

Sidney Li  
Lakota East Spark

Throughout this school year, I was one of the editor in chiefs, team and individual in-depth editor, culture editor and survey coordinator for the Lakota East Spark. Through these positions, I was able to easily maneuver and write these stories that pertained to my school demographic and community.

One of the stories that I was able to write was my women in-depth that focused on the women in my school from various backgrounds and interests along with the news peg at the time—the second annual national women’s march. With the #TimesUp, #MeToo and other advancements that women have made throughout history occurred, I felt that it was necessary to have a story about them. Writing on such a vague topic like this was a struggle but with all the different sources—professors, athletes, organizations, professionals, mothers and students—I was able to fully grasp the true essence of women and the true treasure of them. I learned that having professionals talk about these issues is much more reliable than the “average joes.”

Another in-depth that I wrote was on the divide between the American public on various topics, such as the NFL knee stance, church vs. state, dropping out of high school, race and other topics. This story was prominent to me as it was an universal idea on how our country is divided to this day but there wasn’t a news peg on it until taking a knee during the pledge in NFL became a major issue. Similarly to the women’s story, I talked to spokespeople, professors and numerous other bluebooks that can give me a complete idea on this issue. One of the things that I learned with this “Divide” story was how no matter how vague or non-timely the issue is at hand, there will always be a story as long as you have your sources and reporting. That’s the job of the journalist, to share the story with the public—even if they don’t want or know about it.

I wrote about the gender identity and expression policy failing in our school district; which meant that it was not universally acceptable for transgender students to use the preferred bathroom or change their student ID along with other issues. This watchdog story was a news brief that had to be succinct but tell everything that was necessary. I learned how to prioritize the importance of reporting with the inverted pyramid and make sure the beginning told the who, what, when, where, and how in a timely manner. Whilst writing this news story, the issue was ongoing so there were follow-ups that my staff wrote in later issues so we had to create a standing head in our design, which I also learned how to do.

Similar to my women’s indepth, I focused on the increased presence that women had in politics in another issue at both the local, state and even federal levels within our country. This story was important to me while writing it because it was near the primary election date and I wanted to showcase how women were taking more positions at a record-breaking level than ever before. This issue about the lack of women in politics was prominent and I learned that contacting politicians is a lot longer than contacting other professors due to their busy schedule and as it was during campaign season, finding time to meet up in person as well. Despite that issue, I was able to FaceTime or physically meet up with these female politicians and let them tell me their story and futures with politics.

Following the numerous protests that have taken place this year involving gun culture and school shootings, I wrote about the gun culture within our conservative community and how it affects the members along with some who oppose it by protesting at national events. Since this issue has taken place over a long period of time, finding a starting point for this issue was arduous as it was such a controversial topic; however, keeping this story as objective as it could be was even more tough too, since there are many polarizing perspectives on this topic. Yet, finding sources throughout this whole spectrum was the goal since it would’ve maintained a fair voice for everyone on gun culture.



# 1 women

noun | wom•an | \ 'wü-mən

1. a person who has power, beauty and the ability to do whatever they aspire to be

Society has been portraying women as subordinate to men in various mediums throughout history; however, women have recently gathered more than ever in order to break down these societal barriers and taken a stand.

**story** sidney li  
**photography** vivian kolks, richard giang, meredith niemann and used with permission  
**art** tyler bonawitz, sidney li and charis williams



L to R: East junior Amali Zade, East junior Haleigh Collins, East senior Hannah Ackerman, East junior Jada Ingram and East senior Joyce Jiang

“I’ve seen better cabinets at Ikea” one sign yelled. “Girl Pwr” one sign proclaimed and finally, “The Future is Female” stated another.

More signs and chatters bombarded these streets on a chilly Jan. Saturday morning. Surrounded by poster boards that are brightly clad with synonymous phrases of empowerment, East senior Hannah Ackerman continued to march on around the closed streets of downtown Cincinnati with hundreds of other spectators packed into a vibrant, constant throng.

Adrenaline ran through her veins. Despite the diversity of people in gender, age, ethnicity and income, they all were united as one for one cause—equality. She pumped her fist up towards the sky, proud of the meaning behind it all.

A year after President Donald Trump’s

inauguration, the second annual Women’s March paved the streets in hundreds of cities across the United States (U.S.). And in Cincinnati, Ohio, Ackerman continued to march for the topic that she has always valued deeply for—women’s rights.

“It was super fun and empowering to be in the crowd surrounded by other women and men who are also feminists,” Ackerman says. “It just gave me a lot of hope for the future of this country and the women’s rights movement.”

In a 2015 poll conducted by Vox, 85 percent of people believe in equality for women; however, 18 percent of those same respondents consider themselves as feminists, 52 percent said they were not feminist, 26 percent weren’t sure and four percent refused to answer.

“I have always identified as a feminist for as long as I can remember because a feminist

believes in political, economic and social equality between genders,” Ackerman says. “There shouldn’t be inequality in pay or job positions simply because one candidate might be a woman or a man. Empowerment is beneficial as a whole.”

While the march spurred national attention a year ago, local people have added to the issue through positivity.

At Plains Junior School girl’s bathroom, quotes are found on the walls and stall doors that empower the adolescent girls. This was all created by Special Education Instructional Aide Megan Huss, Child Nutritionist Terri Ogg and English teacher Lisa Silverglade this academic school year.

After the positive phrases, such as “beautiful girl, you can do amazing things” and “be the best version of you” were painted at Plains, other teachers from Monroe Local Schools





**“I SAW HOW THE MARCH IN OUR CAPITAL HAD ALSO GARNERED MORE PEOPLE THAN THE TRUMP INAUGURATION, WHICH OCCURRED LESS THAN 24 HOURS LATER, THIS WAS AMAZING TO SEE PEOPLE UNITE IN NOT JUST OUR COUNTRY BUT THE WORLD AS A WHOLE.”**



A flyer on a lamppost in Washington D.C. stated the information for the first annual Women’s March in 2017

and Edgewood City Schools aspire to spread more positive empowerment within their own respective schools too.

In a Spark survey conducted, 68 percent of 302 students said that they personally identified as a feminist.

Women all around the world protested in the global Women’s March on Jan. 21, 2017 that was meant to advocate policies that regarded healthcare, equal and reproductive rights and more after the presidential inauguration of President Donald Trump.

This single demonstration had an estimated 4.96 million men, women and children participating in the 673 marches in all the United States (U.S.) and 32 countries, according to the Sister Marches website. However, there is also an expected 6 million participants across the globe throughout the Jan. 20 to Jan. 21 weekend.

“Seeing the news on the Women’s March in Washington D.C. not only made me wish that I was there but utterly flabbergasted that we did that,” Ackerman says. “I saw how the march in our capital had also garnered more people than the Trump inauguration, which occurred less than 24 hours later. This was amazing to see people unite in not just our country but the world as a whole.”

Duke University Women’s Studies and Literature Professor Elizabeth Grosz has written and edited books and articles that connect both literature, feminist history and studies. Grosz told Spark that feminism has “improved [with] progress [yet] women have and continue to overcome great odds to be deemed ‘worthy.’”

“Some people who believe that women should not be ‘allowed’ to make decisions regarding their own future is common in the right wing,” Grosz says. “Some press even bash feminists as selfish and crazy, yet today women should be proud to be feminists to act and identify with other women.”

In the 1960s and 70s, social activist and feminist Gloria Steinem had co-founded feminist-themed magazine “Ms.” that succeeded her various acts of fighting for gender equality. Her actions sparked a movement within the U.S. as there was a shift in the view of a woman’s role in society.

However, there are extreme feminists that are called “feminazis,” where “the most important thing in life is ensuring that as many abortions as possible occur,” as radio host Rush Limbaugh popularized in 1992 with his book, “The Way Things Ought to Be.”

This term has led Americans to avoid being affiliated with “feminism” as “society has portrayed that a person who wants equality between genders or a ‘feminist’ [hates men and supports] female privilege,” Grosz says.

According to a 2013 poll conducted by the Huffington Post, 58 percent of Republicans view the term, “feminist”, as mostly negative, whereas only 40 percent of Independents and 20 percent of Democrats do. Then, 42 percent of men view “feminist” to be negative in comparison to the 32 percent of women who do view it to be negative.

Besides JSA, Ackerman is varsity captain of the academic quiz team and treasurer of Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA)-Future Health Professionals club and Medical Club at East. Each of those extracurricular clubs are related to professional fields that have a predominate male presence.

“I have always had a passion with medicine, science, debate, politics and just academics in general,” Ackerman says. “I couldn’t just pick one club over the other.”

Thirty four percent of physicians identify as female, while 0.1 percent are unspecified, according to data on October 2017 from the Kaiser Family Foundation. Along with this, 19.6 percent of Congress is comprised of women, 23.7 percent in statewide elective and

25.1 percent in state legislatures, according to a 2017 report conducted by the Center for American Women and Politics.

As an executive director at southwest Ohio and northern Kentucky for Unitedhealthcare, Caitlin Clipp partnered with the American Heart Association to participate in their Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Goes Red day at Xavier University along with more than 50 local women.

“Unfortunately there isn’t an increased female presence in STEM fields. That is why STEM programs are so important. Women make up half the workforce and half the college educations, but are extremely underrepresented in STEM degrees and jobs,” Clipp told Spark. “They hold less than 25 percent of the STEM jobs in the United States (U.S.) economy [and] 14 percent of engineering degrees go to women.”

KnowledgeWorks Chief Operating Officer Catherine Allshouse had eight out of about 60 people in her graduating class going into technology. Now, in the class that she teaches at the University of Cincinnati, there are eight out of 22 students heading to technology.

“There are more [STEM] jobs than applicants and will be for some time in the future. I’ve honestly never paid much attention to the fact that I’ve worked with more men than women in technology,” Allshouse told Spark. “I just appreciate solid opportunities and intelligent, dedicated colleagues. I know not everyone shares the same experiences, but being a female in technology has never been awkward or a ‘thing’ for me. I’ve enjoyed every minute of it.”

In this past school year, East juniors Cali Hoffman and Lindsay Isom decided to start the Women in Science and Engineering club in order to remind their high school female friends and more that STEM is possible for anyone.





“THIS YEAR, WOMEN ALL OVER THE NATION HAVE SHOWED MAJOR INTEREST IN OFFICE AT VARIOUS STAGES, WHETHER IT IS LOCALLY, STATEWIDE, OR EVEN NATIONALLY.”



One of the Women’s Marches stretched over a 1.2 mile radius in the streets of downtown Cincinnati.

“We want to get people more excited about science. When I was younger, I didn’t know what engineering was,” Isom told Spark. “I think that there’s a stereotype that girls can’t go into [engineering] and we want to break that stereotype. If you don’t know what [STEM] has to offer, you can’t say you’re not into it.”

Ackerman aspires to become a doctor. In preparation for this, she along with East Medical Club and HOSA-Future Health Professionals club President Sophia Seppi and JSA Vice President Kate Harvey hope to inspire their female underclassmen through the club and their leadership roles.

“I hope that women will be able to confidently say that they are in a job field that has equal representation of genders,” Seppi says. “As I’m president of a club that has little women in its job field, there aren’t many female figures that can be looked up to in [the medical field] and I know Hannah will definitely be an inspiration with her determination and efforts.”

Only six percent of chief executive operator positions are comprised of women, according to a 2017 report conducted by the Center for American Progress. Clipp says that there is a lack of female role models in these conventional high positional careers along with gender stereotyping that makes it arduous for women to obtain these positions that men traditionally hold.

“This year, women all over the nation have showed major interest in office at various stages, whether it is locally, statewide, or even nationally,” Harvey says. “I’ve seen this reflected as I have seen more girls attend our

JSA meetings and at annual conventions.”

Even though there is an increase of women presence in many male-dominated job fields and positions of leadership over the past century, women are paid 80 percent of their male counterparts and the projected pay equity won’t occur until 2059, according to a 2016 report by the American Association of University Women.

