

# YOUTH INITIATIVE HIGH SCHOOL KALEIDOSCOPE

Volume 18, Issue 1

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## CHOICE & VOICE:

### *HOW YIHS EMPOWERS ITS STUDENTS*

We love books at Youth Initiative High School. They take us to other worlds or help us learn about this one. We read them all the time. But there are a few things you can't learn from a book—one of them is initiative. When you're done with a book or you don't like it you can always close it and put it neatly back on the shelf. But life doesn't work like that, and we all know there's no book for life.

Being truly alive implies responsibility, and from responsibility comes empowerment, and an empowered person takes initiative. That's the chain of events that we create here. We expect students to take responsibility for their education and take accountability for their actions. Sometimes that means mistakes and even failure, but it always means that students are ultimately in control of what happens to them, academically and otherwise. When a student realizes this, they are ready to become full members of society; they are ready to identify and do what needs

to be done. In short, they are ready to take initiative.

At YIHS, initiative is more than just a name. We strive to cultivate it in our students in every decision we make. We provide students with choice and voice and we hold them accountable for how they use them. It's a successful formula.

In this issue we explore just a few ways that we give students the choice to be the best person they can be.



**A Midsummer Night's Dream**  
By William Shakespeare

Friday, Saturday, & Sunday:  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 12<sup>th</sup>  
&  
Friday & Saturday  
May 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>

PRODUCED BY YIHS



# SHE TALKS WITH HER FEET

## RUNNING FOR MY LIFE BY JAALI PARRISH

*Youth Initiative High School works tirelessly to afford its students every opportunity to learn and expand their horizons. As a school with a relatively small student body, offering sports programming to our students has historically been a challenge. But we never stop looking for creative solutions and our efforts continue to pay off. For years we have cultivated sports cooperatives with area public schools. Three years ago, many YIHS students became charter members of the area's club soccer team, Driftless United. Two years ago our Girls' Volleyball team became our first WIAA sanctioned sports team. Last year, thanks to Jaali Parrish, YIHS held its first pep rally, a bratwurst-addled fete complete with live rock n' roll that sent Jaali and her teammates off to the state track competition in LaCrosse. We're proud of Jaali and of all our student athletes who embody our values of initiative and cooperation through the sports in which they participate. Below is Jaali's "running" account of how she came to be a small town track star.*

Before I came to YIHS I was homeschooled. I really enjoyed the homeschool life since—well, I enjoy being at home and I love my mom. In homeschool I learned history, algebra, a little Spanish, cooking with my dad, grammar with Terry Beck, and a multitude of other subjects. The daily schedule consisted of class in the morning with my mother, and Mondays and Wednesdays there was Spanish and cooking with my dad. After the morning classes there was homework and practicing instruments. Wednesdays Terry came over to teach grammar.

The downside to homeschool was that I could not go out for track, and I didn't really hang out with friends as often as I would have had I been in school. I ran track in 7th grade and loved it, but I couldn't do it again during my 8th grade year because as a homeschooleder I wasn't eligible for public school sports.

I came to YIHS because the environment and the way it was run appealed to me greatly, but a major reason for coming to YIHS was so that I could go out for track.

I joined track because I like to run and I like to compete. What can I say, I'm a competitive person! Track meets are fun social events and I love to cheer on my teammates. Also, the feeling of crossing the finish line, knowing that I've run a good race, is such a wonderful feeling.

Last year (2012), during the earlier track meets, I ran the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash, and 400-meter dash. I was also a long jumper last year, but I injured my ankle landing wrong and so I *won't* be doing that again this year. As the more important meets (Regionals, Sectionals, and State) arrived, I had to decide whether or not to run only open events (just me running) or team relay events. Since it was my first year running track, my coach strongly suggested that I run in the relay team so that I could help my older teammates reach the state competition.

We made it to the State competition in two events: the 4x100-meter relay and the 4x400-meter relay. I was the anchor (last runner) for both relays. Being part of a relay team was incredible—and also very nerve-wracking. Knowing that once I got the baton I was supposed to bring the team home was scary! I didn't want to mess up the hand-off, accidentally drop the baton, or take off too soon! Though I had these fears, I somehow managed to do well.

