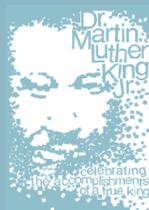


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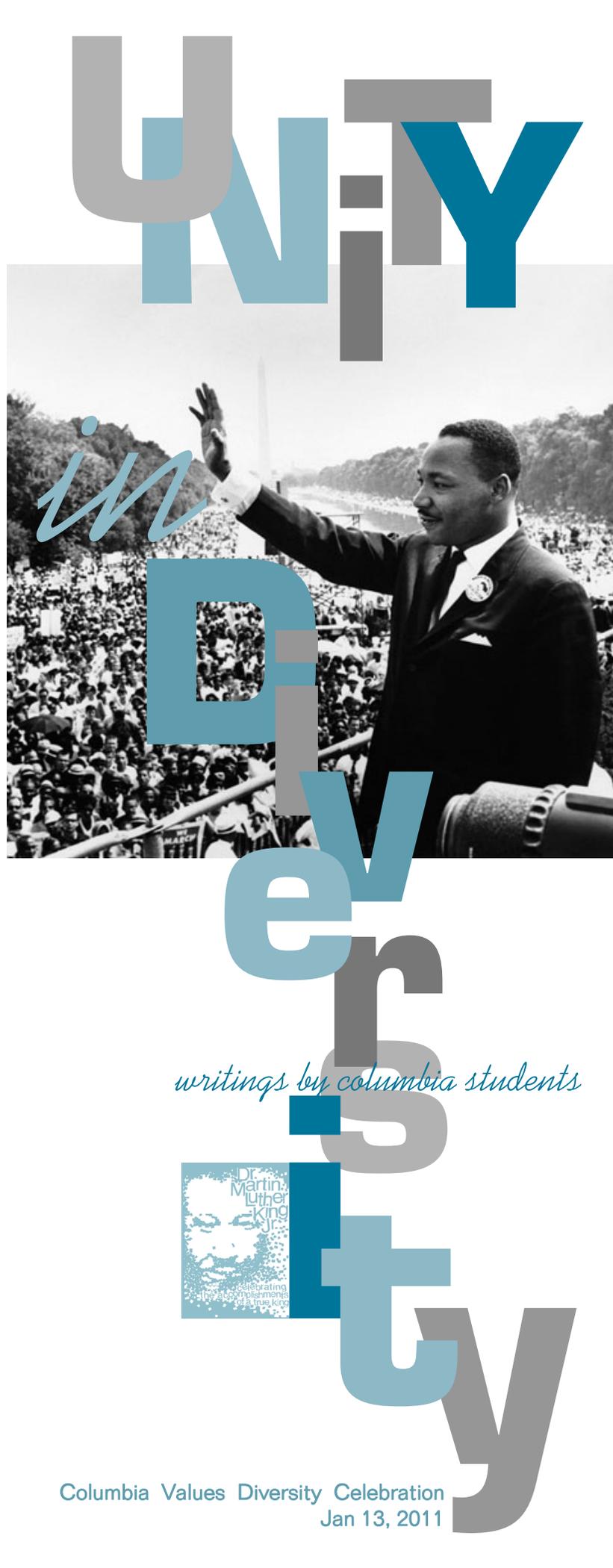
Student Writings were Compiled by
Columbia Values Diversity Celebration
Planning Committee Members:

Michelle Baumstark
Eduardo Crespi
Majed El-Dweik
Brent Lowenberg
Julie Middleton
Larry Monroe
Cale Mitchell
Monica Naylor
Negar Rezvani
Aimee Wehmeier



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Brooke Vangel, Columbia MO
1995

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Just a Thread in the Tapestry

By Ben Chapdelaine

“We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color” Maya Angelou. The Romans believed that there must be no diversity in a community to prevent factions, or the clashing between different types of people. We have found in America, a country of immigrants that a community cannot thrive without diversity as it creates a hole in our own knowledge and lifestyle.

Unity in diversity can be related with the structure of a business. There are many departments of a business each with different skills and expertise in a certain area, if just one department is lacking the whole business will fail. Life is supposed to be a journey of knowledge and without the history and culture of other people in our lives we'll have a hole in our knowledge and we'll never be able to understand certain situations.

Diversity in our community will be the most effective way of teaching ourselves to understand, to better appreciate other people and where they are coming from. Nothing could be a better lesson to learn that.

Jefferson Junior High School, 8th Grade

Mr. McGinty

A Loaded Term

By Ouma Amadou

Unity in Diversity.

Such a loaded term.

Being together in our differences.

Some people believe it isn't important.

That differences tear societies apart.

Our differences show us what is truly important;

The preservation of equality, peace, and justice.

The fight for those qualities unifies us,

thus unity in diversity is achievable.

Similarities are equally important,

but lie at the surface of a person.

Differences are the depth and the inner core of a person;

hard to discover.

Yet, vital.

The respect and unity within us,

cultivates an appreciation for one another.

Unity in Diversity is a loaded term,

but important for all.

Rock Bridge High School, 10th Grade

Mr. Webel

Unity in Diversity

By Ebyan Hassan

Unity in diversity means to me that everybody is different on the outside and we are the same on the inside. People can be different in many ways such as the way we look, the color of our skin, the way we think and our culture. But we are the same inside with our feelings. By feelings, I mean that people want to have **love, peace, friends, happiness, trust, respect and family**. This is what unites us.

