

Pathfinder

JANUARY 2024



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: EXCHANGE STUDENT IKRAM HASANLI

Golden West junior, Ikram Hasanli, is an exchange student from Baku, Azerbaijan. Ikram is spending this school year away from home to experience life as a student in California. His country shares a border with Armenia and is on the banks of the Caspian Sea. Azerbaijan means “protector of fire” and it is often called the Land of Fire. The country has about 350 mud volcanoes, some of which are 20 million years old. Ikram said that although his country is far away, people in California are similar. He recognized that Californians always smile and say hello. Although people in Azerbaijan don’t smile as openly, they are very generous and treat strangers like family. Ikram says that Azerbaijan has many interesting holidays and traditions. One of them is Nowruz (Persian New Year), which is celebrated in the spring. During this holiday, kids throw their hats in front of neighbors’ doors and hide. Then, the neighbors will fill the hats with treats. Ikram pointed out the similarities between this fun tradition and trick-or-treating on Halloween in the United States. Traditional foods in Azerbaijan are many varieties of rice and different types of dolmas (stuffed leaves, vegetables, and fruits). Ikram said that each family has a special rice recipe that is passed down from their ancestors. Ikram is very friendly and loves talking about his country. When you see him on campus, ask him to share more with you.



Ikram with his parents and brother

HERITAGE CLUB SPOTLIGHT: ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDERS CLUB

The Asian-Pacific Islander (API) Club is a new heritage based club on campus this year. Club members described their club goals as sharing about their culture, creating a place to connect, and having more of a presence on campus. There are many different Asian ethnicities, and API members come from a variety of countries and cultures. They want to get to know their cultures better and create a tight-knit community among members. API President, Alani Vang, said it’s nice to talk about heritage, learn more about culture, and connect with students. API club promotes respect, understanding, and inclusivity; everyone is welcome and encouraged to join. The club meets every other Thursday during lunch in Mr. Navarro’s room, P-23.



Asian-Pacific Islander Club members

LEARN ABOUT ARMENIAN CULTURE WITH MS. RUBIO

Ms. Rubio is a joyful Golden West counselor who is proud of her Armenian heritage. Ms. Rubio's Armenian heritage comes from her mom's side of the family; her great grandma Noyemzar came from Armenia. Ms. Rubio became more interested in Armenia when she chose to do an eighth grade project on the Armenian genocide, and she is still very intrigued by the history and culture of Armenia. She said that her Armenian heritage is very important to her because "we shouldn't be here, and we are". The Armenian people have been through, and continue to go through, incredible and devastating challenges and yet they survive and thrive. Armenians have a genuine excitement to meet other Armenians because the purpose of the genocide was to destroy Armenians and it wasn't successful. Ms. Rubio says that she would like people to be more inquisitive about Armenian history. Armenia is a tiny country that has made great worldwide contributions. If you have friends who are Armenian, ask them questions about their very rich and deep culture.



Ms. Joy Rubio, her mom Elaine, and sister Annie



"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY: JANUARY 15, 2024

- Golden West U.S. History teacher, Mr. Delgado, shared information about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK). MLK's movement was significant historically because he used non-violence to create social awareness and social change. It showed Americans outside of the South the inhumanity of racism. You cannot make people like each other, but you can say what is right and not right. MLK showed Americans what is right! We also recognize that there is still work to do.
- Racism has diminished, but many people still harbor resentment and hate toward anyone who doesn't look like they do. We cannot allow their hate to go unchecked.
- Education, tolerance, and understanding of each other's background is how we move forward. MLK taught us that. He also taught us that we should stand up to injustice. We do not need to be violent to get what is right, but we do need to voice our opinion and utilize our vote. Collectively we can make a difference.