In Sept. 2017, three former female Google employees sued the company with claims that they were being paid less than their male counterparts. This led to an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor into their pay practices and if they are violating California’s Equal Pay Act.

But San Francisco Superior Court Judge Mary Wiss told Spark that two out of the three former employees could not accurately depict that they had performed a comparable amount of work to the men that allegedly earned more in Dec. 2017.

However, Associate Professor of Business and Economics at the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College Michele D. Kegley told Spark there is a societal acceptance but now backlash on sexual harassment within the workforce and the “gender pay differentiation has become much more apparent these days.”

“There has been a lot of news articles and airtime about the gender pay disparity today but it has been happening for years and years,” Kegley says. “Now people, specifically women are speaking out against this and are having their voices heard about this.”

However, Kegley says that it takes a long

time to have a cultural shift in society. She says that “we are dealing with a practice that has been unspoken yet in place for years and going against that tide to make a change, which may or may not be inevitable.”

On the other hand, there are women who dedicate their lives to raising their children. According to a 2014 Pew Research Center report, 29 percent of women were stay-at-home mothers in 2012, which was a six percent increase from 1999.

There are various reasons as to why women decide to stay at home besides children, such as disabilities, school, or a lack of job availability. Ackerman’s mother Kim Ackerman stays at home and has raised Hannah and her two brothers Ryan and Sean, as they are all triplets.

“I decided to be a stay-at-home mom to my three children because I wanted to take care of them while also being there for their major milestones throughout their childhood,” Kim says. “How could I not stay home when I not only had one child, but three? It wasn’t a choice but I love it and I have no regrets.”

Despite this rise in stay-at-home moms, there are 74.6 million women in the civilian labor field and almost 47 percent of U.S. workers are women, according to a 2017 report from the U.S. Department of Labor.

In that same report, women are the only or primary earners for 40 percent of households with children under 18 today, compared to the 11 percent in 1960. With that, women own close to 10 million businesses nationwide, which results in 1.4 trillion dollars in receipts.

On the other hand, Hannah doesn’t plan on





East swimmer Tara Witkowski swims the breast stroke in 200 yard IA medley.



on focusing on her medical career. But “if I happen to have one, I still want to continue working and not quit my job simply because I have a child.”

“I want to have that independence and ability to do something that I love along with a child, if I were to have one,” Hannah says. “My relatives expect me to have kids when I’m older but it’s just not in my agenda. In the past, women’s roles were child-bearers but now we can do whatever we set our minds to.”

According to a 2014 U.S. Census Bureau’s current population survey, 47.6 percent of women, ages 15 to 44, don’t have children, which is the ultimate high since the bureau has started collecting data from 1976.

Playing sports has always been the norm for Hannah as she has played tennis recreationally and now varsity at East. She has always enjoyed playing sports along with balancing her demanding Advanced Placement classes and extracurriculars.

During her years in tennis, Hannah has noticed the disparity amongst girls and boys sports in terms of popularity and awareness. She says that boys sports always have more supporters at their games along with promotions that girl sports don’t always get.

“Being good at sports questions the way women are supposed to look and do. It questions our cultural ideas of femininity [as] the way women are supposed to act,” Grosz told Spark. “[Sports] affirms that women can be active, can develop bodily strengths and psychological skills needed to be athletes. However, throughout history, women who are feminine are supposed to be the spectators for active young men.”

Yet, by age 14, girls are two times more likely

to drop out of sports in comparison to boys, according to a 2016 report by the Women’s Sports Foundation; due to the 1.3 million fewer opportunities, safety and transportation issues, costs, discrimination and lack of role models.

“After playing softball for more than 10 years for both school, varsity and travel teams, it’s definitely something that I can’t imagine my life without,” East Varsity Softball Centerfielder Regan Butikofer says. “Softball has taught me so much about myself and other girls should have the opportunity to play whatever sport they want.”

Playing sports for adolescent girls provides numerous advantages, such as health benefits, academic success, self-confidence and easier sociability. This can correlate to “potential increases of women empowerment with each other,” Grosz says.

Despite the separation between boys and girls sports in high school, on Oct. 2017, The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) released a statement that said the organization’s board of directors unanimously voted and girls will be allowed to become Cub Scouts and even earn the rank of Eagle Scout, which is the BSA’s highest honor.

Starting on Jan. 2018, girls can join Cub Scout units, which are also known as dens. Also, each local BSA organization can have the choice of having dens for girls and dens for boys. In 2019, there will be another program for older girls that will allow them to earn the rank of Eagle Scout.

Hannah’s brother Ryan was in Boy Scouts for almost seven years; however, he didn’t register this year as he wanted to focus on preparing for college. In his last year as a registered scout, Ryan earned the Eagle Scout rank too.

“Everyone is making a big deal out of it when it is just offering girls the same opportunities as boys. There are already girls in some Boy Scouts programs and letting them be scouts is the next logical step,” Ryan told Spark. “The Boy Scouts, in my experience, allows [people] to gain a more recognized reward, Eagle, [that] can be [an] advantage to them in life.”

According to a 2017 report from Breastcancer.org, about one out of eight U.S. women will potentially develop “invasive breast cancer over the course of her lifetime.” In 2017, an estimated 252,710 new cases of invasive breast cancer [was] expected to be diagnosed in women with 63,410 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer.”

As part of the American Cancer Society’s non-profit organization Relay for Life, East holds an annual overnight fundraiser that helps raise money for research and programs to spread awareness of the disease.

Last year, East’s Relay for Life raised \$68,000 through the efforts of about 650 East students, including East senior and now senior event chair Colleen Flach. She says that their goal this year is to raise \$75,000 with more than 800 students..

“The reason we relay is because people with cancer can’t and we all know someone who has or had cancer. Personally for me, my grandma died from lung cancer and she is what motivates me to keep relaying,” Flach told Spark. “If every student participated in Relay we would raise so much money for cancer and we would help find a cure [as] Relay is really life changing.”

In Oct. 2017, the Trump administration created a policy that employers had the ability to religiously or morally object the Obamacare

“ [SPORTS] AFFIRMS THAT WOMEN CAN BE ACTIVE, CAN DEVELOP BODILY STRENGTHS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS NEEDED TO BE ATHLETES.”



“I NEVER THOUGHT THAT I WOULD SEE A FEMALE SUPERHERO MOVIE BUT WHEN I HEARD ‘WONDER WOMAN’ WAS COMING OUT, I KNEW I HAD TO SEE IT.”



Fans of Wonder Woman can find comics about her and other female superheroes at Nostalgic Ink in Mason, Ohio.

and its birth control coverage mandate for female employees along with other essential health benefits.

This followed the administration’s April 2017 action of defunding \$32.5 million to the United Nations agency for reproductive health in the 2017 budget. However, the State Department said those funds will be used towards similar programs in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

According to a May 23, 2017 post on the U.S. Department of State’s website, President Donald Trump requested 37.6 billion dollars as part of the 2018 fiscal year budget for the State Department and USAID in order to “reflect the president’s ‘America First’ agenda that prioritizes the well-being of Americans, bolsters U.S. national security, secures our borders and advances U.S. economic interests.”

There is no mention of reproductive health in the post; however “this budget will also support our efforts to combat corruption and address threats to good governance, which helps level the playing field for American workers and businesses.”

Even though Hannah is not on birth control, she has friends that are and is “worried that the government will try to regulate or make it harder for women to have access to birth control as it can help my friends with not only their periods but cramps and other things as well.”

In Dec. 2017, Ohio Governor John Kasich signed a legislation that will prohibit doctors from performing abortions when prenatal tests find out that have the fetus will either most likely or have Down syndrome.

This law is intended to be set in place 90 days after Kasich passed it. Physicians could potentially lost their license and the person performing the abortion could face up to a fourth-degree felony charge, but the pregnant mother who wants the abortion will not be held accountable.

Ohio Northern University Professor of Law Joanne Brant is a scholar at Constitutional Law and told Spark that the loss in medical licenses is a “sufficient deterrent to chill most medical professionals, and makes it unnecessary to police clinics.”

“However, since the law is inconsistent with the [Supreme Court of the United States] precedent, and a similar law has been found unconstitutional in Indiana,” Brant says, “I would expect a legal challenge to be filed in Ohio, and for the law to be struck down by the courts, after the state expends considerable taxpayer monies for litigation.”

Similar to this, 40 states in the U.S. currently tax feminine hygiene products as they are “luxury items” and non-necessities. However, in 2016, at least 13 states and the District of Columbia considered proposals to exempt feminine hygiene products from their state sales tax. Then, Connecticut, Illinois, New York and the District of Columbia accepted the proposals.

In a Spark Twitter survey on Jan. 3, 2018, 95 percent of the 99 East Spark Twitter followers say that feminine hygiene products should not be taxed in Ohio.

Despite this, Ohio still continues to tax feminine hygiene products. Democratic House of Representative Brigid Kelly is currently sponsoring House Bill (HB) 61 to exempt

feminine hygiene products from sales tax in Ohio. But this bill was assigned to the House Ways and Means Committee in April 2017 and has not received a committee vote. Eliminating this tax will save the average Ohio woman 632.50 dollars in her lifetime.

At the same time the House Ways and Means Committee was assigned HB 61, they were also assigned HB 116 that proposed for a sales tax exemption for glasses, contacts and other forms of aid for vision but HB 116 was voted then approved by the committee.

“[Women] need these products in order to fully function in our day-to-day lives and having these products and the luxury tax is meant for items that aren’t necessary unlike these products,” Kelly told Spark. “We have had other elected officials and community members coming in to speak at these hearings about their thoughts on the tax of feminine hygiene products since [last] year.”

After being released on June 2, 2017, “Wonder Woman” garnered 103.1 million dollars in just its opening weekend. The popularity of the solo heroine movie showcased princess of the Amazons Diana, who then became Wonder Woman as she saves the world from her evil half-brother Ares.

“Wonder Woman” is one of the few superhero movies that stars a female superhero, after the last comics movie was “Elektra” from publishing company Marvel Comics in 2005. Grosz told Spark “[Wonder Woman] has impacted the Hollywood box office, which may enable other similar movies to be possible [in the future].”

“Growing up, I always have looked and was





**“IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WOMEN FIND, USE THEIR VOICES [AND] DESERVE TO BE HEARD THEN EMPOWERED. WE SHOULD RESPECT AND HONOR THEIR COURAGE IN MAKING PUBLIC THE ABUSES THEY HAVE SUFFERED.”**



A woman holds up “#MeToo” sign at the Cincinnati Women’s March in Jan. 2018.

infatuated with the whole superhero world. I never thought that I would see a female superhero movie but when I heard ‘Wonder Woman’ was coming out, I knew I had to see it,” Hannah says. “Watching that movie and seeing how Wonder Woman killed it, was so extremely inspiring that it left our theatre room in awe when it ended.”

This 150 million dollar production also features female director Patty Jenkins, which is already a rarity within the film industry too. Women account for 7 percent of directors, which is a 2 percent decrease from 2015, and in 2016, 92 percent of films had no female directors, according to an annual report in 2017 by the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film at San Diego State University.

University of California, Los Angeles film historian Jonathan Kuntz has noticed how “Wonder Woman” and Jenkins “will undoubtedly lead to more female superheroes and female directors.”

“The superhero genre was originated by men for boys, but women and girls have played an increasing role in the past twenty years in science fiction, fantasy and superhero fandom,” Kuntz told Spark. “Women have been a huge part of the audience for ‘The Lord of the Rings,’ ‘Harry Potter,’ and now ‘Game of Thrones,’ so it is not surprising that more women are featured in these films and are increasingly part of the creative teams behind the camera.”

In response to the 37 percent of the photographers, 32 percent of hairstylists and 49 percent of makeup artists that were female in their prior year’s issues, Glamour magazine and their 17 international editions decided to

establish a “#PoweredByWomen” initiative with an all female staff.