We made it to the final heat at the State competition and *almost* got to the podium. We came in seventh place. I remember feeling disappointed and angry—but also proud. Proud because, even though we didn't get to the podium; my relay team made it to State—in my freshman year!

This year I will be running on my own in the open events and hope to make it back to the State competition.







# AMPUTATED MONSTERS OR RENAISSANCE STUDENTS?

## PONY UP TO THE LEARNING BUFFET BY JACOB HUNDT

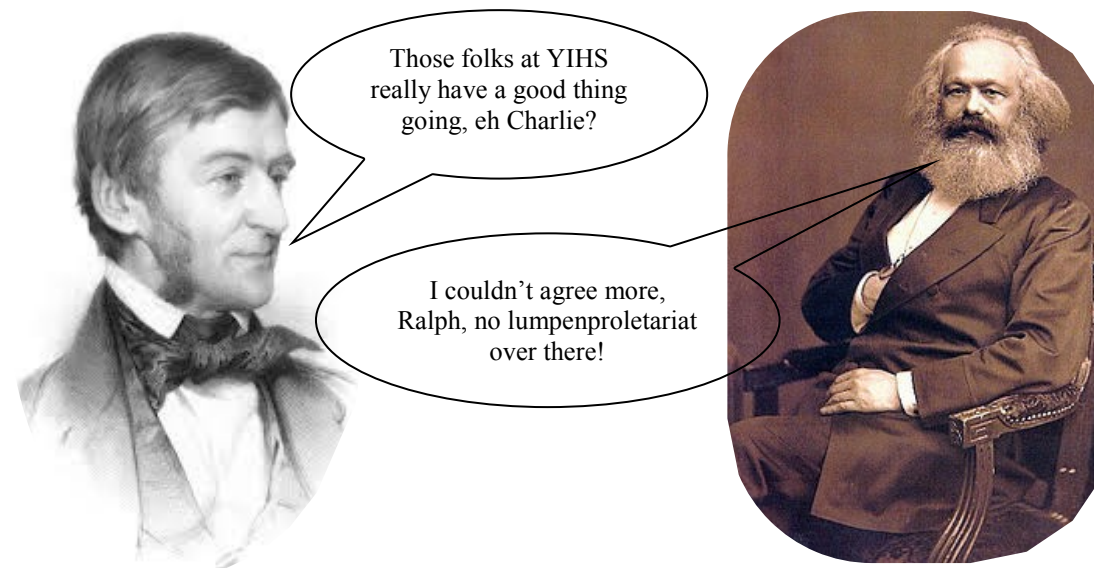
In "The American Scholar," an oration delivered before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa Society on August 31, 1837 that has been called "America's intellectual Declaration of Independence," Ralph Waldo Emerson invoked an ancient allegory to convey his intuition of the pervasive and dehumanizing fragmentation of life in the industrializing modern world:

*It is one of those fables, which, out of an unknown antiquity, convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.*

*The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man, — present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the divided or social state, these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies, that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters, — a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.*

*Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. ...*

Nor have Emerson and his fellow Transcendentalists been alone in this unease. Emerson's materialist contemporary, Karl Marx, echoed the "walking monsters" of the Emersonian fable when he described the proletarian workers of the industrial age as suffering "alienation" (*Entfremdung*) from the essence of their humanness as a consequence of narrow and limiting factory labor. Likewise, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, even the universities and the world of the intellect experienced such rapid and pervasive fragmentation that has become increasingly impossible for scholars in the humanities, "hard" sciences, and the various branches of the social sciences to converse fruitfully across disciplinary boundaries due to the absence of a common vocabulary and points of reference.



