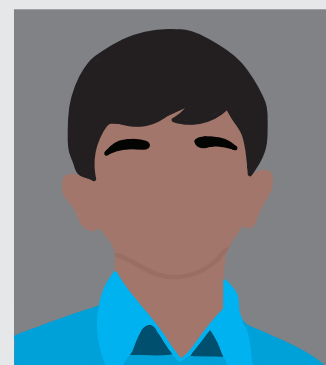
Brignoni feels that spreading and reinforcing this kind of inaccurate stereotype can put a negative lens over how people view each other.

"Stereotypes lead human beings to make assumptions about other people," Brignoni said. "So that would be my biggest caution, not a specific stereotype or phrase, but more so just being aware of how stereotypes can influence your thinking about other people and how far off-base they actually can be."

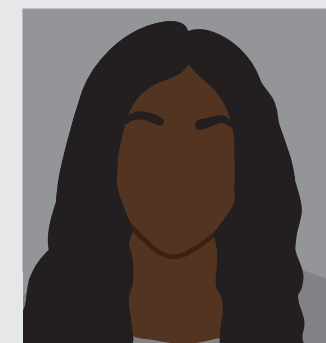
These kinds of stereotypes are exacerbated even within school; freshman Gabby Delplesh has witnessed school faculty make comments that perpetuates inaccurate assumptions.

"Today specifically, one of my teachers insinuated that black people couldn't swim," Delplesh said.

Brignoni uses her class as an opportunity to open the floor to discuss these kinds of stereotypes. She's come to the conclusion, after years of teach-



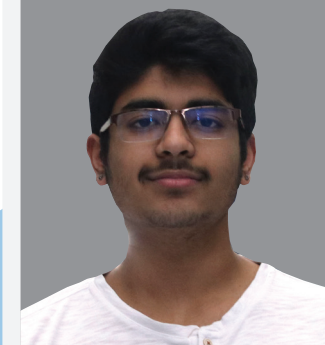
I love Bollywood, only eat curry, am an IT expert and know every other Indian person.



I am aggressive, ill-tempered, illogical, hostile, ignorant and angry.

## PERCEPTION VS. REALITY

Junior Manoj Turaga and freshman Gabby Delplesh compare racial stereotypes to the truth



I am smart, funny, tech-savvy, determined, a jack of all trades, charismatic, a perfectionist, innovative, a leader and a fighter.



I am involved, athletic, energetic, ardent, a perfectionist, unpretentious, a runner, a dancer, a leader and inquisitive.

ing, that people's natural tendencies to judge often evolves into the harmful negativity that feeds malicious behavior.

"It's a natural inclination for us to want to categorize people, but unfortunately stereotypes have gotten so out of hand that most of them have become negative," Brignoni said. "And we talked about it in class quite a bit. They started to try and come up with stereotypes that they've heard, and none of them were really very nice."

However, stereotypes don't always result in hateful comments. Junior Manoj Turaga and his friends commonly joke about being him being a "tech savvy Indian" — a stereotype often associated with his race, but one that accurately describes his own talents. Under these circumstances, he doesn't see the harm in joking about the stereotype.

"I don't think it's bad; I like to take a joke. And certainly, I'm a different

kind of person than most people in the world — I don't get offended by things at all," Turaga said. "Certainly, the things that people say to me, some people will get offended [from]. And I'm not the person to judge whether it's racism or this stuff is okay; that's up to the person [the comments are directed at]."

Turaga notes that these comments sit differently when they come from strangers, though he recognizes that people don't always have harmful intentions when joking about stereotypes.

"It is kind of weird, but they usually mean no harm. I don't mean any harm whenever I do things [like that], and I hope that's the case with them too," Turaga said.

Noting a negative aspect of racial stereotypes, Brignoni describes how they can be a reflection of ignorance about a race's history and culture.

"I think some people don't realize

what some stereotypes are based on," Brignoni said. "They may go back to a time of war or time of oppression for certain people. Also, I think just people [say things] they've heard and they don't realize the effect that it has on people."

For instance, she has seen stereotypes represent misinformation.

"I'm surprised [by] how many people don't realize that Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the United States, meaning that I am a born citizen," Brignoni said. "Whereas some people will sometimes be like, 'Do you have a green card to be in America?' and I'm like 'No.'"

Many minorities like Turaga exchange joking stereotypes as light-hearted fun, and others like Brignoni opt not to use them at all.