Now former Editor-in-Chief of women’s magazine Glamour Cynthia Leive says on an online post on Glamour’s website on Oct. 2, 2017 that their “practices were standard for the industry, and the reasons are complex—high fashion, and fashion photography, have been traditionally male dominated—but regardless, we decided we wanted to do better, and raise the presence of female talent on our pages and screens.”

anging from industries such as film, television and theater, 300 women launched an initiative on Jan. 1, 2018 to fight the ongoing sexual harassment and abuse cases found in Hollywood and various blue-collared jobs, called “Time’s Up.”

This initiative will provide a legal defense fund for women who are less privileged, which is backed by 13 million dollars from donations in order for them to be protected from reporting sexual misconduct.

Time’s Up intends to have legislation punish companies that allow harassment to happen and then even using non-disclosure agreements in order to silence victims in their company.

According to the official website for Time’s Up, they have “a request that women walking the red carpet at the Golden Globes speak out and raise awareness by wearing black [with] a drive to reach gender parity at studios and talent agencies that has already begun making headway.”

Time’s Up follows the social media “#MeToo” campaign and hashtag that has numerous high-profile accusations against film and media personalities, prominently Hollywood movie producer Harvey Weinstein

and National Broadcasting Company co-host Matt Lauer along with others.

Many of the #MeToo women who have come forth as victims of sexual harassment are in the entertainment industry, which is one of the reasons why Time’s Up is predominantly focusing on blue-collared female jobs who have also been affected.

Women’s Studies Professor Carol Stabile at University of Maryland has been researching the history of gender, race and class in media institutions. She is also the managing editor of the “Fembot Collective” and co-editor of “Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology”

“I think the hope for #MeToo and #TimeUp is that having high profile women speaking out against sexual violence—which occurs along a spectrum from sexual harassment to sexual assault—will help affect social change for all women,” Stabile told Spark. “It’s important to note that women are describing what’s happening as ‘the reckoning,’ which they mean that men have abused power in these ways for decades and perhaps that now we will stop these abuses.”

Time Magazine’s annual person of the year for 2017 was awarded to “the silence breakers” that include actresses Ashley Judd and singer Taylor Swift along with women from various socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. However, they all have a common belief that ties them together—shedding light on the dire issue of sexual harassment and abuse.

This led to Oprah Winfrey making her speech at the Golden Globe Awards, while generating talk of another possible female presidential candidate.





A “Women are Perfect” sign was used in the Jan. 2017 Women’s March in Washington D.C.

“WE LIVE IN A PATRIARCHAL CULTURE THAT WANTS TO EMPHASIZE THE DIFFERENCES AND INEQUALITIES BETWEEN THE SEXES RATHER THAN THEIR OWN SIMILARITIES.”

University of Arizona Gender and Women’s Studies Professor Patricia MacCorquodale told Spark that she thinks it is great that women are breaking the silence and talking about sexual harassment and abuse.

“It is important that women find, use their voices [and] deserve to be heard then empowered. We should respect and honor their courage in making public the abuses they have suffered,” MacCorquodale says. “Our culture has a long history of blaming the victim. Some people say that women who suffer abuse “were asking for it” in the clothing, act and places. Everyone should be safe in their own bodies. No one should feel unsafe.”

The U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women gathered a list of myths that pertain to sexual violence and harassment, and discredited them with facts. One of the myths was “victims provoke sexual assaults when they dress provocatively or act in a promiscuous manner.”

However, according to the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women, “neither provocative dress nor promiscuous behavior are invitations for unwanted sexual activity. Forcing someone to engage in non-consensual sexual activity is sexual assault, regardless of the way that person dresses or acts.”

Grosz says this stigma of provocative attire has stemmed from the victims of sexual assault and rape “asking for it” with their choice of attire. In a 2005 Amnesty International United Kingdom poll, 26 percent of people said a woman was partially or completely responsible for rape if she was wearing revealing clothing.

“I don’t think that me, wearing a spaghetti strapped tank to school when it was 80 degrees out, would be a distraction to boys in my class,”

Hannah says. “I come to school to learn and further my knowledge for the future and just because my exposed shoulders are out, doesn’t mean my education should be impeded by a boy who can’t stop staring at my skin that he also has.”

In a recent Spark survey, 42 percent of East students believe there are stigmas on some articles of clothing, such as fish nets and crop tops. However, 28 percent believe it is only true sometimes and 30 percent believe this stigma isn’t true at all.

“We live in a patriarchal culture that wants to emphasize the differences and inequalities between the sexes rather than their own similarities. Clothing is one way of socially reinforcing [those] gender expectations,” Grosz says. “For most women, how they look, not only to men, but to other women, with whom they are supposed to compete, is instilled in them as important, and linked to attracting men.”

CVS Pharmacy announced on Jan. 15, 2018, that they will not alter any of the physical characteristics on the photos of their models that would be used on their stores, social media accounts and websites as a way to promote a positive message on realistic body images to their predominate demographic of women.

“Photoshopping is usually used to make people appear more perfect and more conforming to societal standards of attractiveness,” MacCorquodale told Spark. “The problem is that women and girls who see the photos believe that these are real people who look like this and they in turn want to look like this. They are setting a standard for their own appearance that is unattainable.”

Since women are constantly surrounded by advertisements filled with photoshopped models, this can lead to detrimental problems,

such as eating disorders, psychological distress, excess plastic surgery procedures and exercise addictions.

“As a purpose-led company, we strive to do our best to ensure all of the messages we are sending to our customers reflect our purpose of helping people to better health,” Holly from CVS Pharmacy Customer Relations told Spark. “This new [CVS] initiative is to lead positive change around transparency in beauty and allow differentiation between authentic and materially altered imagery.”

According to the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders’ website, there are at least 30 million people in the U.S. ranging from different ages and genders that suffer from an eating disorder and that number increases steadily.

With that, eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness as in every 62 minutes, at least one person dies as a direct result. However, MacCorquodale says that people need to realize that “real people are imperfect [and] come in all sizes and shapes. Beauty is not the cultural standards and can be found in each person.”

Despite the obstacles that women have overcome since the beginning of history, there are many more potential achievements that women will conquer. As for Hannah, she continues to embrace her femininity as it makes her unique.

“I would never want to trade in being a woman. I’m proud of who I came to be and the women who came before me,” Hannah says. “I can’t wait for the day where I am officially out of medical school, which is male-dominated field, and can say that just because I am a girl, doesn’t mean that I can’t do the same thing that guys can do too.” •





# THE DIVIDE

Americans are divided on topics, such as science, race, education, religion, sports and reality.

story sidney li | photo illustration richard giang | infographic michael croy | art mckenna lewis

Instagram feeds are occupied with fact posts on how much time millennials spent on the internet. Snapchat stories are posted with racial slurs. Twitter timelines are saturated with religious distaste amongst users.

Tumblr blogs are shared about high school dropouts being failures. Facebook posts are pinned on profiles with science being trumped by traditional views. For East senior Alex Lemen, she is constantly bombarded with disparity and arguments amongst peers—no matter the topic and platform.

East’s main campus students participated in East’s presentation of social media safety on October 17, 2017. Sophomores, juniors and seniors were informed of the legal and academic consequences of their actions online.

“That presentation made me realize that I see about a couple of posts or tweets a day that are against certain people or groups in disgust and disdain,” Lemen says. “It’s sometimes is tough realizing that these people are the ones that I sit in a classroom with or talk to in lunch on a day-to-day basis.”

Creating an account on Instagram was just the beginning for Lemen as she was exposed to more conflicts around her usual environment. Since Lemen was in the eighth grade, the unlimited access to widespread opinions of millions of users made her aware of polar opinions being a major setback within the American society.

According to the November 2016 Gallup survey, 77 percent of Americans view the United States (US) as divided on the most important values to American’s lives. This survey has taken place over the past 20 years and each one of them report a majority of the results believing the US as divided; however, this year’s survey is the record high.

“Having disagreements is the norm for daily interactions like ‘do you like this’ or ‘why don’t you want to do that?’” Lemen says. “But I know a lot of my classmates and friends who do bring that divide alive.”

When Lemen noticed the beginnings of the National Football League (NFL) players kneeling or locking arms during the national anthem on Twitter and Instagram, she was captivated by the powerful meaning and stance they had.

This led her to research deeper into the issue as she didn’t know much of it. Within a few articles, posts, and tweets, she found President Donald Trump’s tweets regarding the issue and his opinions on it.

According to the First Amendment, kneeling or taking another posture when the national anthem is played, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

However, there is a federal statute in 36 US Code Section 301 that “individuals in uniform,” “members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform” and “all other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart” when the national anthem and American flag are present.

On September 1, 2016, former San Francisco 49ers’ quarterback Colin Kaepernick knelt during the anthem. This led to the Pittsburgh Steelers, Seattle Seahawks, and Tennessee Titans to stay in their locker rooms during the anthem on September 24.

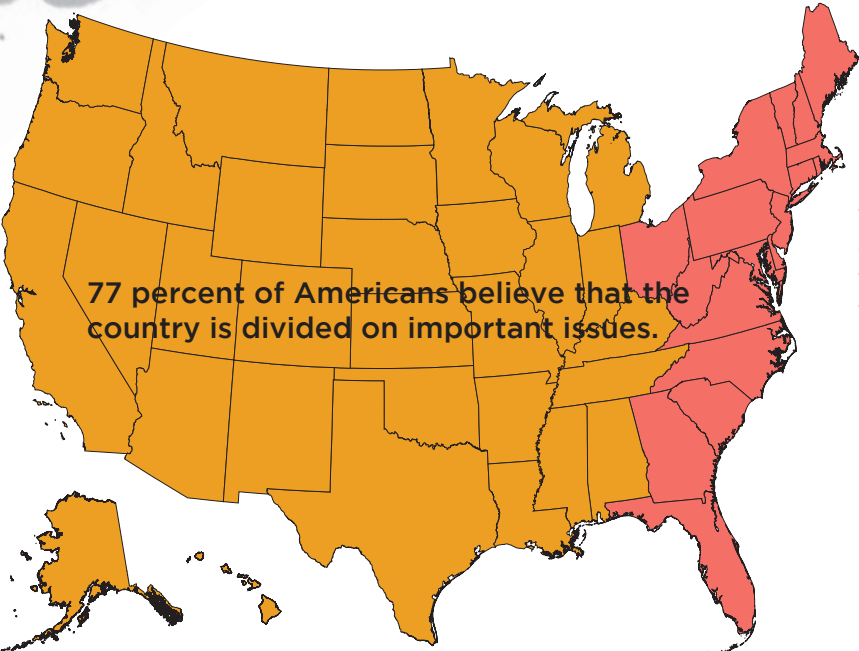
In Trump’s speech at his rally in Huntsville, Alabama on September 2017, he says that when the audience sees players kneeling during the national anthem, “the only thing you could do better is if you see it, even if it’s one player, leave the stadium. I guarantee things will stop. Things will stop. Just pick up and leave. Pick up leave. Not the same game anymore, anyway.”

However, the NFL’s official website NFL.com released an article stating that “The NFL has no plans to mandate players stand for the national anthem, a league spokesman told NFL.com” as “The NFL is





Americans are divided on major issues that affect the country now more than ever.



**sources** pew research center & gallup poll

doing the hard work of trying to move from protest to progress, working to bring people together.”

According to the manager of media relations of the Cincinnati Bengals Pete Schramm, the Bengals released a statement on September 24, 2017, “the day of the Green Bay game, regarding the anthem. It was released following the anthem for that game.”

The Cincinnati Bengals statement says that “football and politics don’t mix easily. Fans come to NFL games to watch great competition on the playing field and that’s where our focus should be.”

In a Cable News Network (CNN) conducted by the Social Science Research Solutions, 49 percent of Americans say that players, who are kneeling during the National Anthem in order to express their political opinion is wrong; while, 43 percent say it’s the right thing to do.