We can have unity even if we are not the same because we know we all don't have to look the same on the outside. We can learn about each other by asking people about themselves. If we do this, we can learn about other cultures and other countries. If you are a student you can make friends with someone who is from another country. They can share information to help you understand their culture and country.

People are different on the outside and some people don't understand why. This can hurt some people and keep us apart. We can come together by trusting and respecting each other. You can try to understand each other and ask questions.

We can embrace our diversity as a community by helping each other and coming together to talk about peace and understanding. We can help the people that don't have money or home. We can help them to build a home and giving them food or money. We may be different but we all need the same things such as food, houses and money. As a community we need to understand each person by giving love, peace, friendship, kindness, trust and respect to each other.

Benton Elementary School, 5th Grade

Ms. Arnone

Patchwork Society

By Carly Kempf

Diversity is about creating a quilt

Putting all the patches together,

And discovering other ways of life.

It's about finding those unique fabrics

And although different,

They complement one another.

It's about seeing the same designs,

In multiple patches,

And getting to know them.

It's about sturdy stitching

That comes from combining the cloths

And creating a solid creation.

The only way you can have such a great work of art is if you take the time to find those special materials.

Then a masterpiece is created

Only then can you have diversity.

West Junior High School, 9th Grade

Mr. Swift

Unity in Diversity

By Lydia Lawrence

What does “Unity in Diversity” mean to me? It means equality to all people. No matter what their skin color is or where they are from. For instance, my friend has a different skin color than me and a different culture. But inside we are the same. If you compare us by our feelings and not by our looks, we are practically the same people. We have different family members, different ideas, different pasts, and different goals. But inside we are the same.

How can we have unity without being the same?

Well, no one can be the same. For instance, the girl sitting next to me is very different, yet the same. We have different pasts, different goals, different family members, different ideas, and a different future. But if you look at us carefully then you can see the unity. Some people come from other countries or from another part of the world. Like my friend is from Somalia. Do you know where Somalia is? Well, it's in Africa. Just because she is from Somalia and dresses different, she is still the same as everyone else. We are still human beings.

Are there similarities that bring us together? Yes and No. Yes, because we have the same feelings, but not all at the same time. If everyone is happy at the same time the world will be too happy, and it works with sadness too. No, because we don't have the same skin color. But that doesn't matter. What matters is that we are all the same and we don't treat each other like we aren't human beings.

Do our differences divide us or make our community stronger? I think that it makes our community stronger because the more people there are in Columbia, the better we can find unity and we can create new friends and find things that we have in common. Like Martin Luther King Jr. said “I have a dream. I dreamed that all Americans will soon be equal.” And it happened! Instead of separating whites and blacks, we all now can go to the same schools, parks, and everything else!

Benton Elementary School, 5th Grade
Ms. Arnone

Five Fingers

By Yasmeen Ed-Jayyousi

Our world is a diverse place and it would be pointless to isolate ourselves and not learn about other cultures. Similarly, the Quran states that we were made “into nations and tribes, that [we] may know one another...” (49:13). Wherever people go in life they will always encounter different cultures, beliefs, religions, races or even just different personalities. As humans we have no choice over where we're from, our race, or what we look like when we are born. However we do have the choice of accepting and embracing other's diversities.

Unlike uniformity, our differences give us strength; we each have a unique talent to offer the world. A good example of this would be your hand; you have five fingers, each of them diverse and made to perform certain tasks. However if you had a hand with five pinkies, performing those tasks would be quite difficult, and your hand would be weak and useless.

We are all the same in our diversities when it comes down to it. People have to learn to look beyond what is on the outside and recognize that we are humans and all alike on the inside. Whether it is an index finger, a thumb or a pinky; they are all still fingers made up of the same components.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. Clowe

Unity in Diversity

By Allison Floyd

Have you ever met someone who looked and spoke different than you? Well, I have. Her name is Mya. She was from Vietnam, and she was adopted. When I first met her, I didn't know what to say, so I just ignored her. The other kids in my school did the same thing. Some even made fun of her. They teased her about her glasses and her flat nose.

Mya seemed quiet and lonely. I began thinking about how I could be her friend, but I kept telling myself I already had a lot of friends.

The next day, I got up the courage to ask her questions, like, “What do you like to eat? What's your favorite book and favorite movie?” It turned out we liked the same things, and she wasn't so shy after all! She was just afraid of what people would think because she was different. The whole rest of the year, Mya was my friend. I loved playing with her. I learned some of her traditions, her culture, and a little of her language.

My point is that diversity is a good thing. You can make new friends and learn new things from people who aren't just like you. The world would be a boring place if we were all alike!

