

Kailey Gee

Artist of the Year Portfolio

Explaining Contributions & what was learned

Before I joined our school's newspaper publication, I had given up on art. I had always been interested in it, in fact my dream job at the age of three was to be an artist in Paris (with a pink poodle, of course). Although my occupational prospects shifted after that, I still enjoyed creating. I would draw everyday in my sketchbook and learned tips and tricks from both the Internet and my fellow artist friends, landing me a spot in "Gifted and Talented Art" in 6th grade.

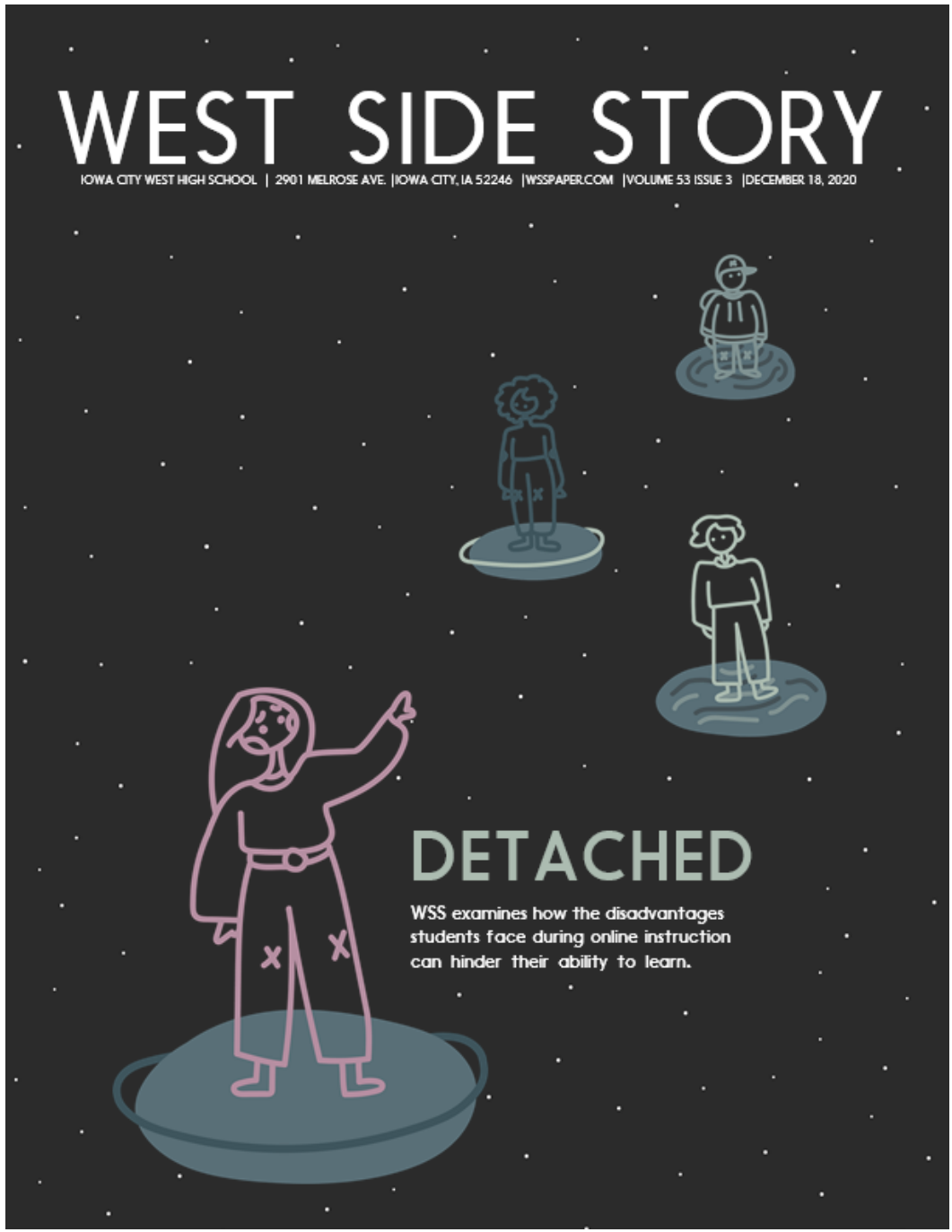
When I got to junior high, I had the opportunity to take my first optional art class, and naturally I signed up right away. As the year went on and I looked around at all the students who had chosen to be in that class, I realized that they had such a vibrant passion and skill for art it was practically exploding out of their hands onto the pages. When I looked at my art in comparison to theirs, I could see the passion was there, but my mind couldn't see the skill. After the class was over, I didn't draw anymore. I had lost my confidence.

