

The American Dream for all

By: Eddie Lin

As an Asian American applying to college soon, noise fills the house with the talk of “remember to get good grades, go to good camps, and score high on the SAT.” Many wonder, where does that pressure come from? I’d say it comes from the values of education that my parents instilled.

It is precisely these cultural values, not an inborn nature that give Chinese Americans the lead in academic success and an edge in success. This is not to discredit the rich culture of other ethnicities at all.. However, there is an increasing gap between Whites+Asians and other minority groups in education. This is of concern as it blemishes the icon of America as the land of equal opportunity. And because of this, race in the form of affirmative action has been a huge issue in both everyday discussions and on the national stage.

One can see the imbalances of races through examining college statistics. And this is not due to nature, studies prove that nature is not the cause of differences in achievement. The discrimination from years of oppression for African Americans and a currently restrictive immigration system for Hispanics has chained these groups into lower performance levels. These chains oppress these groups into a cycle of poverty, which is a killer of success. This stands in contrast to Asian Americans who have recently enjoyed increased education performance due to a more selective immigration process that brought forth my parents to this area. Succeeding as a disadvantaged minority with racism and fewer resources is far harder than in an educated Asian household such as mine. Often times, the averages of these minorities do not have the

same opportunities because their family has less money to afford camps, lessons, etc., poor influences, and a racist society that stereotypes these minorities to not perform well. Through many years of this oppression, the cycle often continues.

Implementing color blind policies in order to make a college experience color blind doesn't make sense. Because of the high proportion of Asians and Whites in colleges, college culture automatically defaults to white and Asian culture. Even after years of affirmative action, a Georgetown report listed colleges as still having less disadvantaged minority representation. And while there may be outliers, we need to look at the averages in determining actions. To ignore these numbers would be turning a blind eye. As an Asian with this in mind, a staple part of college is enjoying diversity, without the use of affirmative action, diversity becomes nearly non-existent. And without diversity, how can we Asians be able to better understand and deal with other cultures?

While race is an important indicator of diversity, it's only one of many factors in reviewing an applicant. First generation college students possess special benefits to give an edge to poorer Asians and whites. Even rich people benefit from legacy preferences and also possessing the money to resume pad their children. Ultimately, colleges need race-conscious policies along with society implementing other equalizing policies; this evens out the playing field and allows a more diverse environment for students. Although affirmative action may make our college applications harder, Asian Americans must take action in allowing our country to be more reflective of the American dream for all.