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Cleveland's faculty groups hustle to find harmony

BY JAY KENT
Staff Reporter

The final bell rings and hallways empty to be populated solely by remaining teachers and staff members. The school day may have just ended for students, but some Cleveland staff members are only partially through their work day. Faculty members group together to discuss different issues that may be plaguing the student body.

The Race and Equity team was founded three years ago, championed by humanities teacher Sonya Urs, who balances leading discussions in the classroom with overseeing the team.



Sonya Urs leads Cleveland's Race and Equity team.

"It's a lot of work, but it's work that I like doing, and it's work that brought me to teaching, so I don't mind doing the work," said Urs. "Simply put, our goal is to address issues of race and equity in our school."

There are currently about 15 members on the Race and Equity team comprised of staff members from different sectors of Cleveland. SoED Assistant Principal Ray Morales is one of the administrative team's representatives, along with SoLS Assistant Principal Catherine Brown. Morales is pleased by the team's attendance.

"The fact that we have consistent participation by passionate folks showing up to the Race and Equity team, it speaks to the dedication that our teachers here at Cleveland have," he said.

On the other side of the administrative team, Brown regularly attends meetings of the more recently founded staff group named Aspiring Allies, introduced in the winter of 2016.

"[Aspiring Allies] is designed to be a space where white folks can help each other learn about race and racial identity... and by coming together in this way, we hope to minimize the harm that we do and also minimize the harm that gets done to educators

EXODUS 98118

The gentrification of South Seattle

Light rail attracts new businesses while forcing out longtime residents



YEN NGUYEN

The light rail zips past new apartment buildings in Othello on Nov. 17. The Othello Plaza was one of the first areas to see a change in demographics after the light rail was installed. Property values in the neighborhood have drastically increased since 2009.

BY ELLIOTT HERNANDEZ SEBASTIAN
Staff Reporter

A vegan coffee shop here, a Pagliacci's there, a PCC around the corner. The changes are subtle until they're not. One day, when you're waiting for the light rail in front of the Columbia City station, it hits you: Where did all these white people come from?

During the past 10 years, Seattle has seen a rapid increase in new businesses, new housing and new faces. The installation of the light rail has been a catalyst for the onslaught of growth across the city, particularly in the south end. Some might call it progress, but others see it as the gentrification of south Seattle.

The class of 2018 was approximately nine years old in 2009, when the light rail drew a line through the Beacon Hill, Columbia City and Rainier Beach neighborhoods. The new train brought easy access to downtown and the airport; it also brought more white people.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, everything south of Interstate 90 and east of Interstate 5, with the exception of the area along Lake Washington from Mount Baker to Seward Park, increased from an estimated 64,776 people in the 2006-2010 period to an estimated 70,216 people in the 2011-2015 period. (Those figures are five years of population data averaged out). Whites in the same area increased from 20.7 percent to 23.1 percent of the total population in the same period. The white population grew from 13,426 to 16,237 - a growth rate of 20.9 percent. That is more



BRANDON TRUJILLO

With an average household rent of \$2,000, owners Jose Rodriguez and his wife Leona Moore-Rodriguez say their business is the only reason why they've been able to stay in Beacon Hill. "If we didn't have The Station, and we were not making the money we're making here ... there's no way we could pay that."

than double the rate of growth for the total population, which was only 8.4 percent.

Whites in north Beacon Hill, Beacon Hill and Columbia City increased much faster than those located in south Beacon Hill, Othello and Rainier Beach areas. In fact, some of those areas showed a

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decline in the white population during this period. While these numbers do not reflect the most recent census data, they do reflect the changing demographics of the south end.

Out with the old, in with the new

In addition to the changing cityscape, the average cost of rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Seattle has more than doubled since 2011, making it one of the most expensive places to live in the nation. Columbia City was listed in the top 10 neighborhoods for the highest average one-bedroom apartment rental in Seattle.

The light rail provides an easy way for people in Tukwila and Burien, who may have been forced out of south Seattle because of rising real estate prices, to still have access to the city. But even in its convenience, the train also brings a more homogeneous crowd to the diverse south end.

Natasha, who is white and asked that her last name be withheld, is a light rail rider who boards at the Beacon Hill station. She acknowledged her role in the gentrification cycle.

"I'm actually new to the neighborhood, and I feel like I am part of gentrification because I am moving into another area that I am not familiar with," she said. "But I was also pushed out of areas that I wish I could be living in."

Another rider, Stephen Bucheit, agreed with the claim that the light rail drives gentrification.

"The fact there are more people who are using it, tells you that something changed," Bucheit said.

Students have it a bit easier when taking the light rail, as Seattle Public Schools provides them with a free ORCA card. But for people on a fixed income, a \$3 or \$4 round trip can add up over time.