9th Grade Blocks		10th Grade Blocks		11th Grade Blocks		12th Grade Blocks	
AM Blocks	PM Blocks	AM Blocks	PM Blocks	AM Blocks	PM Blocks	AM Blocks	PM Blocks
Orientation Week/Camping Trip							
Foods/Nutrition 9	Comedy/Tragedy	History of Technology	Water Cycle	Botany	Computers	Native Cultures	Meteorology
Service Week/Grade 10 Expedition/Grade 12 College Tour - Sept. 23-27							
English 9	Skills Elective 1 <i>Carpentry, Stained Glass, Maintenance, Sewing</i>	Zoology	Skills Elective 1 <i>Carpentry, Stained Glass, Maintenance, Sewing</i>	English 11	Skills Elective 1 <i>Carpentry, Stained Glass, Maintenance, Sewing</i>	Senior Workshop	Skills Elective 1 <i>Carpentry, Stained Glass, Maintenance, Sewing</i>
US History - Pre 1870s	Art Elective 1 <i>2D Design Photography 1</i>	Foods/Nutrition 10	Art Elective 1 <i>2D Design Photography 1</i>	Native Cultures	Art Elective 1 <i>2D Design Photography 1</i>	Genetics/Biotechnology	Art Elective 1 <i>2D Design Photography 1</i>
Human Anatomy	<i>Sculpture 1 Figure Drawing</i>	English 10	<i>Sculpture 1 Figure Drawing</i>	Physics/Electricity	<i>Sculpture 1 Figure Drawing</i>	Transcendentalists	<i>Sculpture 1 Figure Drawing</i>
Theme Week - Dec. 16-20							
Civics/Intro to YIHS	Art Elective 2 <i>Circus, Drawing, Comics Metalsmithing</i>	Chemistry 10	Art Elective 2 <i>Circus, Drawing, Comics Metalsmithing</i>	World History	Art Elective 2 <i>Circus, Drawing, Comics Metalsmithing</i>	Foods/Nutrition 12	Art Elective 2 <i>Circus, Drawing, Comics Metalsmithing</i>
Thermal Physics	Computers	Poetry	Drugs	Chemistry 11	Art History	Russian Lit	Meditation
Western Religions	Art Elective 3 <i>Play Set Design/Costume</i>	Western Religions	Art Elective 3 <i>Play Set Design/Costume</i>	English 11	Art Elective 3 <i>Play Set Design/Costume</i>	World History	Art Elective 3 <i>Play Set Design/Costume</i>
Chemistry 9	<i>Painting Screen Printing</i>	English 10	<i>Painting Screen Printing</i>	Parzival	<i>Painting Screen Printing</i>	Economics/Money	<i>Painting Screen Printing</i>
Play Intensive Week/Service Week							
English 9	Geology/Geography	Physics/Kinematics	Automechanics	Grade 11 College Tour		Chemistry 12	Art History
Grade 9 Expedition				Economics/Money	Meteorology		
Revolutions	Intensive Block <i>Agriculture, Photo II Mural Painting</i>	Ancient History	Intensive Block <i>Agriculture, Photo II Mural Painting</i>	Foods/Nutrition 11	Intensive Block <i>Agriculture, Photo II Mural Painting</i>	English 12	Intensive Block <i>Agriculture, Photo II Mural Painting</i>

Above is a working draft of the 2013-2014 schedule of block classes. Not listed here is a full complement of Math, Foreign Language, Music, and Movement classes. The average 4 year student at YIHS will be introduced to a staggering number of people, places, and processes and many of those experiences will occur because of a conscious choice on the part of the student.

If Emerson, Marx, and the rest are right, it may be that some of the greatest assets of the modern world – the thorough and complete division of labor along the lines prescribed by Adam Smith, as well as the explosive growth of scholarly and scientific knowledge into myriad branches and fields – have also become a serious challenge to our very humanness. How can we take advantage of the blessings and richness of our contemporary world without falling into the condition of alienated, amputated walking monsters, only partially human, yet exquisitely specialized? Can we avoid being “metamorphosed into a thing, into many things”?