"You can make a heck of a lot of funny jokes, without stereotyping somebody or at the expense of someone else's culture," Brignoni said.



# FEARING A FAITH

Fear of Muslims is becoming more prevalent among modern American society

AIDEN BURKE

reporter/photographer

When sophomore Deema Rashid moved to America, she felt alienated and left out by an imaginary idea, something that separated her from everyone else. She felt isolated and alone because she was different, because she wasn't from the US and because she didn't look like everyone else. This racial prejudice has become increasingly common in society today and has opened the gate for Muslims to be portrayed as dangerous and 'terrorists' by the media.

Islamophobia can manifest itself in many forms, from blatant discrimination and hatred or jokes made without a second thought. Rashid was born in Iraq and feels that her race has been consistently leveraged against her in jokes and comments. These jokes, according to Rashid, become more common after something happens in the news that can be tied back to her race.

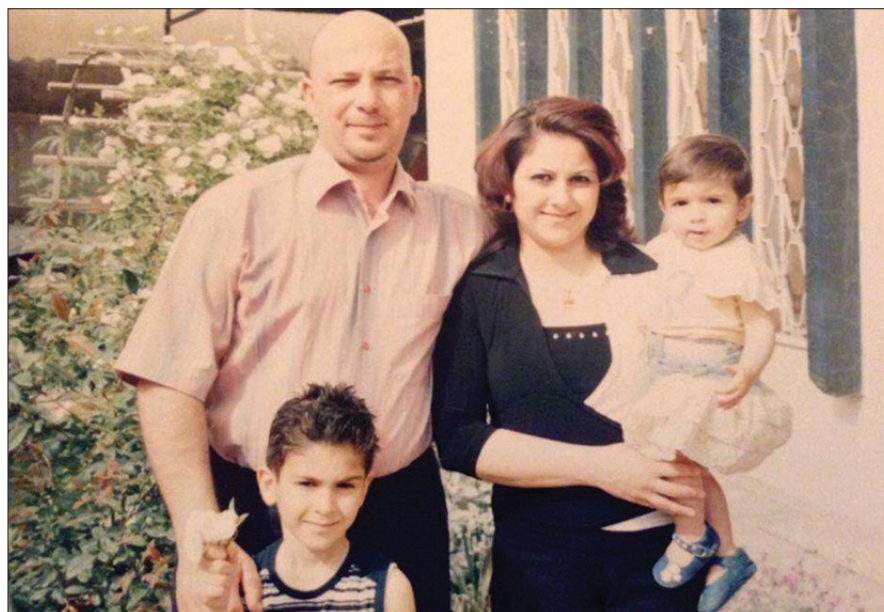
On Jan. 3, Iranian revolutionary leader Qasem Soleimani was assassinated by a US airstrike, which directly led to fostering Islamophobia in America and increased the jokes and comments that Rashid gets.

"Ever since [the killing of Soleimani], I have been getting a lot of jokes," Rashid said. "They get annoying after a while because they just aren't necessary. When things occur and I come to school, people mention it. When it gets overdone, it gets really annoying and sometimes some jokes cross the line and become offensive."

This experience isn't anything new, either; Rashid feels that this discrimination has been directed at her since she moved to Johnson County in eighth grade.

"I moved to Monticello Trails in eighth grade, and I didn't really feel like I fit in," Rashid said. "Everyone would give me weird looks. They were welcoming, but the hesitation and tension were still there."

The feeling of doubt seemed to hover around Rashid when she first



At three years old, sophomore Deema Rashid moved from Iraq to the United States. She has grown up in Kansas and moved around a lot, but her culture is present in her life. | Submitted by Deema Rashid

moved, and the realization that it was over something she couldn't change

**"I DIDN'T KNOW WHY [JOKES] WERE TARGETED AT ME, AND THEN I REALIZED IT WAS BECAUSE OF MY RACE."**

sophomore deema rashid

came as a shock.

"At first, I didn't really know why it was targeted at me and then I realized it was because of my race and I couldn't really tell what to do about it," Rashid said. "After time it passed by and became less common ... but

I've seen a lot more of it recently."

University of Kansas law professor Raj Bhala is a prominent figure in the fight against Islamophobia. Bhala's speaks out about how stereotypes manifest into hatred. As these stereotypes plant fear and insecurity in our minds, we begin to lose any empathy for entire groups of people; in society's eyes, they have become a plague to be cured of and a threat to be rid of. This, according to Bhala in an email, is how Islamophobia becomes real.