After Trump’s statement in Alabama, high school football players across the nation, such as Evanston High School in Chicago, Illinois; South Park high school in Buffalo, New York and H. Grady Spruce high school in Dallas, Texas kneeled before their own respective games.

In regards to East, East’s athletic director Richard Bryant says that “it is an issue of individual choice. As a school and an [athletic] department it is not something that we have gone into detail about or discussed.”

Miami University professor of sociology

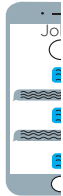
Glenn Muschert says that the US becomes heavily divided at certain times throughout the the years—especially after elections and events that take place on US soil. Also, in an East survey, 64 percent of the 312 students believe that the American public is divided over issues in American lives.

“After this election with an unconventional president and many catalysts for change in society with shootings, marches and others, Americans are torn,” Muschert says. “There is a fresh, reborn, and discrete division today on numerous topics—hence this so called ‘anti’ [on] the internet, science, academia, race, religion, and the media.”

Along with this, 35 percent of Americans say that they used social media and internet as the main source of news for the 2016 presidential election, according to a 2016 survey from Pew Research Center. This has led to an “influx of dependence on the internet and it’s ability as [a] source for information,” Muschert says.

Since Lemen uses her phone about three hours each day, she is able to easily connect with her friends and family without any issues. A drawback, however, is not reinforcing the opportunities to physically hang out with her friends on a regular basis.

Besides that, Lemen uses the internet to take a break or have an “escapism” from her real life’s current situations in order to seek distraction and alleviation. Through her schedule between volunteering, babysitting, and horseback riding, Lemen says that the



**Cell Phone Use:** 51 percent of teens prefer to communicate over the internet rather than in person.



**Religion:** 23 percent of people in the U.S. are unaffiliated with a religion.



**Dropouts:** 49 percent of East students know a person who has dropped out of high school through either friends or family.



**Environment:** 60 percent of Americans are opposed to the recent budget cuts to the EPA.

internet allows her to take her mind off of any stress and anxiety.

“There is a tendency for younger generations to adopt an online medium for communication in comparison to the older generations,” Muschert says. “We have become so dependent on devices that people find it much easier to express themselves than in person, whether it’s due to self-esteem or accessibility.”

Besides using electronics as a medium to communicate over social media, people also use it to text. According to a 2015 report from Attentiv, 51 percent of teens prefer to communicate digitally than in person, even with their friends.

Despite the religious background of her family and the belief of a superior being, Lemen hasn’t fully committed to the faith. While her parents and younger brother attend church, Lemen struggles with aligning herself into Christianity’s core beliefs.

When Lemen was a child going to Sunday school and church services, she always brought coloring books and a distaste for Mass in hand. Sitting in a pew wasn’t appealing to her because her adolescent mind couldn’t comprehend and believe the topics that her family brought her up in.

“Part of me still fights with the Christianity side because growing up, I felt that I had to believe in something. But the science side of me, which is practically all of me, doesn’t,” Lemen says. “I sometimes struggle with my

own self-identity because I am so torn about this [divide].”

While Lemen’s mom Wendy Lemen works as the biology lab manager at University of Cincinnati Blue Ash campus, she equally believes and practices Christianity. Even though there is a separation between church and state, Wendy embraces both concepts uniformly.

“Church and state might have distinct differences [between] each other, but they are concepts that everyone should respect,” Wendy says. “[However], there is a lack of willingness to listen to others opinions and [a] total lack of respect for any opinion that differs from your own [today] especially with science-related jobs like mine and religious beliefs.”

The apathy amongst religions hasn’t fazed Alex as she says there is “a correlation to the closed-mindedness of many of the traditional religions in Liberty Township.” But the lack of religious affiliation is increasing in prevalence amongst people today.

According to a 2016 survey from the Public Religion Research Institute, people today are about four times as likely as people in the past generation to identify as religiously unaffiliated with just over 26 percent.

This number has increased from 14 percent in 2000. Also, 66 percent of people, who report being raised outside a formal religious tradition, continue as unaffiliated when grown up as adults. However, the amount of people, who identify themselves as Catholic is 21 percent; even though, there is a decline of 10 percent in participants.

“There are so many religious Americans who are traditional and [believe there is] a superior being above all us,” Muschert says. “But soon enough, people of different or no religions can become the majority and alter [the] conservative persona of the religious outlooks into the world.”

Even though religion has affected Alex in numerous aspects of her life, her race hasn’t impacted her and her religious beliefs in any way. Alex’s friend and East senior Maggie Lehman has found negative stereotypes to play a crucial role on people disregarding certain races and religions.

“Long held beliefs of one race being superior to another have caused people to use any reason they can to pit people against [others],” Lehman says. “The negative stereotypes [against] every race is very active, while [people are] excusing the behaviors of their own race, even if they’re just as bad.”

The mistreatment of colored races has led to 64 percent of people say that racial tensions have increased over the past decade, according to a November 2015 Kaiser Family Foundation and CNN survey.

Alongside to this, 53 percent of blacks and 36 percent of Hispanics experienced unfair

treatment in the previous month due to their race. Miami University sociology professor Lee Harrington says that this correlates for all races too.

“[There are] certainly stereotypes about different racial-ethnic groups contributing to differential treatment, [such as] stereotypes about Asians being good at math versus stereotypes about [Mexicans] being ‘lazy,’” Harrington says. “In addition, many whites today feel threatened by a rising population of people of color in the US, and use stereotypes as a defense mechanism.”

While Alex believes reverse racism exists, she still “thinks that racism itself is a bigger issue, even though we are one [race], the human race with biodiversity.” But her pertinent belief in science has allowed Alex to openly accept other’s beliefs, whether she agrees or disagrees with them.

When Trump announced the budget cut of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by 31 percent, according to the Trump Administration’s fiscal 2018 budget proposal, both Alex and her friend and East senior Alyssa McDonald was distraught at the blatancy of the presidency not committing to aid the planet and the environment.

Now, the current budget of 8.2 billion dollars would decrease to about 5.7 billion dollars. Of the 349 East students surveyed, 34 percent were aware of this exact deficit and 29 percent knew of it, while 36 percent weren’t even aware of the Trump administration’s cut of the EPA’s budget.

“When I’m grown up and am hopefully a veterinarian in ten to fifteen years, I want there to be advancements and change,” Alex says. “I hope that we could all help each other out since the science community is known to be open of everything, no matter the racial, religious, educational, or financial background of researchers.”

As president and vice president of Lakota Environmental Advocates Forum (LEAF) club Goldina Bristow and Lexi Defillipo believe that Trump should not have the right to “revoke funding of the EPA [as] coal, oil and natural gas in all of its fossil fuel glory, will cease to exist at some point.”

“The companies that sponsor fossil fuels and nonrenewable energies have become so rooted in the fabric of our society, that many doubt the future of our economy without them,” Bristow says. “But when we set a reform



111 Reading Rd, Mason, OH 45040  
(513) 398-2020



Americans are torn. There is a fresh, reborn, and discrete division today on numerous topics—hence this so called ‘anti’ [on] the internet, science, academia, race, religion and the media.

- Glenn Muschert, Associate Professor of Sociology at Miami University

in motion of using harmful materials, these companies are as strong as the government makes them and Trump wishes to give [them] the power they want.”

With 48 percent of Americans believing human activity affect global climate change, 52 percent believe there are no environmental consequences of the 7.5 billion people on this planet today, according to an October 2016 Pew Research Center survey. On top of that, 20 percent of Americans believe there is no evidence of global climate change.

“The EPA was created and stands for protecting people’s health by regulating the amount of hazardous chemicals in the air, water and soil,” Defillipo says. “The lack of perception to see how this [budget cut and] the ignorance is going to affect people’s quality of life.”

After that, Florida governor Rick Scott signed the Florida House Bill 989 or more commonly known, “The Anti-Science bill” on June 26, 2017, after it passed both chambers of the house. Any county resident in the state of Florida can file a complaint about the academic teachings of science in the county’s public school system.

Once the complaint is filed, the school would have to appoint a hearing officer for it. This bill has supporting affidavits that don’t support the lessons in classrooms concerning the topics of evolution and climate change.

After learning about the concept of evolution, global warming and the heat index in biology in freshman year, McDonald’s interest in science was piqued by how much of the world and its history has been affected by it.

Later in her high school career, McDonald took honors anatomy and physiology in her junior year as she wanted to learn more about the human body system. Because of that class, McDonald plans on pursuing neonatal or pediatric nursing.

“Anatomy taught me so much about our human race as I am pro-science,” McDonald says. “There is so much that we don’t know about how influential science is and that isn’t

right. There shouldn’t be a divide on science, even if people are conservative or not.”

Clinical social work and therapist Delvin Hector has experienced and educated human development to his patients over the past 35 years in Cincinnati, Ohio. Hector says that some people “refuse to accept facts in order to relieve themselves and others on the dire, impending issues.”

“It doesn’t matter in what you believe or don’t believe in [with] climate change and science, it’s what are the facts,” Hector says. “It is what it is, but it comes down to who’s in power and can allocate the resources to certain issues. However, some people are accustomed to presenting and arguing their beliefs, whether they are right or wrong that others tend to believe and trust them.”

Out of the 1.87 million bachelor degrees distributed to the 2013-14 college graduates, health professions and related programs and biological and biomedical sciences were one of the highest amounts of degrees with three hundred thousand graduates, according to a 2014 report from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Even though science related programs and degrees are increasing, so is the number of high school dropouts. Researchers at Washington University in St. Louis had a 2014 study that says 11.4 percent of students would drop out if they have to pass six math and/or science classes to graduate than the ones who have to pass two classes, as it is a 8.9 percent dropout rate.

“I joke around that I’d drop out but in reality, that isn’t the case because I need to go to college and get my diploma so I can get into medical school,” Alex says. “Since I aspire to be a veterinarian, college and graduate school is my best bet as I want to be able to make a living doing something that I want. But going straight into the job market out of high school might be others’ aspirations.”

Over 1.2 million students are dropping out of high school every year; that is equivalent to 7,000 students a day or one every 26 seconds,

according to former US deputy secretary of education Anthony Miller at his speech at the Auxiliaries in Ministry Convention in 2011.

“High school dropouts always had this stigma as they were generalized that they were the social failures, who couldn’t manage the strenuous high school curriculum [and] life,” Muschert says. “That isn’t the case for all since we have an increased job marketing field that is now easily accessible for people to get jobs with or without a high school diploma.”

With career technical programs such as Butler Tech, Alex still continues to enroll in the traditional high school route until she graduates with her Ph.D degree in about eight years. She finds herself striving and accustomed to the same method of school that both her parents had pursued.

The divide in views for high school dropouts has always existed just as it is for race, religion, internet and science. Hector says that is one of the reasons why it is con that the US is a melting pot “when you combine how exposed people are to issues, how they were either conventionally or unconventionally brought up and their disagreements, there is bound to be some distaste.”

Not only that, White House press secretary Sean Spicer prohibited reporters from news publications, such as, CNN, the New York Times, Politico, the Los Angeles Times and BuzzFeed, from attending Trump’s daily briefing in February 2017.

This action adhered to Trump’s blacklist of media platforms during his 2016 presidential campaign trail. Similar news outlets, such as, Politico, the Washington Post, Buzzfeed, and the Huffington Post didn’t have the same resources, time and press credentials as other publications in attendance.

The Ohio State University freshman student Erinn Aulfinger was a former editor-in-chief of Lakota East Spark and believes “the current administration mocks the power and importance of the media by blaming qualified journalists for contradicting false material, and spread dangerous misinformation that

threatens democracy.”

“As one of the [former] chief editors of a nationally-awarded student news publication, I experienced first hand the impact journalism has on society,” Aulfinger says. “Access to quality, unbiased information saves lives, stops wars and changes the way individuals interact with their surroundings. Information is the greatest power.”