The premise of the Waldorf education, and of the Youth Initiative curriculum, is that we can. In comparison with other models of education, especially around the world, students at YIHS are challenged to exercise and develop a very broad array of human faculties. Throughout their high school careers, all students at YIHS are asked to engage world history and culture through literature, history, and the humanities, to delve thoughtfully into the natural world through observational and experimental science, to cultivate clear logical thinking through mathematics, to appreciate and cultivate beauty through the fine arts, to cultivate memory and cultural understanding through the study of foreign languages, to solve practical problems in the physical world through manual skills and crafts, and to work towards justice and practical political compromise through shared





*YIHS students usually don't make very good cogs. We're proud of that.*

Fought (the nobility), those who Prayed (the clergy), and those who Worked (the peasantry). In the place of this system, the Renaissance introduced a new ideal vision of the human being-- the Renaissance Man, who strove to become a master of all disciplines, including art, science, literature, philosophy, mathematics, statecraft, and more. It is one of the ironies of history that the historical process launched by the likes of Leonardo da Vinci and Galileo Galilei has brought us directly to a fragmentation of human nature more narrow than anything seen in the Middle Ages.

Throughout this time, however, the great leaps, the paradigm shifts, have continued to come from synthesizers, from those individuals with the ability to see more than their tiny field. And as the world becomes increasingly digitized and the river of information swells into a raging torrent, it can be argued that the need for true Renaissance Men and Women is greater now than it has ever been. We need, for example, Men and Women who can become absorbed by the chemistry and biology of soil and water, as well as the economics of farming and the politics of land use, as well as the beauty of a sunset over a gently contoured landscape of field and forest. To have separate experts in each of these areas will do us no good; indeed this divided perspective has already done us all great harm. Therefore, let us have no more walking monsters, no more amputated, alienated limbs and digits. Let us instead have full, real human beings whose "fountain of power" can be gathered up and poured out to bring the Earth into bloom.

school governance and service. Unlike many of their contemporaries around the world, YIHS students are neither forced nor allowed to narrowly specialize – or to amputate some organs of their human nature - at an early age.

At the same time, it is our hope that this broad exposure and ongoing challenge in diverse fields and activities will assist our graduates in identifying their true destiny. Especially during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years, the YIHS Faculty works closely with individual students as they chart their future paths. All students complete an extensive senior project and most also participate in an internship or apprenticeship during their senior year and as students proceed towards college or other post-secondary opportunities, their own unique passions and interests begin to take the lead, a flowering growth from well-watered and diversely-fertilized roots.

The present era of history has its earliest roots in the European Renaissance, a period which broke from the Medieval conception of a society rigidly divided into three castes – those who



# "AS IF OUR HANDS, OUR SIDES, VOICES AND MINDS, HAD BEEN INCORPORATE..."

## TRUST IN THE TEENAGER BY STEVEN LAURDAN

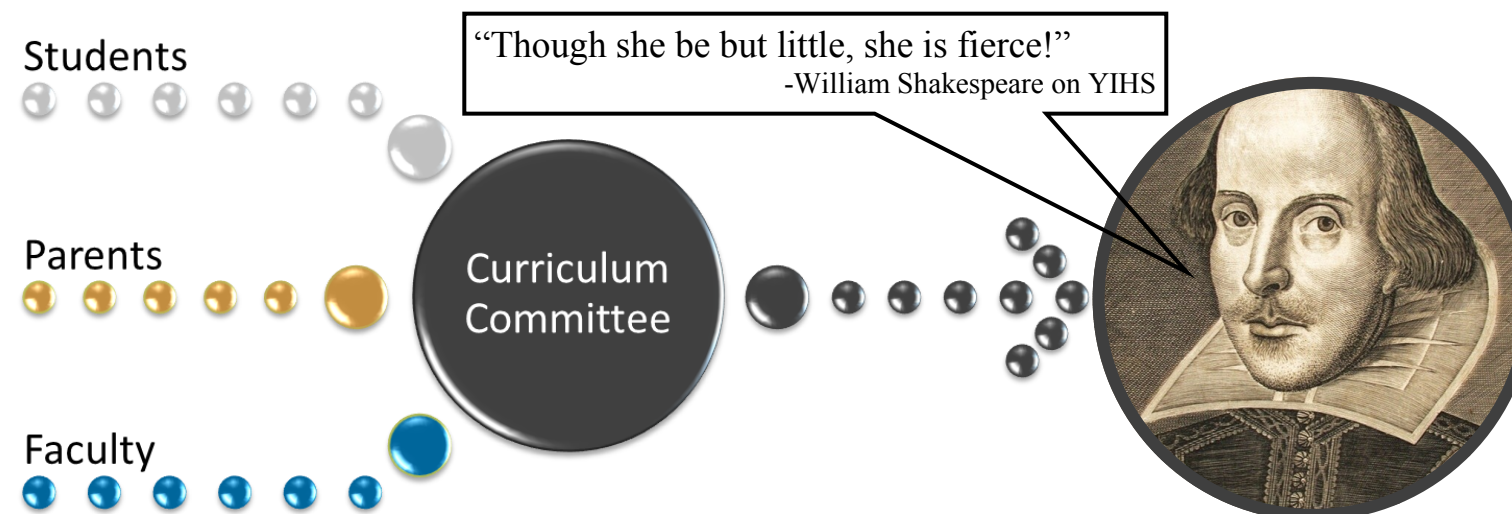
*Steven Laurdan has directed the last two plays produced at Youth Initiative High School. This year will be his third and each year we welcome his down-to-earth, calm, ironically undramatic approach to directing. As curtain time nears and the anxieties of dozens of students whip into a crescendo, Steven never blinks. His experience, wisdom, and steady hand make every play a success and a satisfying experience for all.*