"Islamophobia is borne of a lack of empathy," Bhala said. "A lack of empathy is caused by a lack of understanding, which, in turn, leads to prejudice."

Shari'a law is a form of religious Islamic law in which a lot of Islamophobia is directed at. State legislatures, including Kansas, have enacted anti-Shari'a laws that perpetuate Islamophobia.

According to Bhala, the proliferation of anti-Shari'a laws in Kansas in recent years is founded in ignorance

## FACTS BEHIND THE PHOBIA

The definition of Islamophobia, according to Merriam-Webster's dictionary

Is • lam • o • pho • bi • a

noun

irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against Islam or people who practice Islam

of the debt that is owed to those who have been subject to discrimination in the past.

"These bills are based on ignorance," Bhala said in a 2011 interview with columnist Bill Tammeus. "The American legal system — many specific concepts in it — owes a debt, either direct or indirect, to the Shari'a. We have imported some concepts or some debates into our legal system that also are found in the Shari'a, and the Shari'a long predates English law from which our system more directly comes."

Bhala compares this analysis to what it would be like to disown the kinship of your ancestors and trying to disassociate from your race and religion; it would be disingenuous.

"It's like banishing the blood of your great-great-great-great-great-grandparents from your veins. You can't do it," Bhala said. "It's intellectually ignorant and disingenuous to do that ... it's absolutely thoughtless [to adopt such laws]."

To Bhala, the most effective way to combat this discrimination and build empathy is to stay educated on social issues and befriend people without worrying about race or religion.

"Comprehensive education about comparative religions, comparative constitutional law, and comparative legal systems are some of the ways, as well as people-to-people exchanges, to build empathy," Bhala said.

Rashid believes that this feeling of resentment and hatred is often fostered from stereotypes that people hear and learn from others and that the only way that they know how to express that feeling is through jokes.

"A lot of the time, people are worried about stereotypes and don't know how to take that out except using words," Rashid said.

When people don't know how to take out feelings of distrust, the immediate reaction is lashing out with words, slurs and jokes.

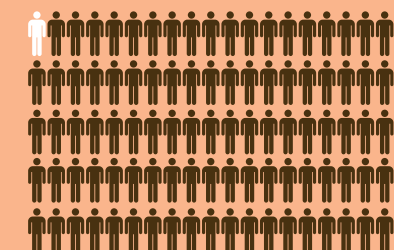
## PROVING THE PREJUDICE

Statistics on Islamophobia in America

Muslims account for

**1%**  
of the population

source: npr.org



At

**62%,**

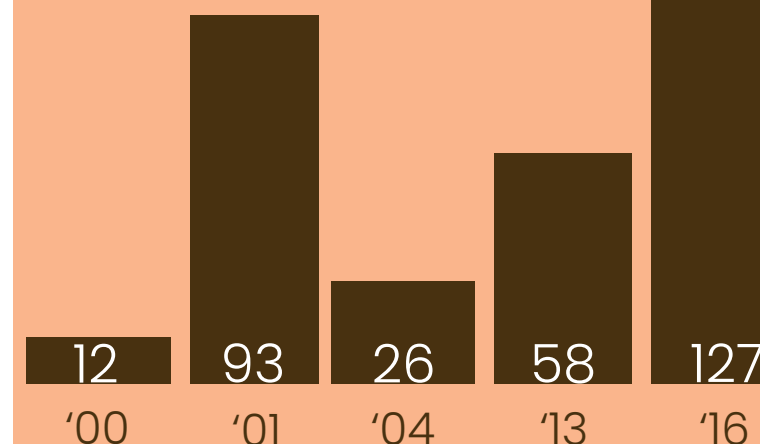
Muslims are the most likely group to report experiencing religious discrimination

source: ispu.org



## American Hate Crimes Committed Against Muslims in the 2000s

source: Pew Research Center





## staff editorial:

## STANDING TOGETHER



Being open to learning about people's stories will help us accept different races

**HANNAH CHERN**

editor-in-chief

**TANNER SMITH**

assistant editor

Racism is an issue that many think has been solved. Slavery, segregation and so many other racist policies have been abolished and programs like affirmative action are pushing us one step closer toward complete equality. Despite this seemingly growing acceptance of other races and cultures, America, including Mill Valley, still has work to do in regard to racial equality and that starts with being understanding of other cultures.