Of the 293 East students surveyed, 48 percent say that they believe journalists are being mistreated today, whether it is through politicians or society as a whole. Muschert says that some people tend to follow public figures on their opinions without fully doing their research and allows people to bash journalists

without knowing the full story of Trump and the media.

“We have always been [a] divided country, it just hasn’t been as recognized as it is today. We had a civil war in America as we were divided as a north and south,” Hector says. “Now, there isn’t a north and a south but we have large groups of people against other large groups of people, no matter the topic. Hopefully we will resolve our issues and make improvements.”

Whether it is through her phone, friends, conversations and observations, Alex finds herself deluged in the divide. She hopes to find a united front with not only the US and its population but universally in the near future.

“People unite over Sunday night sports,

64% of the 312 East students surveyed believe that the American public is divided over issues in American lives.

memes, vines, posts, Facebook jokes, games, award ceremonies, tweets on Twitter and events,” Alex says. “But it’d be so much better if people could unite over pressing world and domestic issues surrounding and affecting all of us in different forms and shapes today.” •

# UNDER DEITIES OR UNDER OATH

The separation between church and state has been an underlying divide amongst the American public.

story samadhi marapane | \* denotes name change

Pacing the front of his lab equipped classroom, he continues his lecture in a college preparatory chemistry class in hopes of influencing the minds of the high school students in front of him. As his students take notes, he teaches them how to interpret the lab data and evidence they need to form conclusions.

Outside of the brick-walled classroom, the slow beginnings of a nationwide anti-science movement persists. This movement comprises of debates against evolution, human-induced climate change, vaccines, stem cell research and more topics. However, science teachers, such as East Chemistry and Advanced Placement (AP) Physics teacher John Severns, attempt to educate teenagers in those topics.

Before his 15 years as a highschool teacher, Severns worked 11 years as a research scientist and manager at Procter and Gamble. This all stemmed from his continued interest in the science field 38 years ago. Even though he advocated the current status of the internet and all opinions having equal value, Severns also has discontent in the attempts to disprove scientific findings.

“It is ludicrous to equate someone’s gut reaction to the well-reasoned conclusion of someone or a group of people who have studied something for years,” Severns says. “I find it very frustrating when someone says ‘I

just don’t believe that’ and consider that [as] a counterargument.”

According to Professor of the History of Science at Harvard University and author of “Science” and “Anti-Science” Gerald Holton, anti-science is the rejection of the scientific method and that science is an objective method or produces universal knowledge.

For example, climate change, or the gradual increase or decrease in the average temperature of the Earth’s atmosphere and its oceans, is a concept widely believed by scientists across the world. However, according to a 2014 poll by Pew Research Center, only 40 percent of Americans believe in climate change or that it is an immediate threat.

Miami University Justice and Community Studies Professor John Forren focuses on the fields of civic engagement and political science, and says that the challenges of some of the basic premises, methods and finding of the scientific community are not new in American politics.

“[The anti-science movement] is a very troubling thing because if we as a nation are going to solve our problems, we need to be able to agree on what the basic ‘facts’ are—about climate change and about a broad range of other social, environmental and cultural issues,” Forren says. “America’s success as an economic powerhouse has been based largely

on our ability to innovate and solve problems through science and technology.”

Even though atheism endorses science, the theory of evolution is still controversial between many types of atheists and religions. Whissel believes that the teaching of creationism over evolution in classes is strictly religious based and is refuting the scientific findings about evolution.

“It is certainly a concern when many Americans don’t believe in the findings of scientific experts,” Forren says. “It is going to take a big effort by government and the private sector alike to address challenges [like Americans questioning the existence of the problem in the first place].”

The Valley Temple rabbi Sandford Kopnick has been the leader of the temple since 2001. According to Kopnick, Judaism believes in one God who created the heaven, earth and everything in between. However, Judaism’s holy book the... continue reading online.

Want to read more? go to [lakotaeastsparkonline.com](http://lakotaeastsparkonline.com) under our “indepth” section





(Right to left) Kelley Casper, Brad Lovell, Julie Schaffer, Todd Parnell and Lynda O'Connor. At the Jan. 9, 2018 Board Meeting Casper and Lovell were sworn into office. Lovell is now on the policy committee and expresses support for the transgender policy through the election season.

# 3-2 FAILED TRANSGENDER POLICY

The Lakota Board of Education vetoed the Proposed Board Policy 5000 on Gender Identity and Expression.

story sidney li | photography julianne ford

After the December meeting, the Lakota Board of Education decided to not codify the gender identity and expression policy with a 3-2 vote. With the opinions from Lakota's legal team, the Lakota board plans to further discuss the proposed policy in their January agenda meeting.

Board president Ben Dibble, board member Lynda O'Connor and board vice president Todd Parnell cast the majority votes of not making the proposed Gender Identity and Expression policy formalized. Board member Julie Schaffer and now former board member Ray Murray comprised of the pro votes.

"It is important that we do support every one of the students," Dibble said. "Every student needs to be valued and feel safe in our schools, but I am not sure if this policy is the

## TRANSGENDER POLICY

right answer."

After consulting with transgender students and their parents in this district, and the Dec. 2014 suicide of Kings Mills transgender student Leelah Alkom, Murray was inspired to create his proposed Lakota board policy.

Murray based Lakota's Proposed Board Policy 5000 off of an official board policy from a district outside of Columbus, Bexley. He says that he based his proposed policy off of Bexley's "word for word that I plagiarized as it was legally sound until I put Lakota's name on it."

"While working with Ray, I do see that we should consider a policy," Parnell said. "When you do have a policy, we have to do it right and with a legal voice, we were told that we aren't [as] ready as it needs to be right."

During the board meeting, there was a motion to vote on the amended version of Proposed Board Policy 5000, which was created at the prior board meeting on Nov. 20 with word changes in order to clarify the policy.

"My concern for policy is to create consistency between building and administrator to administrator," Shaffer said. "If we can amend the amended motion of [Proposed Board Policy 5000] as it is a roadblock then let's strike it out and move forward."

O'Connor feels that further work is needed

for the policy in the upcoming year with the new board members included.

"There are areas that aren't enforceable and need to be addressed for our over 16 thousand students," O'Connor said. "In the long run, we are setting a precedent that we will need to make a policy for every minority."

The amended version of Proposed Board Policy 5000 had the locker room section stroke through, which created the newly re-amended Proposed

Board Policy 5000 on Gender Identity and Expression.

Despite the section pertaining to the locker room being removed from the proposed board policy, Parnell said that "it's poorly written policy, it does not have legal support [and] it's a completely rushed and [a] haphazard process coming up with this thing. We need to rewrite the thing and do it right."

Bexley School Board Vice President Mike Denison was one of the members that voted on Bexley's gender identity policy for Bexley's

district and he believes that "the policy comes from the standpoint that the relationship between the student and the district is paramount and so all language is based on what the student wants."

"We had to create a policy that gave them guidance and teachers support. I don't care if there are no transgender students. It's just the right thing to do," Denison said. "Our lawyer did say there is not a lot of case law on this, especially in Ohio. We knew we were doing something that was not yet proven but we felt it was the right thing."

Supporters for Lakota's proposed Gender Identity and Expression policy came in wearing white attire for transgender people. In a recent Spark survey, 88 percent of the 325 East students said they would support a policy that protects transgender students.

"In a typical school day I use the restroom twice. That's two times I walk into an area and assume I will be safe and protected," East senior and Gay-Straight Alliance member Chris Williams said. "It's heartbreaking to see our friends and fellow students [who are transgender people] question their safety in such a simple task as going to the bathroom."

New board members Bradley Lovell and Kelly Casper have joined the Lakota board with incumbent member Parnell. Lovell and Casper said they were in favor for the proposed policy at Spark's Nov. Candidate Night and the Oct. Candidate Chamber Night.

"As a mother, I have a dream that my child will not be judged by his face but his character," Lakota parent Lisa Phair said. "A yes vote will provide a safer and inclusive setting not just for transgender kids but everyone involved."

The Dec. 11, 2017 meeting was Murray's last meeting before his contract ends for the 2018 year. But Murray has promised his endeavors onto making this policy official for Lakota.

"We, as a district, are currently working with kids that are [gender] transitioning," Murray said. "But we need to have clear and consistent guidelines to help our kids go through this difficult point in their life." •

88% of 325 East students surveyed said that the district should have a Gender Identity and Expression policy for its students



# ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ EQUALITY IN RE

Women in the community are running for leadership positions in fields, such as politics, trustees, and education that potentially impacts the 2018 election.

**story** sidney li | **photography** meredith niemann and used with permission | **infographic** sidney li and landon meador | **art** leo rolfert

## QUICK FACTS

- Women hold 105 of the 535 seats in the 114th U.S. Congress
- Women hold 447 of the 1,972 state senate seats
- Women hold 1,428 of the 5,411 state house seats
- Among the top 100 largest cities in the U.S., 19 have women mayors
- Women hold three out of the nine seats in the U.S. Supreme Court
- There are seven women in the cabinet and cabinet-level positions

**source** [cawp.rutgers.edu](http://cawp.rutgers.edu)





# PRESENTATION

**W**alking door to door in the local neighborhood isn't the ideal way for her to spend her Saturday mornings. Despite wearing her heaviest winter jacket and a wool scarf around her neck, the chilly breeze runs through and sends a cold sensation across her body. Yet, she persevered as she knows it will have beneficial results in the end for the upcoming Election Day on Nov. 6.

As she approaches each door of a persuadable Republican, Democratic Candidate for the House of Representative for the 52nd District Kathy Wyenandt personally greets them as a community mother and running candidate representing the Butler County area.

However, this isn't uncommon for the upcoming primary and election date as there are 118 women running for open seats in the House of Representatives, 46 women for governor, 30 women for lieutenant governor across the United States (U.S.) and seven women for the Senate;

"the most ever in history," according to Rutgers Center for American Women and Politics 2018 report.

"I am a mom of four kids and have been very active with the Lakota school district and community at large. We are a small business family so I have seen a lot while living here," Wyenandt says. "People are extreme with their politics and I think it's time that we put people over politics and come up with solutions that work for everybody."

Miami University Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Professor Ann Fuehrer says that there has yet to be equal representation amongst gender in politics "because of traditional gender role expectations of what roles men and women should perform and [how] early government documents favored patriarchy."

In a recent Spark survey, 62 percent of the 392 East students said that they think women should have political positions of power. However, 14 percent said that they did not think they should not have it.

**When women perform well in leadership positions, misogynistic attitudes change and women are even seen as more balanced and competent than many men. Once girls see enough role models, they grow up with the possibility and expectation that they too can be political leaders.**

— Ann Fuehrer, Miami University Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Professor

When Wyenandt announced her running for state representative, she has yet to experience any "overtly outlandish comments or prejudices with my decisions." There has been positive feedback for Wyenandt's campaign and she hopes that it continues onto Election Day.

"Just because I haven't received any messages from people that have struck a chord with me, doesn't mean that I occasionally have people ask me, 'how are you going to balance home and this?'" Wyenandt tells Spark. "Yet people don't typically ask men those questions due to the societal views on them."

**A**s with any new experience, there are unknown obstacles that Wyenandt has learned to compromise with. From balancing her stay-at-home role and being an active member in the community, Wyenandt is thankful that her and her husband have an equal role with running their family.

Before running for state representative, Wyenandt served on the Lakota levy committee and aided with issues surrounding the community. Whilst doing that, she was the Butler County Democratic Party Central Committee Chair and a former Butler County Board of Elections member.

"When women perform well in leadership positions, misogynistic attitudes change and women are even seen as more balanced and competent than many men," Fuehrer

says. "Once girls see enough role models, they grow up with the possibility and expectation that they too can be political leaders."

After noticing some issues with funding and dependency on property taxes for public schools; as well as, the funding of charter schools, these ultimately led to Wyenandt recruiting Mark Niehaus as her campaign manager as she wanted to diversify the solutions within Butler County.