"For people who can't afford [an] ORCA card or a train ticket ... it's quite expensive. People don't have enough money for that," said Biniyam Mamo, a Cleveland senior.

Beacon Hill was once considered to be one of the most



BRANDON TRUJILLO

A barista tends to the register at The Station coffee shop in Beacon Hill on Dec. 5. The shop is a popular hangout for neighborhood dwellers and commuters who use the light rail.



LYDIA SOURICHANH

A statue of Roberto Maestas, founder of El Centro de la Raza, sits in the plaza is named after him on Beacon Hill. El Centro de la Raza provides a blend of social services and advocacy that results in stronger, more effective programs. Maestas was a leading advocate for social justice and fought for social change around the city. He died in 2010.

diverse neighborhoods in the nation, but during the past few years, this has become less true.

"We have a lot of white folks that have been moving into Beacon Hill because obviously they've been pushed from other neighborhoods," said Jose Rodriguez, who owns The Station, a local coffee shop on Beacon Hill, with his wife Leona Moore-Rodriguez.

The couple has seen the effects of gentrification directly. As Seattle experiences an explosive tech boom, the fallout can be seen in surrounding neighborhoods, including Beacon Hill.

"I think there's a lot of tech companies moving to Seattle, and with that, a lot of people are moving into Seattle from other places," said Rodriguez.

"They're buying all those new developments because they can afford it," said Moore-Rodriguez.

As developers are buying up and renovating homes, businesses are opening in mass, forcing residents out en masse, all while raising the area's property value. With an average household rent of \$2,000, the Rodriguezes say their business is the only reason why they've been able to stay in Beacon Hill.

"If we didn't have The Station, and we were not making the money we're making here ... there's no way we could pay that. We would be forced to move out, especially because we have two kids," said Rodriguez.

They're worried about their neighborhood becoming dominated by whites and how that might affect their kids, who are half-black, half-Mexican males. They also wish that people who move into the area were active in their neighborhood community.

The Rodriguezes feel lucky. They have watched friends, customers and even employees be forced to move out of the neighborhood. They blame it on the lack of rental oversight in the area.

"There's no rent control in Se-



SIBLEIGH JULANDER

Even Cleveland High School can't escape the affects of gentrification. New apartments have taken the place of old houses across the street from the school.

attle, so there's been a lot of increase in rent in Beacon Hill and with that, unfortunately a lot of [people of color] are moving out of Beacon Hill," said Rodriguez.

The Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) is a policy that is meant to ensure that growth does not destroy affordability. The rule requires new developments to designate at least 20 percent of their spaces to affordable housing.

MHA is a good idea but is poorly executed. Land developers hoping to build housing units can avoid putting in rent control units by paying a fee to the city as compensation. This fee will be used to benefit low-income families. City officials have not decided how to effectively use this money, so the funds continue to accumulate in a pot, unused.

Helping and hurting

Ken Anderson is also a local business owner. His son, Max, is a junior at Cleveland. Anderson has lived in Columbia City for almost 15 years and has been operating Full Tilt, a popular ice cream parlor in the neighborhood for almost 10 years.

"Most of Rainier Avenue along Columbia City was all boarded up when we moved here," he said.

Today, the neighborhood is a far cry from Anderson's description. With new businesses - many belonging to a chain - and high-rise apartments going up every day, Columbia City is Seattle's version of Brooklyn. An area that was once considered a blight is one of the city's hottest commodities. Even when faced with

competition from Molly Moon's, a bigger ice cream chain that recently moved into the neighborhood, Anderson believes that gentrification has been good for his shop.

"Certainly, business has increased with population increasing, so I think that it has had ... a positive effect," Anderson said. "Having family-friendly businesses in walking distance helps because then you have other businesses drawing other people into the neighborhood and they might spill over and buy your product." Anderson also credited his success to loyalty from long-time patrons.

"We also have a very loyal customer base," he said. "We've been here for almost 10 years, and a lot of people feel very loyal to us, so we've been feeling a lot of that community support also."

Reign Concept Salon is a black-owned shop on South Ferdinand Street in Columbia City, catering to African Americans as curly hair specialists for eight years. The owner, Turner Yarbrough, employs several stylists who focus on black hair but can work with hair textures as well. When asked about his take on the gentrification of the south end, Yarbrough said he embraces it.

"I lived in the Seattle area almost all my life, and I have seen the change, but I welcome it," he said. "It's a bigger opportunity for black people to access jobs since more people are opening stores and shops around the area."

Yarbrough said there are three other successful, black-owned businesses in Columbia City: Allstate Insurance, Columbia City Fitness Center and Island Soul Restaurant. In addition to mutual success, they also support each other and work together in a community-driven way.

"There is no competition," Yarbrough said. "We all work together well and depend on each other. We do what we can do to maintain the support."