While no one is arguing that America is worse now than it was in the 1700s, recent white nationalist backlash has made America a less inclusive place. Although most people have no

intent to mirror racist actions of the past, racism from positions of power spills down to everyone, including students at Mill Valley.

Whether it is the backlash from events such as 9/11 or the prevalence of racist memes on social media, teenagers are becoming increasingly exposed to racist opinions. Tweets from President Donald Trump telling four congresswomen of color to "go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came" lead many to have an unfair bias toward people of color.

These circumstances make it crucial that people think before they speak and are willing to change their behavior if it offends someone else. One way to increase awareness of these issues is to learn about the problems other races and cultures face and work toward understanding.

While Mill Valley is generally ac-

cepting of other cultures, accepting is completely different from understanding. By understanding someone else's culture, you understand why they are who they are, how they learned what they learned and better understand who they want to be. This can be accomplished by listening to others stories and by resisting the urge to support racist posts on social media. While we cannot change the racial diversity at our school, taking the time to learn about different cultures will not only allow us to be more understanding, but it will also broaden our views of the diversity all around us.

Whether it is race, culture, disability, gender, religion or anything else that makes people different, understanding the history and importance of their beliefs not only helps you to better connect with them, but also to reduce racism whether it be in person or online.



**ADAM WHITE**

guest writer

In 1865, the 13th Amendment passed, outlawing the practice of slavery within the U.S. In 1954, the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision effectively stopped racial segregation in schools. In 1964, Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law, marking the success of the civil rights movement. In 1968, the Fair Housing Act passed and guaranteed equal housing opportunities irrespective of race.

These examples have been used time and time again by Americans to claim how "progressive" and "in-

Racism still exists despite past reforms, and it is up to students to create change and end racism

sive" this country has become and that racism only exists in singular instances and not as a policy of the government.

**"IT'S UP TO US TO REFUSE AND BREAK DOWN RACIST ORGANIZATIONS."**

junior adam white

Yet, in each instance of progress, the underlying structure of racism has continued. Despite the 13th Amendment, the prison-industrial complex coupled with the war on drugs has instilled a vicious cycle of incarceration that exploits black people for their la-

bor with no pay. In response to *Brown v. Board of Education*, affluent families moved to avoid integrated schools in a process of white flight. Although discrimination is outlawed on paper, redlining and gentrification still have a large effect on neighborhoods today.

Yes, discrimination is not explicitly written in most written laws, but that does not change the intent that these policies were made and enforced with; namely, to continue racism and to reverse progress.

All this means is that all of us, as students with very privileged positions, need to take a step back from our oftentimes white, ignorant worldview and recognize that systemic violence against oppressed groups occurs every day on both an individual and governmental level. In response, it's up to us to not only refuse to support racism, but actively work to break down racist institutions.

## RACIST REALITIES



**GABBY DELPLEASH**

guest writer

In the modern educational environment, 40% to 50% of handicapped students are left out from various school organizations and activities from field trips to graduation programs. Worse yet, students of color with disabilities face a greater number of obstacles impeding their ability to succeed socially and academically in school. The idea of including ethnic individuals in special education proposes the benefits of school districts appropriately addressing education disparities and improving the academic outcomes for children of color with disabilities.

Currently, many handicapped children of color experience a segregated education system; in 2014, students of

Schools need to incorporate more ways for disabled students of color to be involved in a regular classroom

color with disabilities, including 17% of black students and 21% of Asian students, were placed in the regular classroom, on average, less than 40% of the school day.

**"AN INITIAL STEP TOWARD EQUALITY IS PAIRING DISABLED STUDENTS WITH PEERS."**

freshman gabby delplesh

Because handicapped students of color are more frequently forgotten by many schools, this practice has reflected immensely over their cognitive skills. In 2015, only 3% of black and

Hispanic 12th grade students with disabilities achieved proficiency in reading, while practically none achieved proficiency in math.

The thought of integrating disabled students of color into the regular classroom often evokes feelings of both hope and anxiety. An initial step towards educational equality is pairing students with disabilities with their peers.

The idea of including ethnic individuals in special education proposes the benefits of school districts addressing education disparities and improving the academic outcomes for children of color with disabilities.

