

Graffiti

For Good

By: Scott Sunderland

Without learning about the past we are doomed to repeat it.

Mr. Apuzzo taught a lesson in his classes about the history of the swastika symbol.

In this lecture he explained the past usages of the symbol and how it used to be a symbol of health and prosperity prior to being used as a hate symbol. He then explained his history with antisemitism and asked the class to raise their hands if they had ever experienced hatred for their ethnicity, gender identity or sexuality. Most if not all students raised their hands at some point.

At the end he had one of his students read the poem *First They Came For the Jews* by Martin Niemöller, a German theologian. The poem's theme focuses on how not standing up for others when it doesn't directly impact someone has a way of coming back around to impact them.

After the reading of this poem Mr. Apuzzo talked about how swastikas are used now and how to fight against hatred and other bigotry.

"To show that hatred will not win" Mr. Apuzzo put the desk at the front of class and asked his class to cover the desk in positivity. Students covered the desk in positive notes and images. "I am glad the teacher actually talked about it instead of just ignoring it," Salem Herring said. "I felt very enlightened when Mr. Apuzzo taught us the history," Lauren Bautista said.

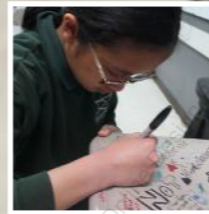
Mr Apuzzo said he loved how the desk had turned out and hoped that after the lessons he taught something like this would never happen again. By the end of the day the desk was beautifully covered in positive messages, hearts and other drawings that spread the positive message.



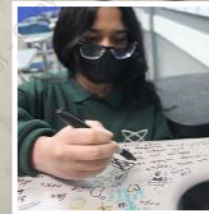
write on the desk?



Raul Gomez Silva
"Uh pretty basic stuff like hate always loses."



Lauren Bautista
"I wrote shine your light upon the world"



Bonnie Zaman
"I put a quote, I don't remember what but I made it pretty."

The desk was originally at the front of the class but was then moved to next to the door for viewing as a constant reminder.