Yarbrough said that even though there are other salons and barbershops in the community, it's not hard to bring customers in.

"We specialize in all types of hair, and it's better for our business ... since we can do anyone's hair there really isn't any competition."

Bitter aftertaste

Gentrification isn't as kind to some people as it is to others. Chevas "Chev" Gary, a Restorative Circle coordinator at Cleveland, is one such individual who got the short end of the stick. Gary was a resident of Columbia City before leaving for reasons that stretch beyond economics.

"For me, [gentrification] feels really disgusting ... it makes me feel dirty," Gary said. "That was one of the biggest reasons I wanted to move. It wasn't just about a financial piece."

Gary said he no longer felt like Columbia City was his home; it felt like it was another person's home. He had lived in the neighborhood for more than eight years and has lived



EDEN MORRISON

A local mother and her son enjoy an ice cream cone from Full Tilt Ice Cream in Columbia City on Dec. 3. The business has four locations open in the greater Seattle area and has been in Columbia City since 2009.

Teachers, students try to make the most out of advisory

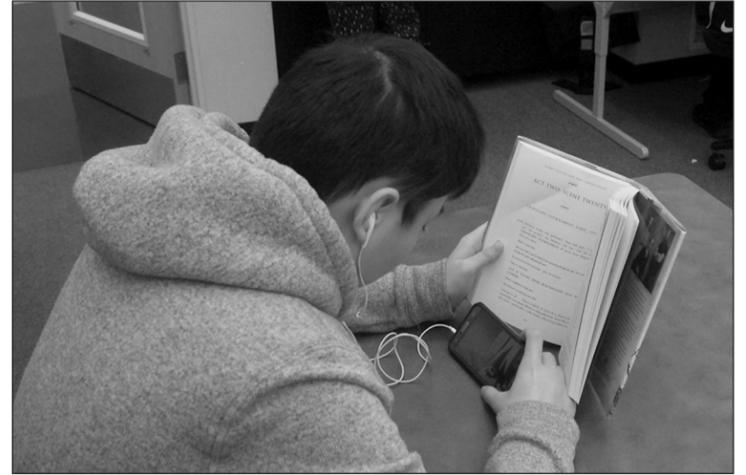
BY DEVONTE REDDICK
AND JORDAN O'NEAL
Staff Reporters

Advisory. You can see students' eyes roll at the mention of the 20-minute period. Most students wonder why Cleveland has advisory, with a large number of kids using it as a second lunch period. But some students are taking advantage of the extra period.

The advisory class, listed as "mentorship" on student schedules, gives students the opportunity to build community in a small-group setting. Students are assigned an advisory their freshman year and remain with that teacher and group throughout high school. The teachers are supposed to check in with students about their grades and other matters that may be hindering them academically. It's also meant to give students a chance to stay ahead of their schoolwork. Students can earn a half credit per year for the class. "I like advisory and think it's a good thing to have because it gives me time to get work that I missed or was getting done before the due date," said freshman Kathryn Capers. "And it gives me time to go to the teacher who assigned it to me and ask them for help."

Capers isn't alone in her views. Most freshmen, who meet with their Link Crew leaders during advisory, find the period useful for socializing. Students like Mitchell Moss and Jack Reddick like that it gives him extra time to hang out with friends, but also offers a support system. "The Link Crew members teach us about what they've gone through and what they messed up on and make sure we don't make the same mistakes," he said.

"I like being able to talk to my friends," said Moss, a sophomore. "I feel like it's a good place



DUKE PETERSON

Sophomore Calvin Zeng watches a video on his phone instead of doing his silent reading during in his advisory class on Dec. 1. Most students use advisory for its intended purpose while others see it as a waste of time.

for me to ask for help and get to know things better, instead of not doing it and not learning anything."

According to their contract with Seattle Public Schools, teachers are not necessarily required to teach during this period, but some teachers do assign work to students during their advisory. Language teacher Lauren Stark serves as Cleveland's union representative for the Seattle Education Association. She said there are restrictions on how many subjects a teacher can teach.

"The limitations to mandatory advisory lessons are related to a specific part of the contract. And that is the section on workload," Stark said.

She explained that Seattle Public Schools secondary teachers can have no more than three different course preparations in no more than two subject fields, but the contract does not keep teachers from teaching advisory at all.

"The bargaining agreement or contract ... also does not say that teachers can't exceed a number of courses for students, but it does set limits to the number of classes that teachers can set curriculum for," Stark said.

While some teachers use the 20 minutes as a planning period, others provide a more structured advisory schedule.

"I have a pretty strict advisory," said Rebecca Williams-Leach, a 10th grade Humanities teacher.

"I require that everyone comes, but Tuesdays they need to have a grade check-in; Wednesdays we do independent reading the whole time; Thursdays is study hall."