According to the Ohio House of Representatives website, there are currently four state representatives representing Butler County. Even though 52nd district Republican State Representative George Lang was unanimously sworn in on Sept. 2017 after former Representative Margaret Condit's resignation, he is planning to run again in 2018.

**D**espite how Wyenandt is a woman running for the 52nd district state representative seat, she is also a Butler County Democrat running for that position. Ever since the current 99 Ohio House districts were formed after the 1964 Reynolds v. Sims Supreme Court case, there hasn't been a Butler County Democrat that has won a State House seat.

"Most of the races that I have worked for were a challenge to start out with a clear path to victory," Niehaus says. "I think having to work in a 'red' district is a real opportunity and developing power within the State





#### Editor's Note:

Out of the 50 states in the United States, six of them have female governors, which is represented by the pink stars.

House for a district that hasn't been represented by a Democrat for over 50 years is something that I'm glad [Kathy] brought me on for."

Wyenandt was aware of the arduous obstacles that came with winning a predominantly Republican district but knew that if she stuck to her roots and stayed true to herself, she would have a clear shot for victory.

"Kathy is unique as she has constructed this diverse team of 15 people, ranging from 16 to 63-years-old with different walks of life," Niehaus tells Spark. "So my job as campaign manager is to manage all aspects of our team, whether it be finances, communications, volunteering and others. I'm pulled in different directions but I'm glad I'm doing this—not only for Kathy's but any campaign."

Niehaus also has help with intern campaign manager Landon Meador, who wants to be involved with politics in the future too. Despite how it is his

first campaign at a local level, Meador knew he wanted to be involved with Wyenandt's due to her positive, unique energy and position.

"Kathy has done a great job bringing in such a diverse group of people in age and background that all have a similar common ground of fair politics and want to boost the millennials to get that 18 to 25 vote," Meador says. "I am glad that I met a strong woman like Kathy that I know for certain will make a difference in our community, no matter what she will be doing as a leader."

**T**he number of women serving in state legislatures has more than quintupled since 1971, according to a 2018 Rutgers University Center for American Women and Politics report. In that same report, now 24.8 percent of U.S. state legislators are women. Yet, there are only three female U.S. representatives from Ohio that are serving alongside to 13 of their male counterparts.

Amy Murray is currently serving her second term and was joining Ohio Republican House of Representative Jim Renacci as his running mate and lieutenant governor for Ohio on the 2018 ballot.

As Murray graduated from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's Degree in economics, she soon became the global business development manager for Procter and Gamble for 15 years. However, she left Procter and Gamble in order to pursue politics after being frustrated with the continual budget deficits in the Cincinnati area.

"Women need to have their voice heard as we approach topics differently," Murray tells Spark. "Even though women are gaining more political positions, we are still sorely behind men. For example, here we are in the urban city [of Cincinnati] and only two out of the nine council members are women."

There are various factors that have played a role into the lack of female presence in politics. According to Miami University Political Science Professor Monica Schneider, the "stereotypes of women are very persistent. People see women as kind and caring but want a political leader to be strong and dominant. The difference between how we think about women and leaders means that people don't want a woman to run. People still prefer a man to handle defense and military issues."

In a recent Spark survey, 64 percent of

Even though women are gaining more political positions, we are still sorely behind men. For example, here we are in the urban city [of Cincinnati] and only two out of the nine council members are women.

— Amy Murray, Cincinnati Council Member



the 392 East students said that they like the increased presence of women in politics. On the other hand, 23 percent said they somewhat liked the increased presence and 13 percent didn't like it.

"[The] government needs to represent all people, not just a select few [but] party leaders and lawmakers, who are mostly men, tend to ask people to run who are similar to them, meaning that they ask other men," Schneider tells Spark. "Women seem particularly negatively affected by this as they really seem to need to be asked to run rather than taking the initiative themselves."

By working across political party lines, women have demonstrated political leadership, despite the struggle they have faced against opposing beliefs and by "championing issues of gender equality, such as the elimination of gender-based violence, parental leave and childcare, pensions, gender-equality laws and electoral reform," according to a 2008 report by the United Nations (UN) Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

University of Cincinnati Political Science Professor Ann Runyan founded and directed the women's studies programs at the State University of New York College at Potsdam in 1992 and Wright State University in 1996.

"Women's different life experiences, resulting in part from living in a male-dominated world, bring different perspectives on what should be addressed and prioritized," Runyan tells Spark. "Thus women entering male-dominated fields may be more attentive to the gender inequalities, resulting in further bad outcomes."

Alongside to Murray and Renacci, Ohio Board of Education member Stephanie Dodd and Ohio senator Joe Schiavoni are also running as Ohio governor and lieutenant governor for the 2018 election.

Dodd is currently in her second and final term as Ohio Board of Education member. While she is balancing her state position, Dodd

owns a consulting company SLD Consulting, LLC, that specializes in fundraising, development and event planning for nonprofit organizations.

"I have had colleagues that have tried to diminish my expertise," Dodd tells Spark. "It's always challenging to [work] with someone who has a preconceived notion about me, whether it's because I am a woman or the youngest state board member."

When Dodd was first elected to the Ohio Board of Education in 2012, she was pregnant with her third child Auggie Dodd. From there, while Stephanie was on board, she brought him along to numerous board meetings and her colleagues would help her as they knew Stephanie was a working mom.

"When I first began to run five and a half years ago, I kept thinking about how I was going to do that, run my small business and be a mom to two small children with my third on [the] way," Stephanie says. "I think women are starting to realize that we can be the voice and leaders of our families and even gravitate [towards] politics as we have every right to equally express ourselves too."

Associate Professor of Sociology at Palomar College Devon Smith thinks there has yet to be an equal representation in politics—on a local state, national and international level as people do not donate to "female politicians as much as male politicians and voters do not vote for females as much. This is due to the sexism."

"I think women's equality in politics is an

**64%** percent of the 392 East students said that they like the increased presence of women in politics.

issue that lots of countries are beginning to take seriously. Some countries have instituted quotas—meaning that a certain number political positions must go to women," Smith tells Spark. "Research shows that female politicians are more likely to support legislation that positively impacts marginalized communities, like the poor."

Through the efforts of the quotas from the UN Decade for Women Conferences in 1975, 1980 and 1985 and the Beijing World Conference for Women in 1985, it allowed the increased numbers of women to be involved with decision-making at international and national levels as a way to better address world problems.

When Schiavoni was looking for a running mate, he knew he wanted someone who valued education starting from pre-kindergarten up to the higher end. This led to Schiavoni choosing Stephanie because she has been embedded into education for a long period of time and cherished the future generations.

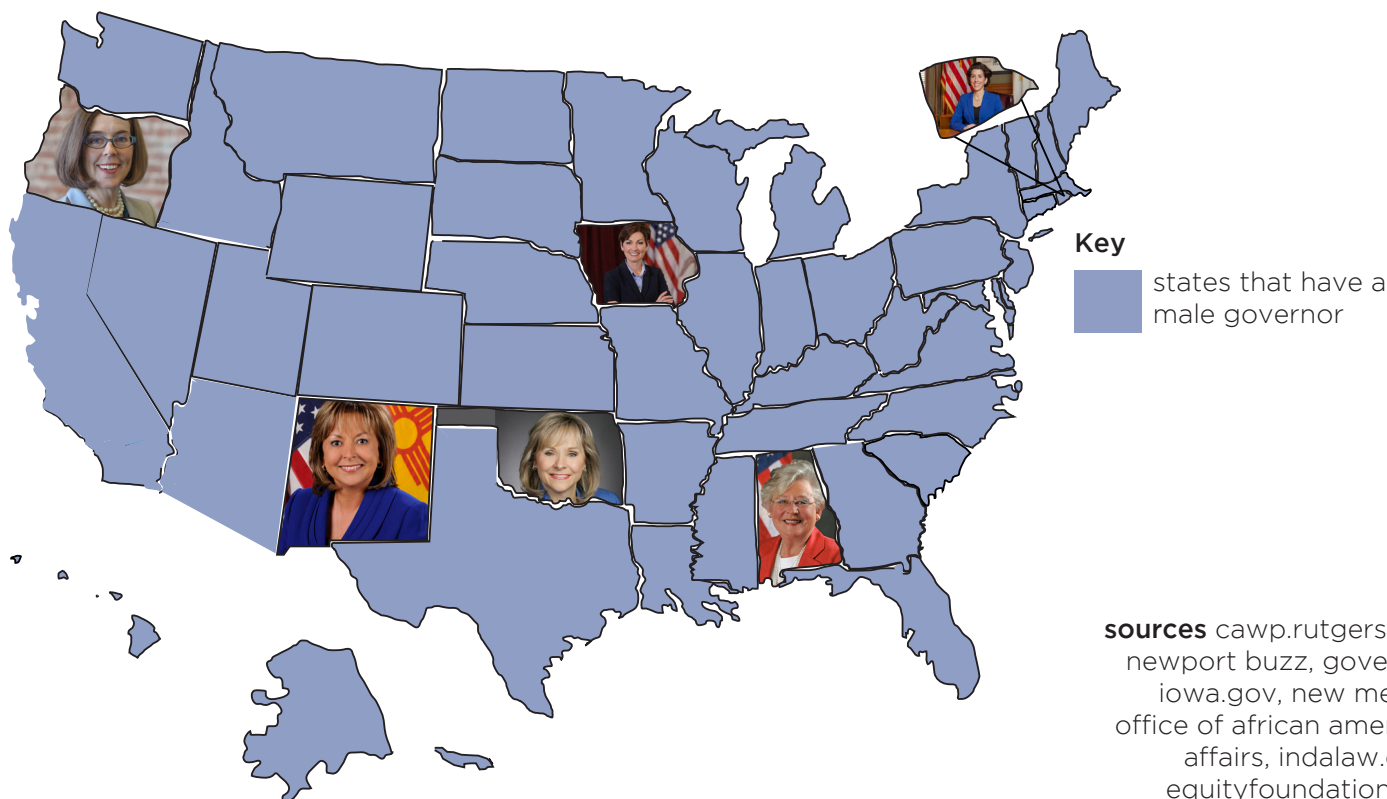


Above (L to R): Wyenandt's Campaign Member Missy Frazier, Wyenandt and former longtime Lakota Board of Education member Joan Powell are at the announcement rally at Grainworks Brewing Company.

Left: Democratic Candidate for the House of Representative for the 52nd District Kathy Wyenandt talks to Butler County residents during one of her door campaigns.



Six states have a female governor: Iowa, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, New Mexico and Alabama.



**sources** cawp.rutgers.edu,  
newport buzz, governor.  
iowa.gov, new mexico  
office of african american  
affairs, indalaw.com,  
equityfoundation.org,  
waterunityok.com

"It's empowering for younger women to see this pathway that female politicians, chief operating officers and more are paving for society," Schiavoni tells Spark. "That in itself is a very strong message for not only future generations in Ohio but the U.S. too."

**B**oth Schiavoni and Stephanie comprise the youngest team on the Ohio ballot for governor. This has brought some skepticism; however, they are embracing the limelight as they view it to be a unique factor with their campaign by bringing in a fresh face.

"Having more diverse voices represented in all levels of politics will benefit everyone," Smith says. "Having the bulk of our politicians come from a small pool of the U.S. citizenry as straight, white, Christian men means that important perspectives are missing from politics and that likely many group's needs are

not being met."

According to a 2018 Jan. Inter-Parliamentary Union report, 19.4 percent of the 432 members in the House of Representatives and 21 percent of the 100 members of the Senate are comprised of women.

This has U.S. placed at the 100th place by descending order of the total percentage of women in either the lower, upper or single House. However, Rwanda is first with 61.3 percent of women in their lower house and 38.5 percent in their Senate.