I began to let my creativity out in other forms, starting with graphic design. When I joined the school newspaper as a designer two years ago, I quickly realized that I was probably going to have to start doing some art again. Not only did most of the designers on our staff do both, but a lot of my design ideas required art. The first design that I completed my own art for was nerve-wracking, but each art piece got easier. Fellow artists were able to give positive and constructive feedback that both helped me improve and gain confidence. Over the course of this year, I have learned how to be confident in my art skills again. It started with setting out to do my first art assignment for another staffer, instead of for my own page. Then, I started helping with web feature images and infographics. Eventually, I did art for cover pages, along with their respective cover stories.

This community of artists and journalists has helped me revive a passion that was long dead, and I've been honored to give back to the community through my newly regained skills.

WEST SIDE STORY

IOWA CITY WEST HIGH SCHOOL | 2901 MELROSE AVE. | IOWA CITY, IA 52246 | WSSPAPER.COM | VOLUME 53 ISSUE 3 | DECEMBER 18, 2020



DETACHED

WSS examines how the disadvantages students face during online instruction can hinder their ability to learn.

Detached

This cover story discussed how online students felt disconnected from both their peers and the rest of the school. I wanted to show these feelings through physical space, so each student is on a different planet to show the true vast difference between their experiences. It also worked to implement my graphic on the first spread, seen below, where the student is physically disconnected from the wifi with a play on an astronaut suit. [Link](#).

DETACHED

As the ICCSD shifts between learning models, students who lack access to reliable Internet and other necessary resources face significant challenges to their learning and well-being.

BY HEIDI DILL
HANAH KITAMOTO
& SOOMIN KOH

Recognizing the message appearing on their screen as their internet cuts in and out, and they are kicked out of the virtual classroom yet again. Frustrating. As the lesson continues, the student struggles to retain the class, fiddling with WiFi settings while hoping they aren't missing any crucial information. Frustrating. When they finally regain the audio, comes back cheaply and robotic, making communication virtually impossible.

BEHIND THE SCREEN

All students have had to adapt to virtual learning, but the added challenge of an unstable internet connection presents some from effectively communicating with their teachers and peers. Since Canvas, AP classroom and other online applications are used to complete homework, reliable internet and technology are essential for online academic success. Online school takes place on Zoom, where daily attendance is mandatory. However, features such as screen sharing and breakout rooms can be troublesome to access with a weaker internet connection or a less capable device like a Chromebook. For Josh Hernandez '22, his district provided Chromebook to not fast enough to support online learning. "A lot of these Chromebooks that the ICCSD gives us [are] really slow, so if you open a Zoom link and if you want to do a Zoom or something on another one, it will really lag the Zoom meeting," Hernandez said.

For Demario Rodriguez '21, the dependence on technology during online learning is not ideal.

"IT'S VERY CHALLENGING TO GET THE GRADES BECAUSE I HAD TO WORK HARDER THAN WHEN I WAS IN [PERSON]."

-PAMMIE QUINTERO RODRIGUEZ '23

"It's very challenging to get the grades because I had to work harder [than when I was in person]."

Quintero Rodriguez said. "I'm a more paper-pencil type guy, and so it's very hard for me to use my Chromebook all the time because ... [it is not really good at] technology." Off-site learning has also affected Quintero Rodriguez's access to the additional support the county receives through the Individualized Education Plan. She believes the technological difficulties of the online environment have hindered existing obstacles in her learning experience.