Inclusive education for handicapped students of color is deeply rooted in social justice movements to end discrimination towards individuals with disabilities. As such, students, parents, and educators will benefit immensely from more validated practices that support the integration of ethnic students with disabilities into the regular classroom.



# A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Looking into how students' diverse cultural backgrounds influence their lives

**HANNAH CHERN**  
editor-in-chief

**QUINN FRANKEN**  
reporter/photographer



Along with her brother, junior Ashleen Toor visited Punjab, India when she was three years old. | Submitted by Ashleen Toor



Over the summer, junior Courtney Mahugu took a trip to Kenya with her family. | Submitted by Courtney Mahugu



Alongside her family, freshman Sophia Chang went on a vacation to Taiwan. | Submitted by Sophia Chang



For his first birthday, freshman Amit Kaushal visited his family in Punjab, India. | Submitted by Amit Kaushal

## THE TOORS

Junior Ashleen Toor speaks Punjabi with her family

The first words she said as a child weren't in English; it was in Punjabi. Her parents immigrated to the U.S. to open opportunities for her and her siblings. While her parents left their native country, they passed the Indian culture to their children. Even as a first generation U.S. citizen in her family, junior Ashleen Toor's life at home closely resembles her parents' native Indian culture.

While she speaks English at school, growing up, Punjabi has been Toor's primary language. Being able to speak Punjabi has opened doors for Toor to communicate in the native language when she travels back to India.

"I can communicate with people from my culture and people who I live with," Toor said. "It's a good thing to know because whenever we visit India, it's really helpful to know."

In addition to teaching her children how to speak Punjabi, Toor's mother

Kirendeeep Kaur has maintained their native culture by taking her children to their temple, the Midwest Sikh Gurdwara, to immerse them into an Indian community.

"We have many programs in our church, so we try to take our kids over the years so they can know what Indian culture actually is," Kaur said.

Despite there being over 400 families at her temple, families share a close relationship on the basis of their religion and language.

"We're really close knit," Toor said. "We all come together on the basis that we're all Sikh and we all speak Punjabi, so that's what we all relate to."

While the community at her temple has allowed Toor to connect with people of her culture, traveling to India has enabled Toor to appreciate her Indian culture.

"I love [the culture]. When we go there, I love seeing the culture, the



In a wedding tradition, junior Ashleen Toor makes a rangoli. | Submitted by Ashleen Toor

food, all the people talking, and the clothing," Toor said. "Everything makes me feel really proud of my heritage."

## THE MAHUGUS

Junior Courtney Mahugu's parents are from Kenya

three years. Mahugu's parents both immigrated to America from small villages in Kenya and are learning about American culture through Mahugu as well as keeping their own African culture alive.

"My parents went to high school in Kenya... they really don't understand what it's like to be an American Teenager... so life is challenging a little because I have to explain a lot of things," Mahugu said.

Mahugu's dad, Francis Nuthu, tries to keep his African culture alive in his house through one of his favorite things: food.

"I try to maintain the African culture through food, music and language..." Nuthu said. "African cuisine is diverse and delicious."

According to Mahugu, the authentic dishes that her mother makes at home requires spices that are not commonly found in the U.S.

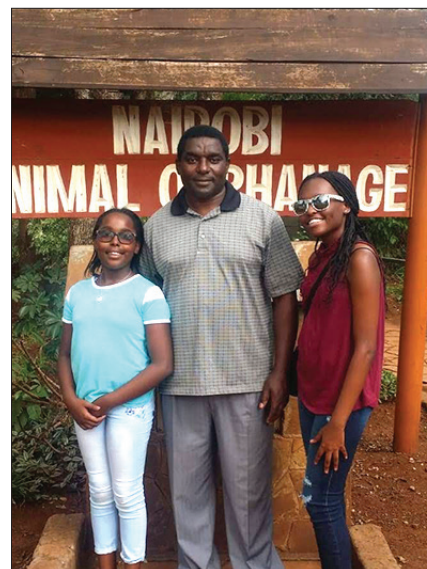
"We cook only Kenyan food in my house...so there's a lot of spices involved," Mahugu said. "Although you can buy those spices in America, there's a lot of spices...that are easier to get in Kenya."

In addition to the food of her culture, the Mahugus connect with people that share their African culture through their church, Prince of Peace, once a month.

"It's a Mass where there's a lot of singing and there's African garments everywhere," Mahugu said. "Everyone's wearing whatever country they're from and singing songs from their country. I get to hang out with kids who understand what it's to be Kenyan."