**N**ewly elected female Lakota Board of Education member Kelley Casper has been involved with the community through her children Claire and Daniel Casper in the Lakota district. Now that both of Kelley's children moved out of the house, she decided to run for the board with the increased free time.

After being elected in the Nov. 2017 ballot, Kelley has yet to find any differences from what she expected to being a board member. Now, Kelley tries to attend as many district and school events as much as possible in order to grasp a more tactile approach to learning what the students do on a day-to-day basis.

"There are more women in the world than men and I think now more than ever, women want their voices to be heard," Kelley tells Spark. "Generally, the women on the board are just as respected as the men on the board too. I don't think there isn't any disparity between

genders but I can't say that is the same for all around in all universal job fields."

As for Kelley, she believes that society will see more women; however, it will take time for men to realize that women are as qualified as they are too. Yet, "there has yet to be an equal representation within politics or leadership because it's hard to convince a woman and be self-confident in their decision," Kelley says.

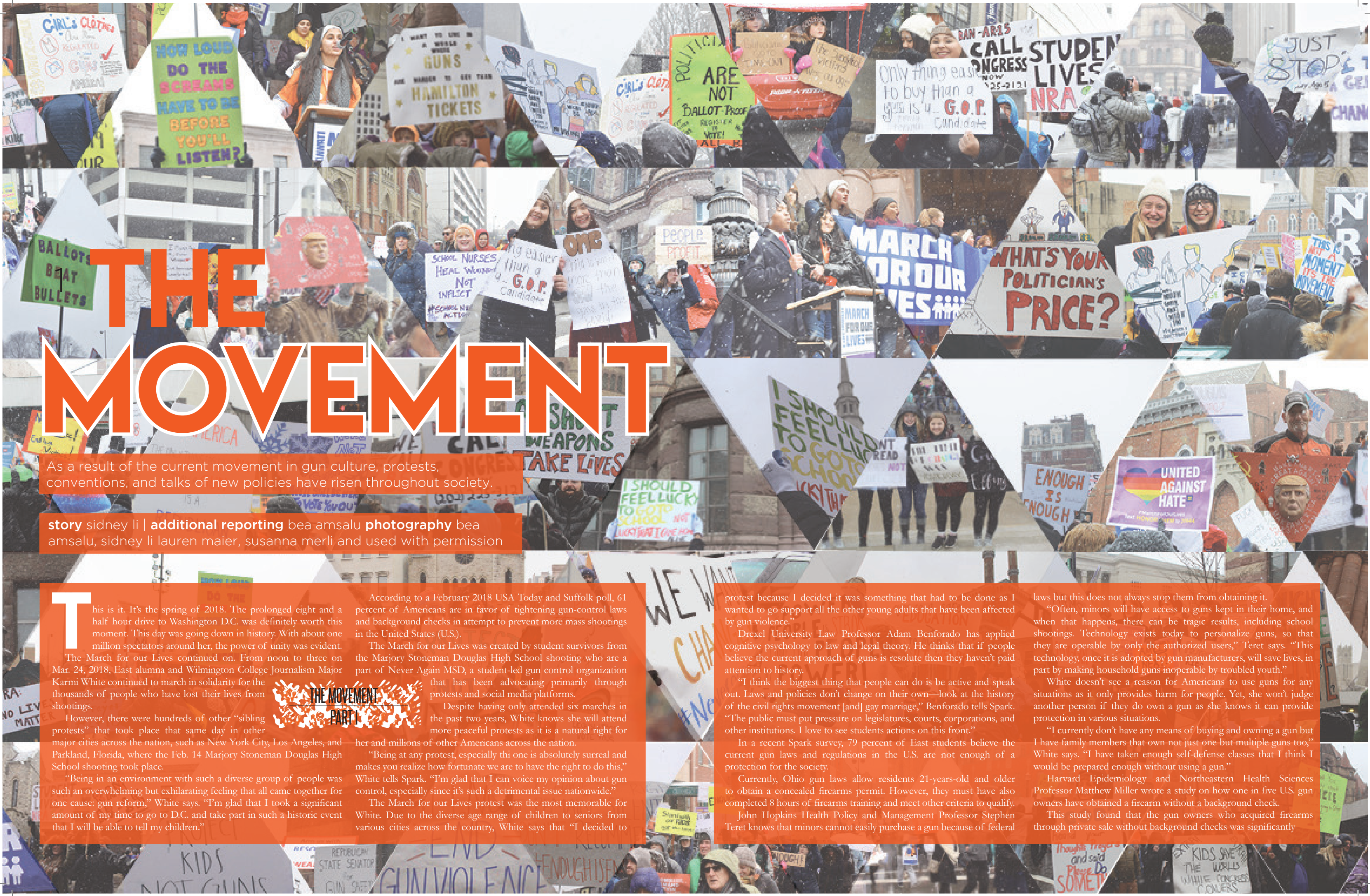
"Women have largely been taught that politics is a man's world. In general, women feel less confident in their ability to win," Smith says. "Also, being a politician takes time away from one's family [which] women are more reluctant to do this than men."

**E**ven for Wyenandt, she believes that there will always be opposing forces that have different gender beliefs that will never coincide with her own. Therefore, she has found that she should embrace it and continue to spark conversations and make change for the better in the community, whether it is at the state or local level.

"[Young people should] read, get involved with the community and different organizations. I would especially challenge the younger generations, whether you are a man or a woman to be involved with a cause that is out of their norm," Wyenandt says. "I would advise to [any] young girls that [they should and would be able to continuously break down these barriers and not be stuck in this echochamber." •

**62%** percent of the  
392 East students said that  
they think women should have  
political positions of power.





# THE MOVEMENT

As a result of the current movement in gun culture, protests, conventions, and talks of new policies have risen throughout society.

**story** sidney li | **additional reporting** bea amsalu **photography** bea amsalu, sidney li lauren maier, susanna merli and used with permission

**T**his is it. It's the spring of 2018. The prolonged eight and a half hour drive to Washington D.C. was definitely worth this moment. This day was going down in history. With about one million spectators around her, the power of unity was evident. The March for our Lives continued on. From noon to three on Mar. 24, 2018, East alumna and Wilmington College Journalism Major Karmi White continued to march in solidarity for the thousands of people who have lost their lives from shootings. However, there were hundreds of other "sibling protests" that took place that same day in other major cities across the nation, such as New York City, Los Angeles, and Parkland, Florida, where the Feb. 14 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting took place. "Being in an environment with such a diverse group of people was such an overwhelming but exhilarating feeling that all came together for one cause: gun reform," White says. "I'm glad that I took a significant amount of my time to go to D.C. and take part in such a historic event that I will be able to tell my children."

According to a February 2018 USA Today and Suffolk poll, 61 percent of Americans are in favor of tightening gun-control laws and background checks in order to prevent more mass shootings in the United States (U.S.). The March for our Lives was created by student survivors from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting who are a part of Never Again MSD, a student-led gun control organization that has been advocating primarily through protests and social media platforms. Despite having only attended six marches in the past two years, White knows she will attend more peaceful protests as it is a natural right for her and millions of other Americans across the nation. "Being at any protest, especially this one is absolutely surreal and makes you realize how fortunate we are to have the right to do this," White tells Spark. "I'm glad that I can voice my opinion about gun control, especially since it's such a detrimental issue nationwide." The March for our Lives protest was the most memorable for White. Due to the diverse age range of children to seniors from various cities across the country, White says that "I decided to

protest because I decided it was something that had to be done as I wanted to go support all the other young adults that have been affected by gun violence." Drexel University Law Professor Adam Benforado has applied cognitive psychology to law and legal theory. He thinks that if people believe the current approach of guns is resolute then they haven't paid attention to history. "I think the biggest thing that people can do is be active and speak out. Laws and policies don't change on their own—look at the history of the civil rights movement [and] gay marriage," Benforado tells Spark. "The public must put pressure on legislatures, courts, corporations, and other institutions. I love to see students actions on this front." In a recent Spark survey, 79 percent of East students believe the current gun laws and regulations in the U.S. are not enough of a protection for the society. Currently, Ohio gun laws allow residents 21-years-old and older to obtain a concealed firearms permit. However, they must have also completed 8 hours of firearms training and meet other criteria to qualify. John Hopkins Health Policy and Management Professor Stephen Teret knows that minors cannot easily purchase a gun because of federal

laws but this does not always stop them from obtaining it. "Often, minors will have access to guns kept in their home, and when that happens, there can be tragic results, including school shootings. Technology exists today to personalize guns, so that they are operable by only the authorized users," Teret says. "This technology, once it is adopted by gun manufacturers, will save lives, in part by making household guns inoperable by troubled youth." White doesn't see a reason for Americans to use guns for any situations as it only provides harm for people. Yet, she won't judge another person if they do own a gun as she knows it can provide protection in various situations. "I currently don't have any means of buying and owning a gun but I have family members that own not just one but multiple guns too," White says. "I have taken enough self-defense classes that I think I would be prepared enough without using a gun." Harvard Epidemiology and Northeastern Health Sciences Professor Matthew Miller wrote a study on how one in five U.S. gun owners have obtained a firearm without a background check. This study found that the gun owners who acquired firearms through private sale without background checks was significantly





**22%** of East students believe that arming teachers with guns would be an effective method of protection within the school grounds.

larger with 57 percent in states without laws regulating such purchases than in states with legislative regulations with 26 percent.

“Not many people know that the leniency of obtaining firearms is quite significant because so many people, who aren’t in the right mind, health and more, can easily buy one without a background check,” Miller says. “It’s definitely easier than buying alcohol at times too.”

According to a 2016 Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence report, an average of 17,012 children and teens are injured by guns every year in the U.S. Of those 17,102 adolescents, about 2,737 will die from gun violence.

Director of the Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education at Case Western Reserve University Daniel Flannery says that “most people who own guns will tell you that they own and carry for protection because it is their right under the Second

Amendment. It gives people a sense of power and authority too.”

“The U.S. has some of the most liberal policies on firearm ownership in the world which is reflected in our rates of injury and death from firearms,” Flannery tells Spark. “[This] exceeds the rates of any other country in the world by far.”

Alongside to this, 72 percent of East students surveyed believe in gun reform. With this, Young Activists Coalition founder Rasleen Krupp organized the Cincinnati March for our Lives on Mar. 24 about the change that is bound to happen within our generation.

“This terrible thing happened to [the Parkland students], but they were still on TV advocating and doing all this amazing stuff that hit me. They are still standing up for what they believed in,” Krupp, a junior at Wyoming High School says. “I wouldn’t wish that on anyone but they really took what they had been given and all changed for the better. Now they’re creating all this change across the nation.”

Even though Krupp is a strong activist for various issues, she has been met with criticism from her parents on her beliefs. As she is the only child, like White, Krupp knows they can’t disown her. However, Krupp’s mother is more supportive but they don’t want it to be her career.

“I’ll just say that they’re very anti-politics and anti-activism and we do not agree politically at all. They were not happy when I started

volunteering for Brian Garry, [who campaigned for Cincinnati city council],” Krupp says. “It was hard getting involved in the march, but it’s also comforting to know that a lot of different activists’ parents are not supportive at all.”

However, on Feb. 18, 2018, Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones tweeted that he was “going to offer free concealed and Carry class free 2 [sic] teachers in butler county. Limited number. Details coming soon on line [sic]. Also training on school shootings.”

This arming teacher initiative was capped off at 300 teachers the following day. The teachers who completed the 12-hour training had to have at least two hours at a live firing range but they will not be able to start taking guns into their classrooms right after these classes.

“When I first heard about Sheriff Jones and his arming teacher initiative on Twitter, I honestly thought it was a joke,” White says. “I can’t imagine any of my college professors or my former high school teacher handling a gun. It’s not that they aren’t competent of it, it’s because you never know how you’ll react when you’re in that endangered state.”