"If I write things, I get them in my head easier ... but it's kind of hard with the Chromebook because I can't type fast," Quintero Rodriguez said. "I had this trouble when I was home because my hands and eyes were not coordinating very well, so that made it hard for me."

In addition to the personal struggles students are facing, online learning reliance on a steady internet connection proves challenging, especially for those at a lower socioeconomic status. A few research center analysts found that 37% of households with school-age children and an annual income below \$10,000 lack high-speed internet access compared to 6% of households earning \$75,000 or more annually. This internet access gap is especially prevalent in Black and Hispanic families. With certain instruction dependent on a steady internet connection, these racial disparities may only exacerbate the education gap.

According to ICCSD academic data, 56.7% of Black students and 42.7% of Hispanic students enrolled in the online learning model were falling at least one class at midyear during the first

JAP & CHENBY BY HANAH KITAMOTO



35% of households with school-age children and an annual income below \$10,000 lack high-speed internet

VS 6% of households annually earning \$75,000 or more lack high-speed internet

Source: Pew Research Center

trimester, while white and Asian students' fall rates were 20% and 12.0%, respectively.

"Virtual learning has proved to be problematic for one Black West High student who wishes to remain anonymous. For this student, the recently published data is not surprising.

"In my opinion, this [data] is because of our income level. Some may not have access to the internet and cell service. Some may have jobs to support themselves and may not have enough time to study," the anonymous source said.

David Ellis, a professor of sociology of education at the University of Iowa, echoes these sentiments, saying a family's socioeconomic status can have a significant impact on a student's success in the virtual classroom.

"Social class always has something to do with these things," Ellis said. "There are big differences in the ability of families to provide quiet places for their kids to study and have jobs that are flexible enough to accommodate their kids' learning."

"The anonymous source has experienced similar challenges. The younger brother, who has a disability, has struggled to adjust to the online environment. Because of this, the source and her family have modified their schedules to take breaks before class during his classes.

"I think it's hard for him because he can't really focus and sit in one place," she said. "It needs to be doing something hands-on to be engaged." She finds the scheduling arrangement difficult to juggle with her own schooling.

"It's hard to keep up with lectures because we have to help with his school work, and he is not able to follow with his teachers and peers," she said. "We are all stressed out about that, and we have to create schedules to be there with him to go through the material."

On top of this, the anonymous source's internet cuts out periodically, further adding to the challenges.

"I could be in a lecture or in the middle of a presentation, and then suddenly I can't hear anybody correctly or they can't hear me, and that makes me worry about my grade," she said. "It's like a strong internet connection and so."

According to Hernandez, internet and lecture technical resources provided by the ICCSD are not sufficient enough for students to use during their online education.

"I think the school district did the best job they could have done, but these laptops were outdated," Hernandez said. "If you got more than one child on it at once, then they were really outdated. And most of these families have three or six kids living in a household. It just wasn't working for them."

Michelle Forbes, the executive director of Community Coordinated Child Care of Johnson County or 4C2, says the NIST57's main goal is to address the gaps in students' learning that have worsened as a result of the pandemic.

"The main goal of NIST57 is to make sure that students are able to get the support they need to succeed in their learning," she said.

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-ALISON DEMORY, NUTRITION DIRECTOR



strained teacher-student relationships. In his experience, poor audio quality and limited classroom have contributed to confusion and miscommunication.

"It's painful on my end because I can't get a read on them," Hernandez said. "That sort of will take away from my ability to look at a student and see if they're understanding you ... not having these tools available is certainly tough."

ADAPTATIONS IN THE ICCSD

The ICCSD provides additional support for families who need internet access, including direct at-home internet service through Mi4connect, where Mi4connect does not cover the household or the current installment of cable internet service takes too long, the district provides the family with a temporary WiFi hotspot to use. Families can access these resources by filling out the technological support request form on the district's website or calling 319-688-1900.