The Spring Production this year at YIHS will be *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It was written by William Shakespeare, in case you didn't know. I'm told it will be the first Shakespearean production in the history of YIHS.

I'm strangely excited about approaching this show. I say strangely because I actually never thought I'd direct a Shakespearean play for high school. I'm pretty sure I've sworn that if I *did* direct one, it would certainly never be "*The Dream*"...as Bard-ophiles are wont to call it. It's not that I have anything against Shakespeare – or high school actors. But I started acting in high school, received a BFA in Theater, and went on to act more-or-less professionally for more-or-less thirty years, and I honestly believe these plays are best tackled later in life, as part of a career focus, and after honing other basic skills.

I'll add that I personally *really* enjoy the freshness and originality of modern play-writing, and by nature avoid plays that are too well-known or which smack of quote/unquote "high school theater". To my little mind, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* seemed too cliché in that regard...a beloved "chestnut" of high school drama programs for as far back as high schools have had drama programs.

So now, looking back, it's fun to see how easily the decision came about...how a group of students, a parent and a teacher helped me come around to deciding that this was the best choice, indeed the *only* choice, for this



year's play. Something fresh and original for me, and probably all of us.

The biggest challenge for any director is finding the right script, and when it's a high school production that challenge increases exponentially. Aside from obvious considerations of suitability and appropriateness, audience and technical needs, a script for school production has to provide roles for as many actors as possible. Ideally, everyone who wishes to participate should get a role to meet their comfort and skill levels. But that's no small task. The greatest hurdle is the curious fact that at high school auditions *female* students almost invariably out-





Kate Buche-Pattison will play Hermia and  
Kahlil Anacker will play Lysander

number males. Usually by a wide margin. I have a number of theories for this, but let's just say it never fails there'll be more women than you can cast and fewer men than you need.

So we started early this time. Jacob sent a questionnaire out last fall which revealed that most students favored a play that was modern, preferably comedic. Later informal polling showed me that I could probably expect around 14 women and four men to audition (on the nose!). Nevertheless I was confident and excited. I had the experience to do this thing. I'd find a knockout new play, one that would wow the faculty and stampede even the boys into the audition room!

Over the next few months I read literally dozens of plays, researched and considered dozens more. I discovered or unearthed scripts I fell in love with, really wanted to do, but had to admit weren't the 'right' play, for various reasons.

I sent for scripts that sounded like shoe-ins, only to find them not nearly as interesting or well-written as promised.

To put that period in a nutshell, after six months I was seriously stumped. And disheartened. The time was fast approaching to present the play and I had nothing to bring to the table. I'd exhausted my mental and literary resources. I'd spent hours Googling suggestions. And it was gradually dawning on me that what I needed was not really a 'fresh' new play, but fresh *eyes* with which to view the search. There was *something* out there. The right choice. But I'd blinded myself to it.

