

A Progressive U.S. in the Hands of Obama

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As a prominent, inspiring figure in America, Barack Obama receives abundant support from individuals who favor his leadership. However, there is no doubt that Obama receives persistent criticism from those who disagree with his policies and loathe his attitude in his seventh and currently ongoing eighth year in office. One of the common judgments that many critics hold is that Obama has been unproductive throughout his years as the President of the United States. Regardless of what the media publishes about him, or what Obama hears, he presented himself confidently to America, reminding us of his accomplishments in office during this year's State of the Union address on Jan. 12. President Obama has made influential policies to improve America's economy and health care system while reforming our country's involvement with terrorism. Each of his policies are measures that truly make an effort to combat the dangers this country has

endured years before his presidency. Due to Obama's Affordable Care Act, more Americans are receiving health care coverage than ever before. Obamacare gives access to affordable health insurance. While presidents have failed to create universal health insurance for the past



century, Obama's efforts in pushing for this health care reform has caused health care inflation to decline. Obama's regulations did not only revolve around domestic matters. Currently, our country is partnering with local and international forces to improve Syria's living conditions. Another influential effort included

Obama's call on halting the dispersion of Ebola in West Africa with help from our military, doctors and development workers. This led to his establishment of a Trans-Pacific Partnership that has improved worker's working conditions, opened more markets and advanced American leadership in Asia. His actions proves that he uses his prominence as a political figure to help those in need. Also, through the relentless acts of terrorism our country has endured, Obama sets his protection of the American people as a priority. His vigilant ways in protecting the country include partnering with 60 other countries to cut off Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) flow of plans in harming America. Through thick and thin, President Obama continues to strive for our country to become stronger than ever. He holds potential in completing his presidency effectively regardless of what the media implies about him. In special times like President Obama's final State of the Union address, he succeeds in reminding Americans of his accomplishments while announcing his agenda to continue the growth of our country.

CAN YOU DIG IT?



Lights, Camera, Action toward Racial Diversity

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Over the past two weeks, social media has been filled with angry tweets and posts criticizing this year's Oscar nominations. For the second year in a row, the actors and actresses nominated for the top acting categories are all white, resulting in Hollywood figures boycotting the awards show and an immense amount of backlash for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. As the film industry's highest award, the Oscar is undoubtedly amazing for those who are nominated and those who win, but the lack of racial recognition within the entertainment industry is anything but honorable. Of course, Oscar nominations should not be given to directors or actors of color simply to fulfill a politically correct vision of diversity; nor is it the Academy's fault that this year's distinguished films revolved around all-white casts. Nonetheless, the outrage that has erupted from this year's Oscar nominations reminds us that diversity is something that mass media can significantly use much more of. The beauty of films lie in the fact that they portray stories and experiences that matter. When we praise and reward certain stories above others, it sends a message that American cinema supports one type of image. As history has proven time and time again, America is made up of more than just "one type." As the hashtag "#OscarsSoWhite" trends worldwide and videos like BuzzFeed's "10 Things Less White Than the Oscars" parody this controversy, the issue of diversity has resurfaced to entice a sense of change within Hollywood. The Academy's recent announcement to make radical changes to its recruiting process and governing structure proves that change is slowly coming to life. The Academy's goal to increase the number of female and minority members by 2020 is a step in the right direction amidst a time of criticism. After all, diverse representation is undeniably something we all dig.



Powerball Not Worth the Hassle

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Known as one of the most popular lottery games in America, Powerball allows people to win millions of dollars by buying \$2 tickets. Because of this, many people buy an excessive amount of tickets to increase their chances of winning. However, because of the massive amount of people who participate in the Powerball, the chances of winning the grand jackpot are extremely slim. This past January, the jackpot for the Powerball grew to \$1,586,400,000, the largest winning amount in Powerball history. According to CNN, the odds of winning are 1 in 292 million. There are total of 175.5 million ways to combine numbers in order to win, one is more likely to become a movie star than actually win the lottery. Despite the fact that the chances of winning are insanely low, some people spend a large amount of money on lottery tickets to win, bringing to light whether buying tickets are worth it in the long run. The statistics show that whether one buys a large amount of tickets or not, it is not worth the hassle of participating in the Powerball in the long run. The participants are losing out on their money and the money they spend on tickets keeps the game running to exploit even more people in the future. If it were not for the people participating and spending their money, the lottery would not exist. People are better off putting their money in a savings account rather than spending it on a large amount of Powerball tickets.

Hoping for a one in two hundred million chance to win the lottery may be exciting for some, but pouring money into the Powerball is ultimately pointless.

MOOR graphics by LESLIE HWANG

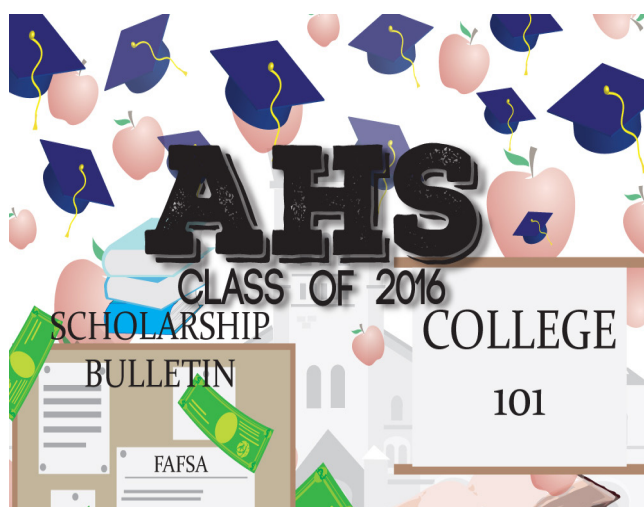
A Message to Seniors: Let's Thank Our School

NADIA GOV
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The end of the school year seems high for seniors as we settle into our concluding semester at AHS. With so many "lasts" coming up like our final Sadie's, prom and Grad Night, reflecting on these past four years becomes inevitable. Though it is easier to remember certain aspects of the high school life such as dances, clubs or sports, I urge everyone to take a moment to appreciate the more subtle connections we have created in our time here. Perhaps it was a particular teacher that inspired you to further pursue an academic interest, or maybe it was that one class where, although you didn't necessarily know everybody on a personal level, interaction and discussion came naturally. There is something to take away from the camaraderie that comes from going to school and being able to look at the

same sum of faces every day. Unfortunately, the comfort of this mutual bond that stems from more or less mandatory attendance will disappear after graduation. Whatever the future holds for

ation requirements to fall back on. All of us will eventually find ourselves in a sea of individuals no longer united by a common goal, for we will have to begin mapping out the paths for our own lives. Moreover, the abundant opportunities for guidance that are offered to us will become sparse and difficult to find; workshops, presentations and counselors will be replaced by a "you will only get help if you look for it yourself" system of aid. This is by no means an attempt to intimidate people, but rather, it is simply a reminder that much gratitude is owed to everything AHS has done for us. The assistance provided by the mere atmosphere of our high school community has pushed us forward for so long that many have forgotten how much we have come to rely on it. Because of the impending goodbye we will have to say to our school, it is time for us to return the favor and recognize the significant role it has played in propelling us to where we are today.



us seniors, the glaring threat of independence looms undoubtedly. We will soon be forced to make more decisions that can potentially affect the entire course of our lives, and we won't have something as trivial as a list of gradu-