Shepard Elementary School, 5th Grade
Ms. Hamilton

Columbia Values Diversity

By Samantha Spurgin

Diversity in Columbia is something I value to a great extent. As a young child I grew up part of my life in a small town in Kentucky, where there were very few people that weren't Caucasian. Since I was kept from other ethnicities for part of my life it makes me value diversity more. Being around only people with the same culture as you isn't very exciting because you don't get to experience or learn about new or different ideas and aspects of life. My neighbors were Indian, they were the only people in our town that weren't Caucasian. This made me even more fascinated by them and how they lived their lives, they did many things different than my family and I, such as what they ate and how they dressed. My family and I were very accepting unlike others in our town, we had gatherings together and we barbequed together in our backyards, not concerned about the difference in our ethnicities at all. As I got a little bit older we moved to Columbia, Missouri; in Columbia it was like a whole new world to me. I began to see people with ethnicities I had never seen before. I was amazed. I didn't treat them any differently than anyone else; I actually tried to become friends with most people that were different than me because I was so fascinated by our differences. My first real best friend was African American; I thought it was so cool how we could be friends even though most of our other friends looked at us differently. I never thought about the fact that we looked different, I just liked her for her and didn't care what others thought of me. To this day, I'm friends with people of almost all ethnicities, I don't judge people because of their color or cultures, and I have learned to accept everyone no matter what they believe. Growing up in a small town with no diversity has shown me how much I value diversity in Columbia, if everyone looked and acted the same, things would be boring. A diverse city is way better than one where very few people are accepting of anyone different than themselves.

Rockbridge High School, Grade 11
Ms. Jennifer Black Cone

It Does Not Matter About Color

By Ian Smith

If you're black or white it does not matter if you want to play just get together.

It does not matter if you have a friend that's black or white.

Call your friends to call their friends even if they're black or white.

Unity and diversity is a good thing in America.

Rockbridge Elementary School, 4th Grade
Ms. Blackburn

Unity in Diversity

Megan Sweeney

We are all really separated by many different things
But deep within us there is something special every-
one brings

We may differ in religion, or culture, or thinking
But those are the things that keep us all linking

Because when all mixed together there happens to
be
Something that makes them part of us, and you part
of me

Justice and equality, it seems so far away
When it comes around, people can't imagine that day

But here in Columbia we all take some pride
In saying "we've got it" and hold our heads high

Diversity to us, is like blood to your body
It's everywhere around us, complete, not just spotty

Unity in diversity, I guess you might say
Is something we have here so let's not let it stray

West Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. Randy Swift

Who You Are

By Alli Flakne

"Life is precious, and part of its beauty lies in its diversity" said Barack Obama, our country's president, at this year's back to school speech. And he is completely and utterly right. Without our differences we would all be common. Every story would be one you already knew. Every person would have the same interests and hobbies as you. It would be a world consisting of only *you* and eventually you would get bored of yourself.

People have different ideas and outlooks, different ways to solve problems. The way we've solved problems since the beginning of forever is by getting different points of view. So be proud of your individuality. No matter if what makes you different is your heritage, your neighborhood, who you associate with or anything else. Your diversity is what makes the world work.

Your individualities are why people like you. And, accepting those individualities lets you work as a team. We all know that two heads are better than one. You should always stand up for yourself and your diversities. Don't ever let anyone tell you your individuality is wrong or un-cool, because it's not. If anything, it's the opposite. Your individuality is what makes you who you are, and you should never be ashamed of who you are.

West Junior High School, 8th Grade
Ms. Turner

Over The Rainbow

By Hannah Cajandig

After a thunderstorm, there is often a strip of color that paints its way through the open sky. We call this beautiful image a rainbow. But what makes a rainbow so breathtaking? That's right; it's all the different hues and tints that harmonize with each other.

We are like a rainbow. Our country is amazing, a perfect blend of pigment, a vivid picture we've created ourselves. No matter your color, age, race, job, style, taste, gender, or beliefs, you are part of our rainbow. Sure, we all appear to be different. However, take a glance on the inside, and you'll perceive that we are all equivalent. So why do we turn people away? Why do we call them out for being diverse, when actually, they are just being themselves? We have no right to judge who someone is because of their outer shell. Sure, everyone is unique. Even twins have some defining factor about themselves. You may even state that people are different because of their flaws. But I choose to call flaws by a special name. I prefer to call them unique differences. Possibly even personality traits. All of us, with our unique differences and personality traits, make up the singular shades of a rainbow.

So, next time there is a storm, and a rainbow has once again made its way into the sky, I challenge you to gaze at it with an unusual point of view. Take it in, breath in its creativity. Just like that rainbow, just like the way that it's multihued, we are one country, a puzzle completed of all the striking pieces. Our nation cannot be so amazingly diverse without having separate groups to unite. I mean, after all, we are called the United States, right?

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. McGinty

Unity in Diversity

By Quinn Converse

Unite everyone no matter what color!
Never stop fighting for what's right!
I and you should never stop loving!
Trust others!
You can still love!
Include everyone!
Never judge people by there color!
Different colors of the human race!
Everyone is different!
Variety in the world!
Recreate peace between whites and blacks!
If I care you should too!
Trust what is right!
You can still care!

Rockbridge Elementary School, 4th Grade
Ms. Blackburn

You and I are Just Two People

By Caroline Sundvold

In 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech that exercised the thought of equality of all people. While he spoke his opinion to many groups of people, his goal was not to make anyone change who they are, but to unify America through their differences. To me, unity in diversity means not having to change who you are or what you believe in for anyone else. While you are accepting who you are, you also have to accept all those around you, no matter how much their outlooks and beliefs differ from your own.