Typically, the district receives 16,000 to 18,000 support requests throughout an entire school year. According to Director of Technology and Innovation Adam Karth, this year, the district received 8,000 support requests within the first three weeks of school alone. After those three weeks, the district saw fewer technology support requests as the school year continued, and Karth views this as a promising trend.

"For many of these students, we've already provided internet where that would be an issue," Karth said. "That's an indication that most families who need the service already have it, and that's a good thing, and they'll keep that service regardless what enrollment mode they're in."

Despite the district's best efforts to provide those in need, Wata kids there are still students who lack reliable technology.

"The district has worked very hard to provide students with hotspots, but unfortunately, the data sometimes runs out. The internet speed on a hotspot can also be an issue," Wata said. "If a student has problems with technology, I work with the family to find a solution, whether that is requesting a new hotspot from the district or making an appointment for Chromebook repair."

Another service the district has provided is free grab-and-go meals for families. This began following the first school closure due to COVID-19 and subsequent transition to online learning last March. Everyone is eligible for the grab-and-go meals, regardless of their family's income level.

According to ICCSD Nutrition Director Alison Demory, there were over 49,000 meals served from March 22 to the end of August.

"I was proud of my staff ... we were those meal workers that had to come out and make sure that families and students in this community had access to meals when school wasn't open," Demory said. "We know that lots of students rely on these meals, and we wanted to make sure that we were still able to provide those for any-

body that wanted them."

The grab-and-go meals include breakfast and lunch, and the menu has expanded over time. Meal options now include items that families can take home and warm up. For Demory, providing this service has been a rewarding experience.

"There's been a lot of challenges we've had to overcome," Demory said. "We want to make sure that we keep everybody safe. As stressful as all of these things are, it's just been very rewarding to feed our families."

IN THE COMMUNITY

In response to the pandemic, organizations in the Iowa City area are adjusting the ways they provide essential items to families in need. One of those is Housing Into Homes, a non-profit organization that provides furniture for families who lack necessities in their homes. Co-founders Salma McCarty and Larry Barber started the organization after volunteering at elementary schools and realizing there were some students who did not have stable living situations.

"I wanted to hear a lot [of] 'I'm tired,' 'I'm sad,' and eventually, the kids let me know that they didn't have beds at home, and I was shocked," McCarty said. "At that point, I'd felt like I was not in the know about the needs in our community."

Despite obstacles posed by the pandemic, Housing Into Homes is still working to provide the community with household necessities.

"It's been that there were kids in our district who were sleeping on the floor was something that was so awful, and I couldn't imagine trying to be a successful student and do my homework and eat dinner ... from the floor to my house," McCarty said. "Over those years, we've been able to do a lot of work, and we've been able to get a lot of kids out of that cycle of poverty."

Hill's agency scheduling is crucial for upward economic mobility and tops the increasing cost of higher education can be a substantial obstacle for those of lower socioeconomic status.

"Policy-makers typically looked at education as a way for people to get out of poverty," Hill said. "With the escalating costs of higher education, that's becoming more difficult for many people."

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 40% of children living in poverty come from a household where their parents did not graduate from high school.

McCarty feels it may be difficult for students who cannot take measures to understand the barriers of those who do.

"If your entire life you've had a bed and you've had furniture, it's really difficult to imagine being a student who doesn't have those things," McCarty said. "There are homes in our district ... that I feel [are] completely inoperable for students to be expected to learn from."

"The combination of an unstable internet and a new learning environment can pose an additional set of challenges for students. To help those students succeed, numerous Neighborhood Navigator Every Student Together Safety, or NESTS, have been created around the community to provide adequate internet, food and additional technological resources.

One of those is the founders of the Open Heartland NESTS, primarily works with Hispanic immigrant families living in Johnson County's mobile-home communities. These efforts to create a safe and reliable place for students to learn.

"I just wanted a big old room [where] we'd put in some desks and provide internet access," DeBake said. "And then some other people in the community, they loved the whole idea ... so it all kind of came together, [and] we are part of that whole big NEST initiative."