Mahugu enjoys attending church because of the variety of style.

"Everyone's hair looks different... everybody's got a style going on," Mahugu said.



With her family, junior Courtney Mahugu visited the Nairobi Animal Orphanage during her trip to Kenya. | Submitted by Courtney Mahugu



# THE CHANGS

Freshman Sophia Chang’s family values cultural food

Growing up as a first-generation U.S. citizen has opened freshman Sophia Chang to two different cultures. Her parents had immigrated from Kaohsiung, Taiwan and with them, they brought the Taiwan culture to their family through food. Inspired by the food in Taiwan, Sophia’s father Scott Chang opened the restaurant Blue Koi to serve traditional Taiwanese dishes.

“It really was a dream of our family to own a business,” Scott said. “We grew up loving the food in Taiwan.”

Blue Koi serves a variety of dishes including authentic noodles and dumplings. Chang believes that traditional food is a significant part of her culture.

“I just like eating Asian food; that’s the biggest thing for me,” Sophia said.

Since food is an important component of her culture, traveling to Taiwan allowed Sophia to taste unique street foods found only in Taiwan and connect with her extended family.

“We always visit mom’s family, and we usually take two weeks to do that,” Sophia said. “They take us everywhere to go to eat a lot of food.”

For Scott, being able to take his children to his native hometown of Taiwan is a worthwhile experience.

“It’s kind of like your parents’



While in Taiwan, freshman Sophia Chang visited the Miaoli Garden. | Submitted by Sophia Chang

“IT REALLY WAS A DREAM OF OUR FAMILY TO OWN A BUSINESS. WE GREW UP LOVING THE FOOD IN TAIWAN.”

sophia’s father scott chang

homeland, so it almost feels like you are coming home,” Scott said.

While Sophia is not able to speak Mandarin fluently with extended family, she is able to comprehend what

they are saying by listening.

“Although I can’t communicate very fluently with them, I still understand things that they’re saying because I’m more of a listener,” Sophia said.

While traveling to her parent’s home town allows her to connect with her culture, Sophia also has outlets to connect with her Asian culture in the community. When she was a child, Sophia attended a Chinese school where her mom was an instructor. Even though she no longer attends Chinese school, Sophia feels that the community there provided her meaningful connection with others similar to her.

“I think that the connection, the relationship with other like-minded Chinese, is the most valuable,” Sophia said.

# THE KAUSHALS

Freshman Amit Kaushal’s family blends American and Indian cultures



With his family, freshman Amit Kaushal enjoys the Festival of Holi. | Submitted by Amit Kaushal

Growing up speaking three languages has always been normal to freshman Amit Kaushal. Kaushal speaks Punjabi and Hindi with his family, and English with everyone else. Both of Kaushal’s parents immigrated to America from Punjab, India, and with them, they brought their language and culture. Kaushal’s mother, Kirana, followed her husband to America seeking a better life and a place to start their family.

“We came to America for a better life. My husband lived here, so I came here with him because I didn’t want to be by myself, and after we moved we didn’t want to go back,” Kirana said.

The differences between Amer-

ican and Indian cultures have also been applied to Kaushal’s life in other ways, like his friendships. Kaushal feels more connected to the friends in his community because of the culture they share.

“I feel like with the friends in that community I can relate to them more since we have the same background,” Kaushal said. “We can crack jokes here and there about our culture.”

The temple the Kaushal’s attend is a place where Kaushal feels really connected with his culture. That is where they celebrate many Hindu holidays, including the most significant, Diwali.

“Our most important holiday is Diwali, the festival of lights,” Kaushal said. “It signifies good always wins

against evil. We go to our temple and we light candles representing light and goodness.”

The Kaushals also celebrate American and Christian holidays, like Thanksgiving and Christmas, but for family purposes rather than religious reasons. Kirana’s reason for this was simple.

“I FEEL LIKE WITH THE FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY I CAN RELATE TO THEM MORE.”

freshman amit kaushal

“We celebrate both and there’s nothing wrong with that because we are living here, and now we’re mostly American,” Kirana said.

Kaushal believes attending services at his temple, his mother’s cooking and speaking Punjabi has helped him embrace and keep his culture alive, which he hopes to continue to do.