Although King's speech was almost 50 years ago, we can still relate his teachings to our country today. In more detail, we can relate them to Columbia today. There are many ethnic, religion, and social groups in Columbia. For example, most kids in Columbia attend public schools. While, lots of children have different home life and religion, we all come together and set aside our differences to receive a good education. This, to me, really shows unity in diversity, because although all the kids live different lifestyles, they can still be unified and reach for a common goal. Public schools show the same kind of unity as our city government. There are many different types of representatives and governmental figures that help make decisions for our city, and even though most of their views are probably different from each other, they all reach for the betterment of Columbia, as a city.

You and I are just two human beings. One of us is not an alien or a different species. We may be a different color or size, but still just two human beings. Our differences can both divide us and make us stronger. If nobody is willing to listen to what someone else has to say, our differences may cause conflict. As a community, we can better embrace our issues if we respect and listen to everyone's opinion. This goes along with acceptance, because if people know they have a place in this city in the fact that their voice can be heard, Columbia, as a whole will be able to move forward and reach goals that will make Columbia a better place for everyone.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. McGinty

Together, Forever

By Leenah Mustafa

She's Christian, I'm Muslim, and she's Jewish. But guess what, we're all friends. That's what makes up unity in diversity in my eyes. Just because someone's from a different country or culture doesn't mean we can't get along. Put aside your differences and unite for the sake of your community and fellow citizens.

You'd think it's ironic that a Jew has similarities to a Christian, or an Atheist with a Buddhist. But believe it or not, there's at least one similarity between everyone. It's to make the world a more peaceful place to live in.

Each person's personality, culture, or belief is like a puzzle piece. It completes another person, extending until it helps complete the whole puzzle, which is the community. Our differences not only bring us together but they also make us stronger.

That was one point that Martin Luther King Jr. was trying to prove. If racism and segregation would stop, then people would unite as one and work harder for the common good and welfare of their community and selves. Together, nothing can stop or harm them.

Look around you, open your eyes. It's not all about you or her or him. We're not working hard and putting aside our differences for nothing. We're doing it for the best of America.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. McGinty

Unity in Columbia

By Maha Hamed

Unity in diversity-
We have diversity but are we unified,
or are we further apart?
Come together so our community can be strong.

Would you shun me just cause we're not the same,
we come from different places,
doesn't mean we have to be enemies.
Accept me I'll accept you.
Unity in diversity-

Respect everyone,
no matter where they come from.
Judge me on my character,
not my ethnicity.
Let's make Columbia,
a big melting pot of ethnicity.

Unity in diversity-
West Junior High School, 8th Grade
Ms. Jones

United We Stand

By Angela Wilhoit

We are not all the same, being united today, in my community does not mean we accept each other's differences, because we obviously do not. We are all divided, whether people want to admit it or not. We are separated by our skin color, our ways of life, and our ways of thinking.

Instead of embracing the diversity within us, we are simply pushing it away. Our President of the United States is ethnically diverse; however, we cannot accept different religions, cultures or ethnicities that contribute to our community. "United we stand, divided we fall," is a great way of speaking about how we, as a people, will become if we do not stand together. As a nation, and human race we can achieve great things together, if we eliminate prejudice comments and assumptions because of how someone looks or speaks. Unity in diversity means to be open-minded and open-hearted to those who do not view things like you do. The dream to be united as Americans and around the world is a global fight, one that no man or woman can win alone. Many of us need to learn and accept that we will never all be exactly alike, which is what makes the world beautiful.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. McGinty

God's Gifts

Eryn Wanyonyi

Unity. Oneness.
Diversity. Difference..
The two words don't seem to agree.
Why can't people just see?
They need to know of its divine importance.
Then people shall follow it to perfect adherence.
To accept another's background
Would make the entire world go round.
Our enemies would become our brothers
And our evil thoughts would be smothered.
Like stormy and springy weather.
These words, will they ever fit together.
The thing is that they already do.
From people's hearts, feelings sprout anew.
Peace is no longer untouchable.
No more is love unattainable.
Unique appearances and blatant differences don't matter.
There is more to it than just the latter.
Under those aesthetics, we're all the same.
Humans alike but each with an exceptional name.
Unity in diversity doesn't seem so strange.
With these precious, precious gifts from God, we will make an abrupt change.

Rockbridge High School, 10th Grade
Mr. Graham & Mr. Webel

Unity in Diversity

By Emily Kinkade

Unity in diversity. It is a simple three word phrase that was the heart and soul of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches. Still, it is more than just a simple statement. 'Unity in diversity' has a much deeper meaning. To me, it means that even though people have different appearances or backgrounds, we are still a community and all one human race.

This leads into the question of "can we have unity without being the same?" The answer is: of course we can. If you look around Columbia, you can see that amongst all our differences, we are all one community. An example would be where I live. On my street, I can look out my window and see people, both white and Asian out walking, and there is an Africa-American woman who lives across the street from me. Does our ethnicity change anything about where we live? Nope. We all belong to the same neighborhood. Our race doesn't change that.

Despite all of our differences, we all have similarities that make us a unity. To start simply, we are all humans; equal, living human beings. Also, we all strive for the same thing: to make the best of our lives. Even though we are all one human race, it is our diversity that makes our community stronger. Because of all of our various races and religions, we are introduced to different customs and cultures. This helps educate us about the rest of the world and how they live, and it teaches us to know and respect their traditions.

