



## Diversity and Cultural Unity in America

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Imagine this: there are two apples, one green and one red. They look very different on the outside, but on the inside, they appear to be the same. In essence, this represents the American identity.

Many people in America have come from different places all over the world and therefore celebrate different holidays and have different tastes in music, foods, clothes.

"Heritage is a major influence because it defines who I am. Most Americans descend from some form of non-native lineage and our heritage shapes our daily lives. [Heritage] shapes the way I interact with others, the food I eat, the way I speak and the way I carry myself," senior Richard Lam said.

When people immigrate from other countries to America, they often bring their own distinct flavors to existing traditions.

For instance, descendants of far eastern Asian cultures celebrate the Lunar New Year, while there is another nationally recognized observance of the same type of holiday on January 1 every year.

In addition, an international buffet of cuisines can be discovered within a few miles radius or in an aisle of a local supermarket. This shows the result of ethnic variety in the United States, especially in Alhambra, where people of Asian, Latin American, African, European and other ethnic roots coexist.

A person's culture is shown through their everyday lives. However, as one person starts to live within another culture for an extended period of time, they

begin to integrate with other cultures. A person who used to only celebrate Chinese New Year may now also celebrate New Year's, and other people may try other foods from other cul-

Magaña said, "but I don't think that it affects the way I am with other people of other cultures."

According to a statistic done by usatoday.com, it is approximated that one out of eight people in the United States is foreign born.

Over time, immigrants may experience some amount of cultural assimilation as they become more acquainted with other people.

Though everyone may have various origins, there is one thing that everyone shares while claiming the United States as home: "the American dream." The desire to make one's place in a "land of opportunities" is ever more prevalent, in spite of any imminent challenges for

younger, hopeful generations.

Since people of various cultures can reside in their own separate communities, the overall view of their distinct places give off the impression that the United States is a "salad bowl" of races. Yet, America is a "melting pot," because there is a sense of assimilation and affirmation in the overall community.

After all, there are grounds of common beliefs and goals. When asked what one may have in common with other Americans, the expectations from a work ethic and education come to mind.

"[I am expected] to always do my best. [...] This is something that exists no matter what culture you come from," Magaña said.

MOOR graphic by SHARON TRANG

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**- Richard Lam**

tures they have not tried before.

Everyone is different in some way. While their own culture will always stay with them, other cultures will be assimilated into theirs as well.

"I am more comfortable with my own culture," junior Christopher

## Reading Recognition Program Commends Student Progress

ELLEN LI  
News Editor

On Feb. 17, AHS held its first Annual Reading Recognition Ceremony in the cafeteria, where parents and school administration were invited to partake in honoring students for their achievements and improvements in the reading program.

According to English teacher Elizabeth Proud, the program consists of four different classes: English I and II Intensive, which serves freshmen and sophomore students on campus who are at least two grade levels behind in reading, and Stretch 9 and 10, which serve the students that are only one grade level behind.

"The goal is that [each] student can increase their lexile score by at least 100 points, which is roughly two grade levels within a school year," Proud said. "Besides lexile score, which is determined by taking the Scho-

lastic Reading Inventory, the class really dedicates much of its time to instill independent reading habits so that students will eventually be life-long learners and readers."

Lexile scores are a measurement of a child's reading abilities based on the Lexile Framework for Reading.

The Lexile Framework evaluates both reading ability and text complexity on the same scale. Unlike other systems, the Lexile Framework uses assessment results to match readers with texts essential for growth, while monitoring their progress towards standards.

Parents and students in the program enjoyed a complementary breakfast provided by the school while students were individually recognized with certificates for improvements in their lexile scores.

"[The program] will encourage kids to do a better job in school," Claudia Calero, mother of Justine Calero,

said. "To see my daughter being recognized for something she accomplished is a really nice feeling. I see improvement in my daughter's reading skills, and I think the teachers are on the right track."

Many strategies were implemented in order to better foster learning in the students. For instance, smaller class sizes allowed for more one-on-one teaching, and active reading strategies, explicit teaching of reading strategies and a scaffolded core curriculum were employed. Furthermore, independent reading at the students' levels allowed them to use their new skills to read on their own. Together, these approaches helped many students improve.

"We wanted to motivate students and show them others cared about their success," Proud said. "When we did this celebration, students realized that they actually did make a lot of growth."



NEW YEAR, NEW GROWTH AHS celebrates the accomplishments of students involved with the English Intensive and Stretch reading programs.

MOOR photos by ELLEN LI



### In Other News...

New Mexico man faces charges after signing up dog to vote

George Washington Chicken McNugget going over \$4000 on Ebay

Vigilante jams cell phone calls to keep peace on city bus

High school girl shoots basketballs while in a coma

Utah woman gives birth to third leap year baby

Kansas man receives lost wallet after 35 years