Hernandez is a student volunteer working with the Open Heartland NESTS to help younger elementary students. From taking students through online assignments to introducing technological issues, Hernandez is striving to create a helpful learning environment for many.

"Most of the kids there don't have access to the internet, so they don't know how to navigate Zoom or Canvas," Hernandez said. "It's hard for me, if I were in their place, it would have been awesome to know that there was a safe place where I could go to take my classes and get help if

makes me feel good that I'm helping these kids."

According to Hernandez, internet and lecture technical resources provided by the ICCSD are not sufficient enough for students to use during their online education.

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HOW TO GET SUPPORT

INTERNET:
CALL 319-688-1900

MEAL SERVICE:
MEAL PICK-UP IS AVAILABLE TO ALL STUDENTS FROM 11:30 A.M. - 1 P.M. MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT WEST HIGH.

SCAN HERE FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
SCANNEZ ICI POUR DES RESSOURCES SUPPLEMENTAIRES
ESCANEA AQUI PARA RECURSOS ADICIONALES



OR VISIT
TWYBURL.COM/WSSRESOURCES

SIGHTS OF SPRING

April showers famously bring May flowers - learn how to identify them and more with this handy local field guide.

BY KALEY GEE & MARTA LERA

SPIDERWORT



These three-petaled purple flowers are found from April to mid July, most often in prairies.

GOLDEN ALEXANDERS



Found in both woods and prairies, Golden Alexanders blossom from April to June.

PRAIRIE PHLOX



These flowers bloom in a spherical cluster from mid May to early June.

SHOOTING STAR



Native to eastern Iowa, these downward curving flowers begin to bloom in May.

REMEMBER TO BE
PREPARED AND STAY
SAFE ON TRAILS.

CANADA WILDRYE



This long grass is common in prairies from May to June and is identified by the spike-shaped formation of its green seeds.

VIRGINIA WILDRYE



This long grass is found from March to May. Although similar to its Canadian counterpart, it can be differentiated by its yellow color.

GEOCACHING BASICS

WHAT IS IT?

- Another way to explore is through Geocaching, an outdoor scavenger hunt activity where participants find containers of varying sizes from GPS coordinates and clues.
- Ensure you've read the rules of Geocaching before you get started.

SCAN THIS QR CODE

to get started on your Geocaching journey with the West Side Story Geocache.



Sights of Spring

When this guide to Iowa prairie plants was proposed, I was super excited to work on the art for it. I referenced botanical guides to accurately portray identifying aspects of each plant. [Link](#).

ALL FOR ONE

Some West students have chosen to ditch the classroom for virtual learning, bringing school allegiance into question as students from all four area high schools are combined.



My main concern is, when we go back, having all new teachers + having to recreate that relationship from scratch.
-Malika Karimi '21



BY ROSEMARY TIMMER-HACKETT AND ISAAC YOUNG

For many, school pride is a pivotal aspect of the high school experience. Football games and school assemblies are as expected part of the social dynamic for students, but these events have come to a halt this year. COVID-19 has kicked fans out of the bleachers and caused many in the district to enroll in the online option. For those students, classes are composed of peers and teachers from all high schools in the district, making school pride difficult to find.

While a strong connection to their home school may not be a priority for most students, it is for Liana Morilla '21 of West High.

"Showing our pride and acknowledging that you like being a part of the school is what forms our community," Morilla said. "We have to go to school almost everyday for months, so it's important to have a community."

City High student Jacob Smith '22 also recognizes the important role that being a part of a community plays in having a good year.

"I love City High. I think it's a great community," Smith said. "It's my junior year. For a lot of people it's probably the hardest year and the most rewarding year, so it kind of sticks that I

want to stick with at my home school."

The lack of school spirit in the online course is especially felt by students. Some, such as Ahmed Elsheikh '24, a West High student, fear they are missing out on an emotional high school experience.