Columbia is a very mixed community, and we can embrace diversity by both acknowledging them and ignoring them. We can acknowledge our differences by knowing and respecting other people's religions and traditions, but we can ignore our differences by not being afraid to talk to anyone who is different than we are.

If all the citizens of Columbia, regardless of race and religion, could join hands and hearts, then we could live Dr. King's dream of peace, justice, and equality for all, and we could find unity in diversity.

West Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. Fagan

Unity in Diversity

By Mollie Nevels

Unity in Diversity
Together in Difference
We can all be united
Despite our differences.

Unity, Together
Diversity, Difference
How can we be together
Without being the same?
Respect others religions, opinions,
Choices then we will be together.

Similarities in all of us
We are people
We care about others
Those bring us together.

Our differences divide our community
We make fun of others
Our differences bring our community together
We try to treat every one equally.

To embrace diversity
Don't make fun of others
Do include every one
And last but not least
Don't forget about peace, justice and equality.

Ann Hawkins Gentry Middle School
Mr. Dadant

Diversity Unites

By Brandi Dye

What makes us different?
3 layers of skin?
6 IQ points?

2 inches of a hemline?
Ha.

What makes us different
Is our personalities

The things we do and say
And how we do and say them
It's the little, unseen things that
Cause diversity

Hair colors and GPAs are just ways
To put down and separate

Whether it's talking with your hands
Or fidgeting with your hair
It's what we have in common

The little things
That cause diversity
They're the things that
Unite us

West Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. Fagan

For We Are All Different You See

By Ron'Zena Hill

We hear our brother's cries
And we all unite to reach one common goal
To heal our brother's soul
See what WE can achieve
When we UNIFY our DIVERSITY
Me,
You,
You,
Me
It's simple as can be
For we are all different you see
But we all come together to reach one common goal...

LOVE

It spreads so far
Touches each and every heart
For you're affected by it too, you know
And you can heal another's soul
For deep down in our heart nothing sets us apart
It's based in what we see on the outside
Not having the time to look within
Give it a try
You may be surprised of what you find out
So how bout' we all come together
And Unify our Diversity

Jefferson Junior High School

Ms. Donoho

Unity is Diversity

By Madison Wipfler

In my eyes unity in diversity means a lot. Unity in diversity is what makes America strong; because of our religious and cultural beliefs, we become closer to one another. The differences make us one. I believe we are all the same no matter what race, just like if you take off the top layer in M&Ms, there wouldn't be a difference. They are all different colors, yet when you come to the inside, every single one is chocolate. So why can't America come together to create the whole package? We are all alike, but some people don't enjoy reaching outside of their shell. They stay in their safe zone and never get the chance to learn new cultures, so they don't treat other races with the same respect of yours.

If everyone were to treat each other with the same respect as they do for someone of their own culture, America could be even stronger. America is known for all of the differences in race and religion, why can't we be known for putting our religious view behind us, so we can all be friends and a part of this country without looking at each other in a different way for their skin color, or what they wear. Because unity is diversity.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade

Mr. McGinty

Unity in Diversity

By Caitlin Price

"Unity in Diversity," simply means that we can unite as one. The culture a person comes from, the shade of their skin and their differing abilities doesn't mean we can't all join together. We are all different in our own ways but something we all share is that we are human. As humans we need to be cared for, and need to feel safe. All of us feel pain and joy. For those reasons we can unite.

Last year I participated in an event for Diversity Day. As part of Diversity Day there were many different acts, which included the High Steppers, a drill team which helps kids with disadvantaged backgrounds, a group of deaf students that used sign language to accompany a song, girls dancing traditional Indian dances, and there was my jazz trio. There was diversity in my dance because I danced with Kendyl, an African American, Caroline, part Salvadorian, and me part Cuban. Events like this would better embrace our diversity.

Do our differences divide us or make our community stronger? It all depends on how people view differences. If we see it as something negative it will likely result in prejudice and it keeps us apart. However if it's seen as something positive it can make people seem more interesting and create friendships.

I hope that one day not just our community, but the whole world can be united as a result of our diversity. In that kind of world people will be more tolerant of one another and kids can grow up in a safe and healthy environment. We should embrace our diversity and realize that our differences can make or break us. At the end of the day we are all human and we share the same feelings, needs, and desires.

These are the things that unify us.

West Junior High, 8th Grade

Ms. Jones

Unity and Diversity

By Hunter Hughes

Without unity, we all divide
Without diversity, we will all collide
With unity, we will come together
With diversity, we will last forever.
With harmony comes peace
And with that you'll cease
The hatred of each other
And learn to love one another
Although it may be a heavy price to bare
You will know that someone will always be there
With unity, we will come together
With diversity, we will last forever

Jefferson Junior High School, 8th Grade

Ms. Donoho

Same but Different

By Lewam Stefanos

Unity in diversity means being together through difference. It means no matter how different we are, as a class, community, city, state, country, etc, we are all one big society. We all have our differences; it might be our ethnicity, religion, or culture. The question is how can we have unity without being the same? Well, a similarity would be that we aren't all alike. The fact that we are all unique as individuals makes us who we are.

When you look around does everyone look the same to you? Or do they look different? Some of us have black hair, some have brown hair, some have blonde hair, and some have red hair. Many of us are not from the same ethnicities, we all have different features. African, Indian, Asian, or American we are all the same. We're people.