Then on Apr. 25, 2018, Madison Local School District voted unanimously on having a policy for their district faculty to carry weapons by participating in the Faculty/Administrator Safety Training and Emergency Response (FASTER) program.



Wilmington College freshman Journalism major and East alum Karmi White walked in the March for our Lives in Washington D.C. on Mar. 24.

Participants of FASTER have to undergo 26 hours of training in armed response, crisis management and emergency medical aid. However, the completion and certification of FASTER can take months so it is uncertain if Madison faculty members will be able to own a gun in the classroom before the 2018-19 school year.

“Arming teachers is one of the most misguided efforts we could pursue. Highly-trained professionals don’t always react the way we want in a crisis, and persons highly trained with firearms aren’t always accurate in a stressful situation,” Flannery says. “Most teachers couldn’t get enough training [along with how] we ask them to be effective in an active shooter situation. Responding law enforcement wouldn’t know who is a shooter and who is a teacher responder.”

East Advanced Composition teacher Rich Schmaltz believes that arming teachers with guns might seem like a good idea at first; however, once gun owners, that could potentially be teachers, realize that it’s dangerous, they wouldn’t know what to do.

“In addition to what we already have to do, giving me a gun isn’t going to solve anything,” Schmaltz says. “I may know how to point a gun. I may know how to shoot a gun. I know some of the basics of gun safety but that’s not the same level needed in an active shooting situation, which is so much more stressful.”

Unlike a cop, who is bound to shoot

someone during their duties, Schmaltz says that teachers will be forced to be put in a situation where they could potentially shoot a student that they personally know—and putting other lives at risk due to the personal relationship.

In a recent Spark survey that was conducted, 22 percent of East students believe that arming teachers with guns would be an effective method of protection within the school grounds on a regular basis.

East principal Suzanna Davis says there are district policies that are in place and how school administrators can’t organize events with the student body unless they abide by Lakota Local School District’s guideline.

“Right now, there are policies about student protests and walkouts, which we, as an administrative team follow,” Davis says. “I never had any intention on organizing any event but it was all students, who are passionate and part of the School Safety Committee that organized the banners for the Marjory Stoneman Douglas students on Mar. 14.”

According to a 2012 Congressional Research Service report, Americans own about 48 percent of the estimated 650 million civilian-owned guns worldwide.

Despite protesting at various events, White also promotes on her social media accounts by posting about events and tips for her followers on how to help out and take initiative on political, social and economic issues.

Even though White has been actively

involved with her social activism, her father Erich White believes that the passion that she has for journalism and her beliefs are unique and beneficial for her or any other person to have.

“That same drive and passion that Karmi has for protesting and speaking her opinion is incomparable,” Erich says. “Being involved with any type of social injustice is tough already but always repeatedly being a part of it is a whole other level of bravery that not many have.”

Kent State University Freshman Fashion Major Brandon Bell went with Karmi to the March for our Lives protest. Even though Bell was initially invited to the Women’s March in D.C., he “wanted to put all my energy and motivation into this [March for our Lives] march.”

“A lot of my peers are not into or don’t like politics,” Bell says. “It’s absolutely amazing that the youth and being apart of that youth is very empowering like seeing me and my friends create change in our country is phenomenal.”

Besides physically protesting and participating in marches, Bell is subscribed to petition website Change.Org that has various petitions for gun reform, sexual abuse, domestic violence, immigration and more.

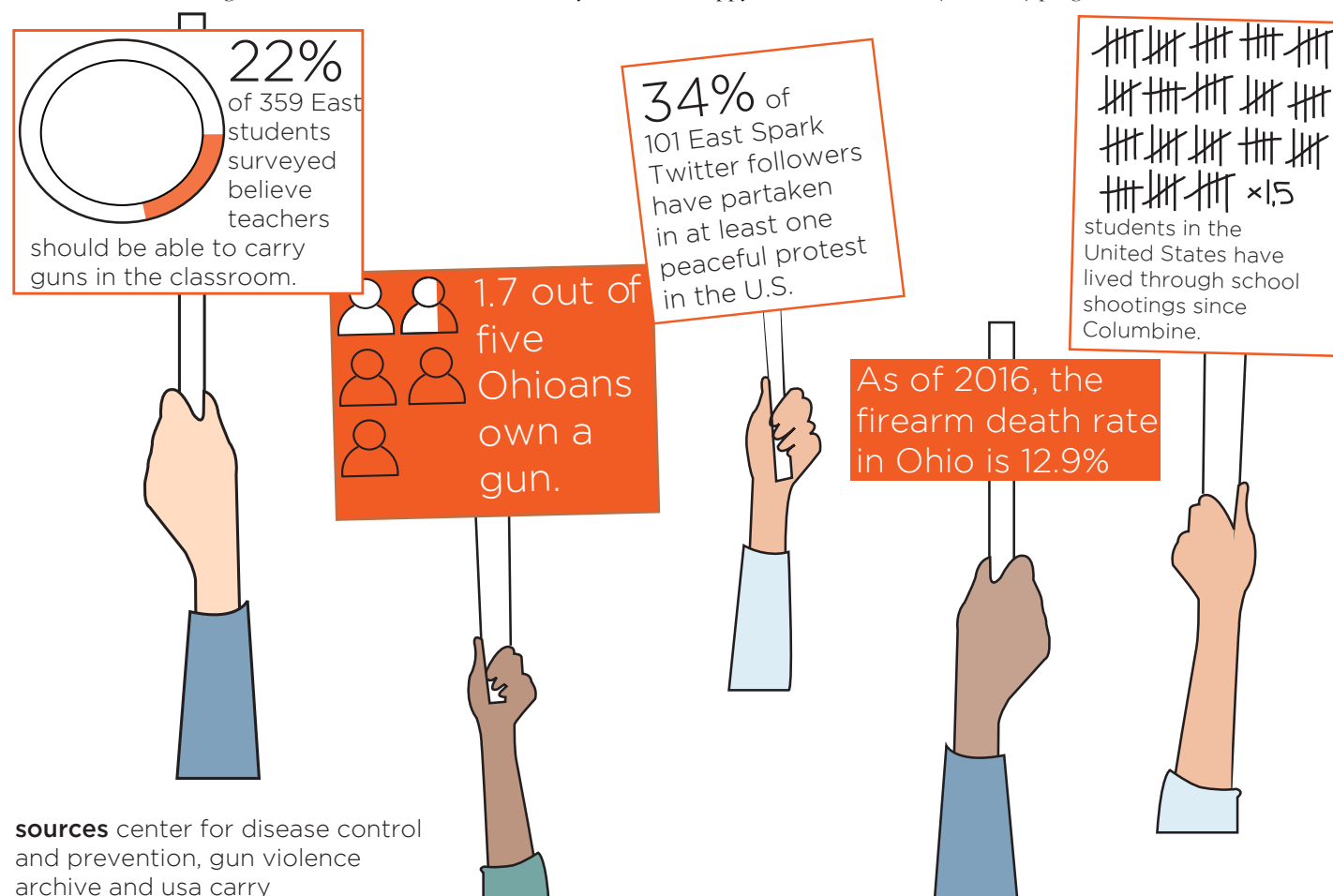
Change.Org has allowed Bell to sign up for petitions online through any electronic device for issues, such as, gun reform, that matter to him. He finds it cool and accessible to use as “you don’t have to leave your bedroom or anything to still make change.”

“One of the reasons that the gun lobby has been so successful is that they have framed the debate over guns solely in terms of gun owners. The #NeverAgain movement has drawn the focus away from gun owners to the victim of guns,” Benforado says. “They’ve changed the key questions: Doesn’t a kid have a right to be safe in her school? When we privilege gun culture, what cost does that have for our young people?”

In a recent Spark survey, 86 percent of East students believe America should have more gun control. Even though Karmi knows it has been a struggle for Americans to see a change with the current gun culture, she believes, in time, gun reform will happen.

“Gun reform is needed. If the American

**86%** of East students believe that the United States should have more gun control.



**sources** center for disease control and prevention, gun violence archive and usa carry



public wants to see a change, then we, as U.S. citizens have the right to make and be the change if the people in office can't," White says. "We should all take advantage of our freedom of speech and make gun reform happen."

East Advanced Composition teacher Rich Schmaltz believes that arming teachers with guns might seem like a good idea at first; however, once gun owners, that could potentially be teachers, realize that it's dangerous, they wouldn't know what to do.

Despite protesting at various events, White also promotes on her social media accounts by posting about events and tips for her followers on how to help out and take initiative on political, social and economic issues.

Even though White has been actively involved with her social activism, her father Erich White believes that the passion that she has for journalism and her beliefs are unique and beneficial for her or any other person to have.

various petitions for gun reform, sexual abuse, domestic violence, immigration and more.

**C**hange.Org has allowed Bell to sign up for petitions online through any electronic device for issues, such as, gun reform, that matter to him. He finds it cool and accessible to use as "you don't have to leave your bedroom or anything to still make change."

"One of the reasons that the gun lobby has

The gun lobby has framed the debate over guns solely in terms of gun owners. The #NeverAgain movement has drawn the focus away from gun owners to the victim of guns. They've changed the key questions: doesn't a kid have a right to be safe in her school? When we privilege gun culture, what cost does that have for our young people? —Adam Benforado, Drexel University Law Professor

"In addition to what we already have to do, giving me a gun isn't going to solve anything," Schmaltz says. "I may know how to point a gun. I may know how to shoot a gun. I know some of the basics of gun safety but that's not the same level needed in an active shooting situation, which is so much more stressful."

**U**nlike a cop, who is bound to shoot someone during their duties, Schmaltz says that teachers will be forced to be put in a situation where they could potentially shoot a student that they personally know—and putting other lives at risk due to the personal relationship.

In a recent Spark survey that was conducted, 22 percent of East students believe that arming teachers with guns would be an effective method of protection within the school grounds on a regular basis.

East principal Suzanna Davis says there are district policies that are in place and how school administrators can't organize events with the student body unless they abide by Lakota Local School District's guideline.

"Right now, there are policies about student protests and walkouts, which we, as an administrative team follow," Davis says. "I never had any intention on organizing any event but it was all students, who are passionate and part of the School Safety Committee that organized the banners for the Marjory Stoneman Douglas students on Mar. 14."

According to a 2012 Congressional Research Service report, Americans own about 48 percent of the estimated 650 million civilian-owned guns worldwide.

"That same drive and passion that Karmi has for protesting and speaking her opinion is incomparable," Erich says. "Being involved with any type of social injustice is tough already but always repeatedly being a part of it is a whole other level of bravery that not many have."

Kent State University Freshman Fashion Major Brandon Bell went with Karmi to the March for our Lives protest. Even though Bell was initially invited to the Women's March in D.C., he "wanted to put all my energy and motivation into this [March for our Lives] march."

"A lot of my peers are not into or don't like politics," Bell says. "It's absolutely amazing that the youth and being apart of that youth is very empowering like seeing me and my friends create change in our country is phenomenal."

Besides physically protesting and participating in marches, Bell is subscribed to petition website Change.Org that has

been so successful is that they have framed the debate over guns solely in terms of gun owners. The #NeverAgain movement has drawn the focus away from gun owners to the victim of guns," Benforado says. "They've changed the key questions: Doesn't a kid have a right to be safe in her school? When we privilege gun culture, what cost does that have for our young people?"

In a recent Spark survey, 86 percent of East students believe America should have more gun control. Even though Karmi knows it has been a struggle for Americans to see a change with the current gun culture, she believes, in time, gun reform will happen.

"Gun reform is needed for the better of the country. If the American public wants to see a change, then we, as U.S. citizens have the right to make and be the change if the people in office can't," White says. "We should all take advantage of our freedom of speech and make gun reform happen." •

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE: THE MOVEMENT PART II

photography lexy harrison

Following the marches and aid for the Marjory Stoneman Douglas students and survivors, the local issues of arming teachers with guns, school safety and community outreach with gun culture will be discussed in the two-part gun culture package.