"This is my freshman year, and I feel like I missed the nostalgia of my first day," Elsheikh said. "That was one of my favorite things, that feeling of having a whole year ahead of me, but you don't really get that feeling in online school."

The lack of in-person interaction has also added an obstacle for student athletes, who had to overcome a two-week break at the beginning of the school year. Micaela Fennell '23, a cross-country runner at West, noticed the effects the break had on her performance.

"Some days I would do the bare minimum and consider it a workout. Others I work above and beyond because I felt guilty, but inconsistency like that is not helpful to improve your overall fitness," Fennell said. "I was definitely better when I had a few friends by my side pushing me through a tiring workout."

Sports also play a large part in the high school

experience of the students who are in the stands. City High student Aida Bahner '22 notes that going to games and cheering on the team was one of the main ways people expressed their school spirit in previous years.

"Football games are probably the thing I miss the most," Bahner said. "Overpoints there, everyone supports and sees each other, and I feel like it just won't be the same this year without that."

Another important aspect of school pride is participating in extracurricular activities such as school clubs and musical ensembles. While some of these activities have found ways to adapt to the new situation and meet safely, many of them have been postponed.

"I'm going to miss marching band a lot," said Morilla. "I know a lot of people don't like marching band, but I really like it because it's time I get to hang out with my friends outside of school."

According to data released by K12ON, approximately 4% of online students are from City High, 39% are from West, 17% are from Liberty and 2% are from Tate. Malika Karimi '21 is part of the 17% from Liberty High.

The breakout rooms liberally rarely meet than one other liberty student, and I probably don't know them," Karimi said. "I think it's kind of funny (when) somebody like, 'I go to Liberty,' and I'm like, 'Oh I didn't even know you went there.'"

Although there are drawbacks to missing the schools, Bahner feels it has given the students enrolled in the online program the chance to make new friendships with people from around the district.

"I think it's so cool meeting new people," Bahner said. "There's two people I see in all of my classes, and we're always in the same breakout group, so I definitely think I can see myself becoming friends with them."

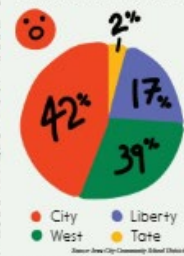
However, building new friendships hasn't been easy for everyone. For some, missing the schools has been more of an obstacle to online learning

than an opportunity. It can make it harder to facilitate Zoom breakout room discussions. Bahner has a tip to overcome the discomfort working with new classmates brings.

"It's almost kind of a conversation starter to be like, 'Hey do you go to West?' do you go to Liberty?' and then you say hi and you introduce yourself."

Another opportunity for those on the online

DISTRIBUTION OF ONLINE STUDENTS



Source: West City Community School District

track in the chance to be taught by teachers from different schools. However, if students choose to enroll in the hybrid model the following semester, they might have an almost entirely new set of teachers.

"I only have one Liberty teacher," Karimi said. "My main concern is when we go back, having

all new teachers and having to recreate that relationship from scratch."

Bahner is also worried about the inevitable transition back to in-person instruction.

"The adjustment to online is already so hard with figuring out your workload and stuff, and I feel like just when we get used to it, it's just going to flip. We're going to have to go on [to] a whole new schedule with new teachers and new classmates... I want to be back, but I also want the same teachers."

Even with the many struggles that come with online school, the lack of community, the unfamiliar faces on Zoom and eventual transition back to in-person schooling, the district has been doing its best to make online school a great experience for students.

"To keep school spirit alive in the online course, City High has been taking steps to try and stay involved with students. During homework, otherwise known as Advisory Time, Principal Kevin Hagan hosts an optional assembly over Zoom for students to offer support and extend them that they are Little Hawks. According to Smith, it's all in an effort to build community and maintain enthusiasm.

Director of Online Programs Gregg Schultz has made an effort to promote community building online through the event "Tag, Tag, Tag." The event encouraged students and teachers to turn on their cameras and show off their hats.

As for the shift to in-person learning, the district's teachers are aware of potential issues that could be caused by the return and are working with each other to cover the same material at a similar pace through consistent communication.