We are also different through our beliefs, like religion and politics. Not everyone has the same views and values. Yes, sometimes people get into arguments over their differences, and it causes some problems; but other times they really don't care. It doesn't matter to them. Your friends might be different than you. They might not agree on everything you do. That doesn't mean you won't stop being their friend. It just means you all have different opinions. It helps us get a better understanding of a person and who they are.

As a community or society, we try to get along with those around us, so we can avoid conflict. We look out for the welfare of others, because we have civic virtue; which means that we put the needs of others before ourselves. When we unite as a group, all of our differences don't matter anymore, they become alike. Like people say, opposites do attract. It helps us get closer to everyone, because everyone is agreeing instead of disagreeing and arguing. Through our similarities, that is how we have unity within our differences.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. McGinty

The Deeper Meaning of Unity in Diversity

By Ida Jacaway

Unity in diversity. That's a short phrase, but if you look closely you will find that this short phrase actually has a very deep meaning. When I think of unity I automatically think of community which then in turn makes me think of all of the communities that surround me like my school and my church. But, it also reminds me of the smaller communities that also uphold the same values including my family, friends, my neighborhood, and some of the clubs at school.

What does unity in diversity mean? It means everyone is brought together through everyone's differences. For example you and your friends are all probably unlike in your own ways but you guys are all friends or one big group. The reason why you are all friends is because you get along well with the other people, and all of your friends' differences are what makes you and your group so strong. Even in this class as I look around, I see so many people learning and working together to accomplish the same goal. Everyone here is so different and unique, but because of these diversities it makes this class so much more enjoyable and fun.

If you think about unity in diversity in a broader view you will find many more communities and groups that support this same idea. For example Columbia is really one big community filled with many different people with different views and beliefs. But we are all still one big community, and everyone's' ideas, though, opinions, and actions are what makes Columbia, what it is. This is what makes unity in diversity so great, without it we would not have this wonderful community. But with it we get so many opportunities and privileges. For example, at school if everyone was the same and not as unique as they are now, we would never get the chance to interact and befriend as many people as we can now. This simple phrase unity in diversity means and represents so much, and if we reflect upon it we will be more open to so many different things.

Jefferson Junior High School
Mr. McGinty

Coal & Snow

By Ruby Rector

Whether you are tan or caramel you are never black
like coal,
Whether you are peach or cream you are never white
like snow,
So, let's set a side those racist words & celebrate our
difference.

Rockbridge Elementary School, 4th Grade
Ms. Blackburn

Unity in Diversity

By Etinne Niyonzima

Columbia is a city of many ethnic groups, religions, cultures and opinions. I believe that the diversity is not to weaken our community, but to strengthen us. I strongly believe that diverse individuals have diverse opinions and the more opinions a community has, the more likely the community will take each individual's ideas into consideration, especially in tragic moments such as voting for a new law that greatly impacts each resident. Columbia, as a multicultural community, has lots of benefits. As a refugee, I have experienced some of the benefits that Columbia provides. Through translating, I have noticed that Americans benefit from hearing the life experiences that refugees have faced and vice versa, refugees benefit from Americans as they teach us, refugees, how to adjust our life in America. The interactions among us, refugees and Americans, allow refugees to assimilate into the Columbia community which brings the two cultures close together, leading to a strengthened and beneficial community.

Rockbridge High School, 12th Grade
Ms. Black-Cone

Unity in Diversity

By Mora Boatman

Have you ever felt different from someone else? Everyone probably has, because, let's face it, all of us are different in our own way. No two people are exactly alike. Just think of how boring this world would be if we were all the same! We couldn't learn from one another. For example, if there was a shy girl and a talkative girl, the shy girl would teach the talkative girl respect. The talkative girl would encourage the shy one to participate more in class.

Diversity can be a good thing and a bad thing. It's good because people learn more and get great, new ideas! It can be bad because some kids and adults don't accept the differences in others and make fun of those who are different. True leaders are people who can accept diversity.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is a good example of a leader who celebrated all people, and it's important to keep his dream alive for a much better world. If we all accept each other as friends, all of us would benefit. Everyone would get along well and there wouldn't be as many fights or bullying. ALL of us can be a friend and treat one another with kindness!

Shepard Elementary School, 5th Grade
Ms. Hamilton

Unity in Diversity

By Amy Schutte

Take a look around you,
What do you see?
Different cultures, different religions, different races
Surrounding me.

Diversity means we're classified
Into this, that or the other
But when you look more closely
we're not so different from one another.

Sure, our skins have many hues
Our gods have many names
But it is in our feelings
That we're actually quite the same.

We all feel inspiration,
Be it from whatever source
Possibly from King's great dream
Or Gandhi's peaceful force.

We all feel we are alone,
If only for a minute,
Searching for the meaning of life
And all the truths within it.

We all feel beauty, also joy,
As they go hand in hand,
Whether through a starry night
Or waves upon the sand.

We all feel fear, we all feel weak,
Some scared to be found wrong
Some of the death and poverty
Still others cringe from the strong.

We all feel love, we all feel hate,
It's natural, it's okay,
But we must learn to use them
In a beneficial way.

We may be different people
With a distinct culture, belief or race
But we share intimately our emotions
Easily found on every face.

In our feelings we can form connections
From here to Timbuktu
Despite our diversity we can unite
But it is up to you.