So one day I wandered into the student lounge during lunch time and just started talking to a handful of students there, asking if they had any suggestions. I don't know why it surprised me that they became excited to be included, but they did. I guess I thought I needed to show confidence and leadership in delivering a great production into their laps. But the reality, of course, is that they *wanted* to help choose the play. They *wanted* to be part of the search. The brain-storming began.

The ad hoc committee consisting of myself and several students met regularly over the next few weeks, sharing thoughts and suggestions by email between meetings. The leading contender for a while was a play called *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*. It was written by Tom Stoppard, in case you didn't know. It concerns two minor, strange, and thankless characters from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, with the brilliant twist that most of the action happens from *behind* those scenes. It's an award-winning piece – funny, surreal, and darkly philosophical – always popular with high school actors and audiences. Plus, there's lots of characters. But alas, it really wasn't the *right* play, for a number of reasons.

(Incidentally, American Players Theater will be doing both *Hamlet* and *R & G* this season, so it's likely they'll embrace a popular repertory concept of having the same actors play the dual roles for both plays, and keeping the shared action as similar as possible. I've never seen this done before...I'm so excited!)

I not sure when *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was first mentioned. I think it was in one of the emails. I fought back a knee-jerk urge to dismiss it or talk it down. I no longer had the luxury of snobbishness. It came up for discussion at the next meeting, and before long we



Steven Laurdan, YIHS Impresario



were talking about how exciting it was going to be. And that was that...everything was right about our choice. We were all excited at the vision and possibilities it offered. The only concerns were that it had been done, in recent memory, by Pleasant Ridge – but that (I now argued in favor) was pointless because the play was always being done somewhere. It was never *not* being done, it seemed to me....

The other concern was that we'd picked a Shakespearean play. A "Classical" play. In early responses to Jacob's questionnaire only a couple students had cast their lot for a Shakespearean play. A small few, however, had vowed they would *not* try out for the show if it was "classical".

This wasn't disconcerting. Actors in their teens always want roles that are exciting to their ego. They're at a point in life where they want to be seen as cool and sexy, tragical and...well, magical. And in all the Shakespearean canon, there is only one play where virtually every character fits that bill.

In fact, everything about *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is fulfilling for everyone involved. The staging and set can be extravagantly creative – or cleanly sparse. There are three different and distinct worlds circling 'round each other, sometimes colliding, so plot and characters are balanced and move quickly. There's room for spectacle. Room for simplicity, too. So above all it's a fun story. A "classical" play in which *playing* is encouraged and rewarded. That, I think, is the timeless charm of this piece, and why it offers such great rewards for actors and audiences.



Christine Zinky will play Helena and Jack Corbin will play Demetrius

## AND THE WINNER IS...



### JAALI PARRISH...AGAIN

She's more than just a jock, she is also the winner of the 2013 student t-shirt design contest. Jaali's winning design (pictured at left), a stunning recapitulation of YIHS' kaleidoscope logo, will be used in promotional materials for the 2013-2014 school year and will also be up for sale in a one-time-only, limited edition printing.

If you would like one of these stylish tees for your very own contact Matt Voz at [matt@yihs.net](mailto:matt@yihs.net). The last day to order is the last day of school, May 31st. T-shirts can be picked up on the first day of the new school year in August of 2013.



# FOREIGN TONGUES

LEARN — TEACH — LEARN

BY AYANA PERRY (CLASS OF '13) & ISIS ANACKER (CLASS OF '16)



Ayana Perry

*Long one of the most self-directed and self-motivated students at YIHS, Ayana Perry (left) accomplished one of her many goals last summer; after years of independently studying Japanese she was able to live in Japan for 6 weeks.*

*This year she chose to share her knowledge and experience with a kindred soul, Isis Anacker, a freshman who shared Ayana's passions for Japanese language and culture. Their relationship has proven mutually beneficial and is certainly a shining example of everything we value at our school.*

I first got interested in Japanese and the Japanese culture in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I don't remember why exactly but I decided sometime that year that I would make it one of my goals to learn Japanese, and to someday go to Japan. I started to try to teach myself Japanese at the end of my sophomore year, and found Keiko (the Japanese wife a YIHS alumnus) in my junior year and worked it out so that she could come teach me Japanese for 2 trimesters. Up until my junior year Japan seemed like a world away, an impossible goal for someone like me, with no money, no relatives there, no anything.