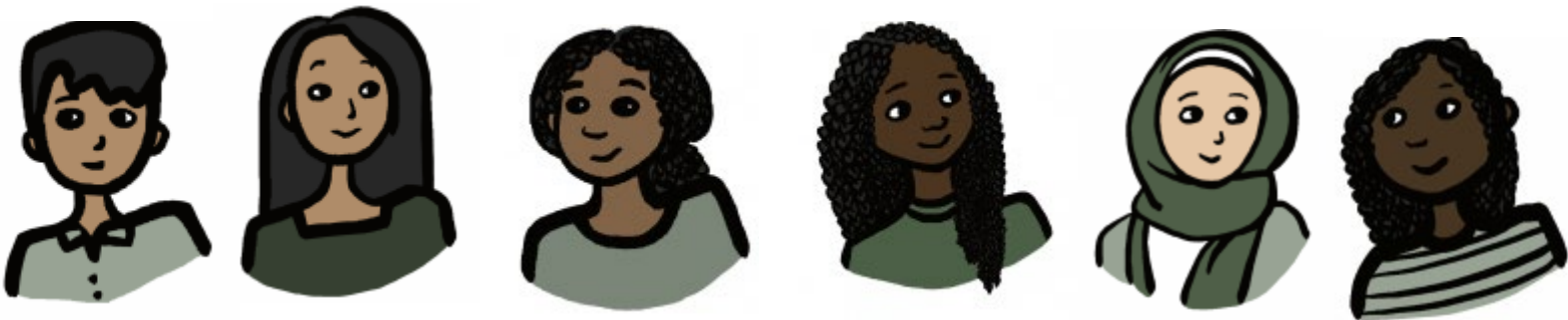
"All of my teachers are doing a really good job trying to break the awkwardness between students and reuniting our time as we're not overwhelmed with homework," Morilla said. "I'm confident my teachers will do a really good job managing this school year."

This is my freshman year + I feel like I missed the nostalgia of my first day.
-Ahmed Elsheikh '24



All for One

Our school district offered both an online and hybrid program for students to choose from, so the online program was composed of students from all four local high schools. I implemented school colors from each school and created simplistic faces to show the varied emotions students had about interacting with students and teachers from other schools. [Link](#).



Standing in solidarity: protester profiles

Our publication does summer coverage in addition to our regular publications throughout the year, so in the summer of 2020 we knew we wanted to cover Black Lives Matter protests that were happening in Iowa City. Since it was difficult to get photos at the time because of COVID-19, we decided to illustrate the students who were profiled, resulting in this feature image and individual portraits of the students. [Link](#).



مسيرة رحمة الله
RAHMATALLAH'S ROAD

Math teacher Hanan Rahmatallah reflects on embarking on her journey becoming an educator and learning the English language.

BY FAREEMA AHMAD

I throughout high school, math teacher Hanan Rahmatallah was ambitious. She was involved in a diverse range of activities from staying to playing sports. She especially enjoyed the wonders of creating, inspired by her siblings getting their doctorate in engineering. Rahmatallah made it a goal to become an engineer herself. Little did she know she would use her creative skills differently.

Growing up to Iraq, Rahmatallah experienced the tumultuous war, which particularly disrupted her senior year of high school. As a result, Rahmatallah fell behind on her schoolwork because the Iraq college admission system only takes into account senior students' core during their senior year. Rahmatallah knew she wouldn't be able to pursue a career in engineering as she had initially hoped. Instead, Rahmatallah embarked on a journey to pursue a career in education, and this twist in fate sparked her path towards becoming a math teacher.

"At the beginning, when I got to college, I said 'Oh my goodness, this is not what I was hoping,'" Rahmatallah said. "But when I [think back to] elementary school, I loved to teach my peers. I was always helping my friends, leading them to what to do. Maybe because I loved to teach my peers, that was inside me... Maybe that was my destiny."

After graduating college, Rahmatallah married her partner and raised a family. Later, she decided it may be a good idea to move to the U.S.