Hickman High School
Mr. Frissell

Diversity Means Unity

By Niky Spurling

All throughout the world, there are people of all kinds.
Different colors, different beliefs, different
backgrounds.

We are all different, but yet all the same.

God created us all under his image.

He meant for us to all become united and learn from
one another.

Someone down the street is Catholic: we are
Christian.

People at school are black. Others are white.

Someone's culture tells them to hide their skin.

Ours tells us to reveal it.

They were raised across the world. We were raised
here.

All of these differences, but dig deeper and you'll find
more similarities.

People come from all different places at different
times.

Instead of scoffing when the "other" walks by, smile
and give a welcoming "hello."

Instead of avoiding change, invite yourself into
something new.

Learn new cultures. Learn new things. Learn new
people.

Don't judge based on appearance, beliefs, or
language.

Open yourself up, be willing.

A great man once spoke the words, "I have a dream."

Keep the dream alive. Share the diversity.

Unite through diversity.

Rock Bridge Senior High School, 12th Grade

Ms. Black-Cone

Unity in Diversity

By Kate Okker-Edging

We are all *homo sapiens*

Race has no real meaning

Culture doesn't define us, it brings us together to share

It's not about being the same

We are all different

There will never be a utopia

Those just don't exist

But there's no point in fighting and killing

When we all could work as one

Look around, lend a hand

Change begins in small places

Change your life, your community, your world

We aren't that different

But let's celebrate how we are unique

Let's celebrate the new and exciting

To join together and move forward

Because we are all *homo sapiens*

Rock Bridge High School, 11th Grade

Ms. Black-Cone

Columbia Values Diversity Celebration

By Chelsea Tatlow

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed of a time and
place where the way you looked did not affect your
opportunities in life including success, friendships
and access to supplies/places. We are so close to
reaching this goal. Laws protect our civil rights now,
and people have started to interlace races. Life will
never be perfect, but we can definitely get closer.

To be equal is to look at everyone as if they are your
own flesh and blood, forgive someone like you would
forgive yourself, and to love them in the eyes of your
true love. Each person is born in a womb of a differ-
ent life, not a different world; we all belong to the
same earth even though we all have different minds.

People often judge their acquaintances based on
simple mistakes that they make. It's often how we
grow up that determines what we do with our lives.
Do you want to be the cause for someone's child-
hood having a negative effect on the rest of their life?
People act the way that they do for a reason, there is
no unexplainable situation you find yourself, or others
experiencing. Before you judge someone, search for
the answer to their situation. You may just find that
the people you are alienating are not much different
from yourself, you may be able to help them. Each
person is special, and they each have their own
personality, which will fortunately never change.
What Dr. King wanted to impact by his non-violent
rebellion was people's lack of acceptance.

From the very first minute we were able to talk, our
parents have stuffed life lessons into our minds.
"Don't judge a book by its cover," and "put yourself in
other people's shoes," tend to be the most common
morals. When you're younger your point of view is
shadowed, you hear words and remember them by
repetition, but when you're older you have the
chance to apply them to your own life. Don't waste
this opportunity; make a change in our world. Apply
these ideas to your own life now. Dr. King was a
martyr; don't let him to have died just so that we can
change once and then settle into living our lives in
this comfort zone. America can be an example for
the entire world, starting with you.

West Junior High School, 9th Grade

Mr. Fagan

What is a Song?

By Kristen Buster

What is a song? What is music? What if you had one really long note, could you call it a song? I think a good song is made up of various sounds, notes, and instruments. You might hear multiple voices and key changes, styles and tempos. Songs can have all sorts of meanings and unimaginable stories behind them. Some stories are similar, some are different. Some songs have multiple meanings, some have only one. Music is a complex mixture of diverse sounds that come together to make amazing sounds. Harmonies and melodies, chords and single notes, come together as one in song.

In the same way, if everyone in the world was the same long boring note, could you call us a song? Could you call us a world? The various lifestyles, personalities, languages, customs, cultures, jobs, clothing styles, and ways of thinking, that's what makes us a community able to advance together. Could you imagine if we all had the same job? Nothing would ever get done. What if everyone always thought the same things, in the same way? No one would ever have a great idea because everyone would have the same ideas. The diversity in our communities creates a unique universe, indivisibly united, yet impossible to recreate anywhere else, or at any other moment in time. Our world is changing all the time, but there will always be diversity. Diversity is what makes people able to feel comfortable in their own skin. I think a lot of people don't have strong feelings for diversity because we've never experienced a world without it. We live in diversity. We unite in diversity.

Jefferson Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. McGinty

Fantastic Friends

By Riley Kerns

Together we stand;
friends have many religions;
some can sing and dance.

Friends are different
shapes and sizes big and small
and I like them all.

My friends are like jewels,
they glow but are different;
they sparkle and shine.

So many talents
like sports, dancing, and acting
and you are special.

Coming together,
all my friends really do glow,
just like a rainbow.

Windsor Street Montessori School, 4th Grade
Ms. Hyatt-Hensley

Unity?

By Janie Hellwege

It's what we all strive for, so why are we running
away?

Don't you want to be able to look towards your
neighbor and greet them freely?

The world is quickly progressing but we still don't
know how to be nice to others.

What makes you different? What makes you the
same?