Williams-Leach ends the week with another check-in.

Teachers like Kathy Mayeda and Greg Kowalke like to keep their students busy.

"I always have my students in my class do something, even when they say they don't have any work," said Mayeda. "I give them work ... so they just don't [sit] around in class not doing anything while the rest of the class is working."

Kowalke, who teaches science, also gives assignments in his advisory, but takes suggestions from the class.

"I have my students ... do some type of work because it is required that I teach them something in advisory," he said. "Usually I ask my students what they want to be learning and doing in my class."

Students who have complaints about advisory do have an outlet. Stark suggested that students could hold themselves accountable and take matters into their own hands.

"I would suggest making a proposal through student government and then bringing that to the Building Leadership Team," Stark said. "They usually help develop the plans for advisory."



EDEN MORRISON

Members of the Filipino Club raise their hand during a meeting on Nov. 27, in Room 2264. The group meets on Mondays to share and learn more about their culture.

CHS clubs fighting against low membership

BY ANDREW CORNEL
Staff Reporter

Cleveland has several clubs to offer for the students, but many clubs remain inactive because of low turnout. Some students prefer to not do anything after school in favor of relaxing at home. Clubs offer students a way to earn service hours, meet new people and try new things.

The Library Club didn't get a large turnout of students signing up. Senior Jessica Apilado, the club's president thinks social media and advance technology is the blame.



Jessica Apilado is the Library Club president.

"I feel like people don't have enough time to read and enjoy a book as they used too," she said.

Key Club had a much larger turnout. Sophomore and club president Justin Nguyen said he joined because he could "meet a lot of new people make a lot of new friends."

Key Club has always had a high number of participants, but the group is made up of mostly freshmen and sophomores graders.

"When you're in ninth and tenth grade, I feel like you're more open and you're more active," said Nguyen.

When the district converted

to later start times, most of the focus was put on athletics and the late practice and game starts. There was little discussion about what it would do to after-school activities.

"That is the most problematic thing I've seen ever since we started doing school very late," Apilado said.

Nguyen thinks clubs don't do a good job of promoting themselves. A few clubs have signs hung around the school; students learn about other clubs by word of mouth.

"Some clubs don't really give them the good reasons why to join clubs ... like join this club because you get hours," he said.

Clubs provide a way for students to have fun after school or spend more time with friends while also learning a new skill or becoming more knowledgeable about a particular culture. Apilado said clubs help student enjoy the things they find interesting instead of putting all the focus on academics.

"You need a balance," she said. Students who are looking to join a group that doesn't exist can start the club by talking to Activities Coordinator Bryan Gordon in Room 2264.



Justin Nguyen is the president of Key Club.

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in south Seattle since childhood. He previously lived in an apartment above the Starbucks on the corner of Rainier Avenue South and South Edmunds Street. Gary could watch the gentrification unfold from his window.

"I definitely saw a lot of physical transitions, like established businesses that had been around for decades, that had owned by people of color, that a lot of us grew up being patrons to, and our parents grew up being patrons to," he said.

Gary was saddened to see businesses and the patrons that

were a vital part of the community disappear because they could no longer afford to live in the neighborhood. He and his wife moved to the Renton area.

Columbia City isn't the only area being gentrified. Many areas along the path of the light rail are also being affected; Rainier Beach and Othello are also facing rapid gentrification.

"You see more development, much more higher rises like down in Rainier," said Karl Hubbs, a light rail rider who boards at the Othello stop. "I mean, down here isn't a great area and now they have all those condos that are like half a million each, so they built them after the

light rail was put in."

With gentrification so widespread in south Seattle, it was only a matter of time until it influenced Cleveland students, many of whom live in the 98118 area code and Beacon Hill. Gary talked about how he kept a list of students whose families had been pushed out by high rents and had to leave



Restorative Circle Coordinator Chevas "Chev" Gary moved to Renton after spending most of his life in the south end.

Cleveland because they didn't live close enough to the school. Some of those students - if they moved back - were not able to get back in since Cleveland is a choice school.

"These students have been displaced from our community," he said. "Some of the students found a way to use the system to get back, but some students never came back to Cleveland High School."

Stay woke

Like most people, junior Richelle Robles didn't notice gentrification until it was already in motion.

"I never realized it until, like,

this one time in the morning," Robles explained. "I do this program, and I just thought 'there was a lot of white people in the train station.'"

Robles defines gentrification as "the rich kicking the poor out, but the rich are usually white people." She pointed out that there are two, new buildings in front of Othello Station. "The only people who can afford it is white people."

Robles sees gentrification as an attack on culture in a neighborhood.

"It'd be weird to say in 10 years, 'Remember when there was McDonald's there, and now there's a Whole Foods.'"