Rahmatallah's practice paid off when she got hired for her first job in Iowa as a teacher for a childcare facility. However, Rahmatallah still had yet to become completely fluent in English, and although she faced many challenges due to language barriers and cultural differences, she was determined to overcome them.

"I wanted to learn the language; that was my pain," Rahmatallah said. "It's not about my paycheck because that was the first step... It's very normal to suffer, but you need to work hard in order to get your goal accomplished."

To continue practicing her language skills, Rahmatallah borrowed the books used at the childcare facility and took them home to read to her children. Some books came with audio, so she also played those to practice her accent with certain words.

As Rahmatallah became more fluent in English, she began to look for job opportunities within the Des Moines Independent Community School District. While scrolling through their website, she stumbled upon a job opening for a bilingual community outreach worker. After an interview and a glowing recommendation from her boss at the childcare center, Rahmatallah got the job. She helped teach ESL students adjust to the classroom and Arabic-speaking families navigate the education system. Through the shared struggle of conquering language barriers, Rahmatallah instantly formed connections with her new students and their families.

"They were so excited when I was showing them I'm also a language learner and like them. I believe it goes from the impression that it's okay to make mistakes; even a teacher can make a mistake," Rahmatallah said. "They've been going through the same process I had been going through, learning the language and everything."

Soon after, Rahmatallah worked as a paraprofessional for elementary and middle school teachers. While she assisted teachers' education with grading, paperwork and translation, she also learned about the educational writing in preparation for becoming a teacher herself.

After lots of hard work and the encouragement of her colleagues, Rahmatallah became an independent teacher for seventh-grade math. Still, she was never afraid to ask for help with language, even from her students.

"I told them, 'Please correct me when I make a mistake because I want to improve myself'... Sometimes they [would] break the words apart [to] help me pronounce it with them," Rahmatallah said. "This is how we learn, so I'm not shy if I make a grammar mistake or a language mistake because I am a second language speaker."

As time went on, Rahmatallah found her skills connecting with and empowering ESL students would be better suited at the high school level. After her children got accepted into the University of Iowa, the opportunity arose they were finally moving to Iowa City.

"I'M A PERSON WHO LIKES TO LEARN MY ENTIRE LIFE. IT'S NOT ABOUT MY AGE... AS LONG AS I'M LIVING, I'M LEARNING."

-HANAN RAHMATALLAH, MATH TEACHER

hanan@iqah.com
Follow math teacher Hanan Rahmatallah on these platforms:

"She has the warmest heart and understands students at a level that I am jealous of sometimes. She just really has a high level of empathy for her students, struggling students and especially ESL students," Kowalek said. "She is genuinely concerned and cares for each of her students and takes it to heart."

Rahmatallah has now completed her ESL endorsement and is working towards finishing her master's degree at the University of Iowa. After all of her trials and tribulations, she wants students struggling with language to know that it is okay to make mistakes.

"Don't give up, and don't be shy to speak. Always, even if you make mistakes, you can't correct yourself," Rahmatallah said. "I'm a person who likes to learn my entire life. So not about my age... As long as I'm living, I'm learning."

TIMELINE

الرحلة العملية

IRAQ
Rahmatallah goes to college to become a math teacher.

DES MOINES
Rahmatallah begins teaching at a child care facility. Later, she works with the school district as a bilingual community outreach worker, a paraprofessional and finally a seventh grade math teacher.

IOWA CITY
Rahmatallah starts teaching high school math.

Scan to read the article in Arabic:
أصبح الرابط لتقرأ المقال بالعربية



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Rahmatallah's Road

This profile was about Ms. Rahmatallah, the only Muslim teacher at our school, and her journey from Iraq to Iowa City. I knew I wanted to incorporate floral embellishments into the design, so I researched flower meanings and settled upon lotus flowers. Their meanings of resilience connected to her persistence at learning English, purity to her kind and wholesome nature, and rebirth to starting a new life in Iowa City seemed to fit well. [Link](#).