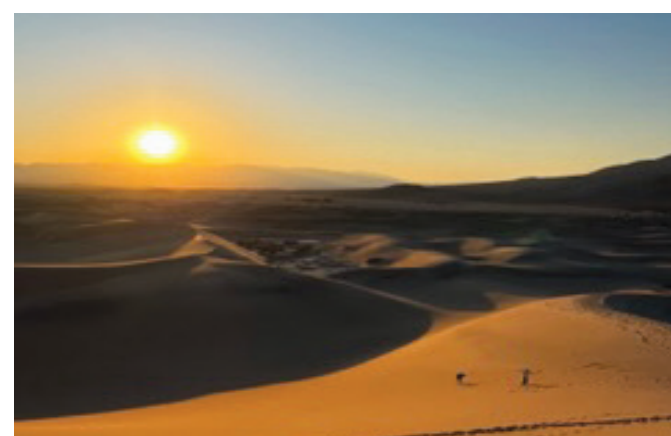


HIGH SCHOOL TRIPS RETURN

Students travel across the West Coast to Tahoe, Death Valley and Ashland, Oregon

Students recently traveled throughout California and Oregon to participate in cultural experiences ranging from Shakespeare plays to sand dune hikes. The trips, from Oct. 11-14, offered hands-on learning and gave students an opportunity to build stronger relationships with their classmates in new environments.



STORY BY SAMHITA KUMAR;
PHOTOS BY REHAN AFZAL,
LAUREN LU, GARRETT XU AND
SIMONE DEBERRY

Freshmen traveled to Heavenly Valley Lodge in South Lake Tahoe, where they participated in team building activities, learned about the effects of the Caldor Fire and practiced basic camping skills.

"On our first night, we teamed up to make a dish to present to our instructors and whoever won would get a prize on the last night of the week," freshman Daniel Holz said. "Rehan (Afzal) and I made some amazing tacos and got second place."

Freshman Ava Dunham, along with her roommates Ashly Omalu and Lillian Wang, prepared pasta dishes. Dunham made risotto, while Wang presented spaghetti.

"I'm not bad at cooking, and I make it every Sunday," she said. However, she ran into some problems. "I ended up burning two batches of my grandmother's risotto, which infuriated me to no end because I wasted all my green onions."

After a third try, Dunham was able to present a successful risotto.

"It was a lot of fun," she said.

The sophomore class visited multiple sites across Southern California. They spent days in Death Valley, the Manzanar National Historic Site — the site of a Japanese internment camp — and the Paiute reservation in Bishop.

"The visit to Manzanar was really eye opening," sophomore Cara Shin said. "It really gave me a new perspective on the people who lived there."

Sophomore Irene Jung enjoyed the trip to the Paiute reservation, where students visited a museum.

"We could make bracelets and stuff out of the wood," she said, referring to activities inside the museum. "We could also do a little scavenger hunt inside."

However, Jung's favorite part of the trip was the sunrise hike in Death Valley.

"It was tiring, but the view was really cool because the sunrise would be really

pink and orange and blue," she said. "It would be all sorts of colors."

The upperclassmen saw five plays from various eras at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon. They also explored the small town, with free rein to enter the shops and restaurants of downtown Ashland.

Junior Julie Tsoi, a tarot enthusiast, had her cards read for the first time.

"I was walking down the street, and I saw a store that said 'Vintage something and Oracles,'" she said. "I was like, 'Wait, what if they do readings?'"

Tsoi was escorted to the basement of the shop, where a woman used three tarot decks to read her future.

"I told her what I was thinking," she said. "I was like, 'I feel like my life is really chaotic right now. And, I just need to know what's going on and like how to move forward.'"

The reader had her place her hands on the cards and think about the questions

she had asked, Tsoi said. The first two decks the reader used answered her initial questions.

"I had to decide, 'What memories do I need to let go of and what memories do I need to keep?'" she said, recounting the words of the tarot reader. She was advised to take time for herself and focus on the ripple effect of positive actions.

The reading closed with advice for any upcoming decisions in Tsoi's life.

"Then she drew a couple of cards that helped explain what I should do to make these decisions and what would help me make the right decisions."

Students also had time to bond with classmates.

"My favorite part of the trip was getting to hang out with all my friends," senior Shakhzoda Khodzakhonova said.

"It was one of the freest feelings. I met so many cool people and got really close with so many people in our grades."