Then I heard about the Experiment in International Living through my uncle Breezy, and even then it still seemed impossible that I would be accepted and get enough scholarship money to go, but by some miracle I did! I studied Japanese relentlessly after that, knowing that in a few months I would be completely immersed in a different culture in a language that I had maybe 6 months of knowledge, all the while fear growing that I would get there and not understand a single thing that was said to me.

And for the first couple days that was indeed what it was like, but after a few days things got easier, and I feel like I learned in a month there what would have taken me years to learn in a classroom. At the end of the month I was able to communicate effectively and understand the vast majority of what was said to me. I can't tell you how much I prefer



Ayana Perry and Isis Anacker, tomodachi

speaking Japanese to English, it might be confusing at first, but once you have a general understanding of it, it's fun to speak and it sounds nice! Unlike English.

The Japanese culture is really quite vastly different than ours, and I feel like I fit in and can enjoy it so



much more than I do here. It's cleaner, more organized, the food is just so, so good, the people are so polite, and I cannot wait to go back some day. I honestly don't think I can describe the depth of how I feel about the Japanese language and culture; it connects with me in a way nothing else ever has before.

When started my senior year Isis Anacker came to me interested in learning Japanese, and it seemed to me like teaching her-or at least trying to anyways- would be a good way to keep my Japanese fresh, even learn a little more, and to also get some teaching experience, since I would like to someday teach English in Japan. And so far it seems to be working out quite well, I'm also using some the class time to study Kanji to further my knowledge of the Japanese language.

-Ayana Perry



*A scene from the wildly popular Japanese anime film Spirited Away. Like most of us, Isis Anacker dreams of one day cuddling a dragon.*

Konichiwa! Yoroshiku onegaishimasu.

(Hello! Nice to meet you.)

I am Isis Anacker, and one of the main reasons I came to Youth Initiative was because you can plan an Independent Study if you are really passionate about something. I have really wanted to learn Japanese for years, and I really want to do a student exchange there.

My fascination with Japan started with the Japanese anime cartoon *Spirited Away* when I was about ten. After watching that I started watching more weird anime fantasy (anime is Japanese' film animation). I started watching anime in Japanese with English subtitles, and reading tons of manga (Manga is Japanese comic books, or animated film). When I was about twelve I stopped obsessing about Japan for about a year, but then my neighbors were getting into the Japanese martial arts called Bujinkan, and I thought it was pretty cool, so I joined. Getting into Bujinkan got me bake into Japanese. This is when I started watching and reading books that weren't only anime or manga. I started loving the culture, the buildings, and appreciating the unique language. I decided that I wanted to go to Japan and that I would study Japanese in high school and try to visit Japan on an exchange.

During our Youth Initiative camping trip in the summer, I found out Ayana had gone to Japan, which is kind of weird because our families are close. I had no idea she had been studying Japanese. I asked Ayana if she would help me a little bit, maybe lend me a book, and explain something if I didn't understand.

I had to plan my Independent Study pretty carefully to get it accepted by the committee. I needed to have specific goals and a final project, plan my lessons, and more really fun things. The Independent Study Committee accepted my proposal and I was ready to learn.

During my Independent Study Ayana didn't only lend me a book and explain a couple things. She sat with me three times a week, every week (every language period). The Japanese language is so much weirder than I had expected. I learned about counters and counting, verb forms, verbs, and conjugating adjectives. Japanese is nothing like English or Spanish, and I have gotten so confused, and I still am a little confused about some of the stuff I am learning right now. But I get excited, curious, and at the same time I get annoyed that my brain won't go faster and remember things so that I can move on.

My goal is to go to Japan in my junior year of high school. I want to explore Japan, and go to a lot of Festival.



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