“I want to pass it down to my kids and I want my kids to pass down to their kids because I want to keep it going,” Kaushal said. “My parents kept it alive and that’s what I want to do too because it’s my roots.”

## LOOKING INTO LANGUAGE

Comparing the written language of English, Punjabi and Mandarin

ENGLISH	PUNJABI	MANDARIN
hello	ਸਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ	你好
thank you	ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਧੰਨਵਾਦ	谢谢你
i love you	ਮੈਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ	我爱你

## THE BIGGER PICTURE

Locating Toor, Anderson, Chang and Kaushal’s parents’ native cities

PUNJAB, INDIA  
TOOR & KAUSHAL

KAOHSIUNG, TAIWAN  
CHANG

OTHAYA & CHINGA, KENYA  
MAHUGU





# ROOTED RECIPE

Senior Nico Gatapia makes a traditonal Filipino dish with his grandmother's recipe



Working together, senior Nico Gatapia and his father Ramulus make Kaldereta. | **Andrew Tow**

**ZACH SHRADER**  
reporter/photographer

Kaldereta, a traditional Filipino stew, makes senior Nico Gatapia feel closer to his culture. Nico's family uses recipes passed down through family members from the Philippines.

"I get to experience my family's cul-

ture without visiting the Philippines. Food is the only thing that connects me with my family's culture," Gatapia said. "Filipino food offers variety and I feel bad for people who don't have access to authentic ethnic cuisine."

According to Nico's father, Ramulus Gatapia, he started teaching Nico to cook so he would be able to take care of himself and connect to his Fil-

ipino history.

"We've been teaching Nico [to make Filipino food] since seventh grade, at the same time we started teaching his sister Camille, so that they develop cooking skills as well as be in-

**"I CAN EXPERIENCE MY FAMILY'S CULTURE WITHOUT HAVING TO VISIT THE PHILIPPINES."**

senior nico gatapia

dependent when they attend college," Ramulus said. "It's also to strengthen their sense of Filipino identity."

Nico hopes to continue the tradition of making Filipino food with his kids.

"I'd like to continue cooking Filipino food in my future. If I have kids, I'll pass it down to them so they can experience the same culture," Nico said.

## MAKING A MASTERPIECE

Nico Gatapia shares his family's recipe for a batch of Kaldereta from the Philippines

### GROCERY LIST

- 7 lbs. beef roast, 1.5 inch chunks
- 2 diced tomatoes
- 3 diced onions
- 5 medium potatoes, rough cut
- 5 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 tbsp. whole black peppercorns
- 2 "glugs" of soy sauce
- 2 lbs. carrots, cut 1 inch chunks
- 2 large bell peppers, cut 1 inch
- 1 can black olives, drained
- 1 can green olives, drained
- 1/4 C white cooking wine



After browning the meat, senior Nico Gatapia dices a tomato to add to the dish. | **Andrew Tow**

### DIRECTIONS

- 1 Brown beef in oil. Add water if not cooking fast enough.
- 2 Add white cooking wine, onion, tomato and bay leaves.
- 3 Continue to cook for 5 minutes.
- 4 Add salt, peppercorns, soy sauce, tomatoes, sauce and water.
- 5 Add salt and soy sauce to taste.
- 6 Add half of the bell pepper chunks so the flavor will absorb.
- 7 Add one-inch chunks of potatoes and carrots.
- 8 Add bell pepper and olives just before serving.



Kaldereta, a traditional stew in the Philippines, consists of meats and vegetables. | **Andrew Tow**

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# We Asked You

## HOW CAN MILL VALLEY BE MORE INCLUSIVE OF STUDENTS OF COLOR?

"HAVE A MORE  
DIVERSE STAFF"

"ENSURE A FRIENDLY  
AND ACCEPTING  
ENVIRONMENT FOR  
EVERYONE"

"CREATE CLUBS FOR  
DIFFERENT CULTURES  
AT OUR SCHOOL"

"LEARN MORE ABOUT  
DIFFERENT CULTURES  
IN HISTORY CLASSES"

"ACKNOWLEDGE  
BLACK HISTORY  
MONTH"

"TEACHERS SHOULD  
BE MORE AWARE  
AND RESPONSIVE  
TO RACIST  
COMMENTS"

"CREATE AN  
ENVIRONMENT  
THAT SUPPORTS  
DIVERSITY  
WITHOUT  
FORCING IT"

\*anonymous responses  
from student survey