Everyone is the same, do we not all have two eyes
and one mind?

Everyone is different, do we not all have different
thoughts and actions?

We need similarity in our life to make us comfortable
so why do we make others seem so different?

Don't opposites attract? So why are we afraid to make
a friend with someone who isn't our twin?

It's true that people die in the name of unity but people
also die to stay separated.

If unity leads to peace then why do we have to battle
to get it?

If unity is sacred then why do some regard it as trash?
We are born blind to the differences to people so why
do we grow to be intolerant?

Shouldn't something be done to keep our minds
friendly?

What will happen to a world that is unified?

Will there be no more wars?

Will there be acceptance of all?

Will there be equal opportunities for success?

Or will the world be devoid of individuality?

Will everyone talk and walk the same and forget how
to live their life?

Unity isn't an answer, it's a question.

Rock Bridge High School, 12th Grade
Ms. Black-Cone

Colors and Unity

By Zane Glosemeyer

Are you purple?

Are you blue?

Does your color matter to you?

I see your color,

Do you see mine?

Is being different

Any kind of crime?

In a box of crayons

We see colors of black and white,

But it takes all the shades working together

To color a beautiful night.

Maybe, Crayola has it right!

It isn't religion, or race

Or the scars on our face

It is the unity of community

That should take place.

West Junior High School, 8th Grade
Ms. Turner

Unity in Diversity

By Fernando Jimenez

Do you know what unity in diversity means? Well, first making fun of people's culture and religion is wrong. That is called racism. That is also rude. If you call people names you could hurt their feelings. Martin Luther King once said that he wanted "No war, no racism and everybody to be treated equally". Martin Luther King had a dream that he wanted peace, justice, equality for our nation and community. Dr. King wanted us to be respectful to people.

I think unity and diversity means to me that people from different nations come together in peace. You should be nice to other people that come from a place you don't know even if they wear different clothes. How can we have unity by not being the same? Don't be rude to people that have different clothes, accents, and language. It will seem hard to some people but it is not. Try your best to make friends. Treat people how you want to be treated! Racism is also disrespectful. You should have manners. Being racist is also making fun of your skin color. Everybody is unique. Black or white no matter who you are everybody has different talents.

Okay, so what have you learned so far?

Lesson 1: Be **kind** to others from different culture and religions.

Lesson 2: Remember Martin Luther King once said that he had a dream **everybody** would be treated equally.

Lesson 3 Making fun of people's accent, language and clothes is really rude.

Lesson 4: Never make fun of people's skin color.

Our community can be strong by not being racist to others who have different clothes and skin color. It doesn't really matter that you're a certain color, it doesn't mean you're better than anybody else or if you're not a perfect person. Everybody should be treated equally. We all have rights to be who we are. We all should get along and behave to one another.

Okay I hope you all learned something that you didn't know before. This essay is very important to me.

Thank you very much for reading this and remember that racism is wrong!!!

Benton Elementary, 5th Grade

Ms. Armone

Its Name is Unity

By Mahogany Thomas

A tree-

See the seeds on leaves, as they sprout

See the roots as they tangle in the soil

See the bark as it evolves through history

See the branches as they reach for success

See the twigs as they struggle to survive

See the buds just want to make it alive.

If examining a tree

Those would be the things I see

Starting with the obvious

Ending with complexity

From the seeds, to the twigs,

And then to the branches

All different parts making a single substance

Its name is unity and it's valued as we live.

Now take Columbia -

See the Muslims as they sprout new soil

See the Latinos as they mix amongst the rest

See the Asians as they swim past any feud

See the Whites as they succeed in most they do

See the Blacks as they struggle to strive

See the kids as they want to live their life

If examining Columbia

Those would be the things I see

Starting with embryos

Ending with diversity

From Latinos, to Whites,

All the way to Blacks, Indians, Italians

All different cultures making one solid place

Where diversity is valued;

Making the unity amongst the state.

Without parts of tree there would be no life

Without various cultures there would be no light

Without the trees where's the oxygen we breathe

Therefore without diversity creating unity,

How must we succeed?

Rock Bridge High School, 10th Grade

Ms. Thomas

Unity in Diversity

By Kylee Cortez

No matter what color skin

No matter what language of tongue

No matter what color eyes nor hair

We shall not be treated differently.

No matter the structure of the body

No matter the age of the person

No matter the intelligence level of one human being

We shall not be treated differently.

Now is the time

To let freedom ring

Never will we

Turn our back on another

We shall stand forever

One nation under God.

Jefferson Junior High School, 8th Grade

Ms. Donoho

Columbia's Unifying Diversity

By Robby Schmidt

There is unity in diversity because together we can do more. When the people are diverse their final product is better. Columbia's diversity influences us through our culture and friends. Fortunately everyone in Columbia is presented with many diverse opinions and can choose among them.

Columbia is diverse like a fruit salad while a less diverse area is like a grape. Like Columbia a fruit salad can have many different kinds of ingredients. A fruit salad can have peaches, pineapple, grapes, strawberries, blackberries or more. A fruit salad is much better than just a bunch of grapes. Likewise a town that lacks diversity is not as good as Columbia.

Furthermore, when people work together they accomplish more. When people are unified they accomplish more. There is a saying that says one plus one equals three. It means that working together accomplishes more than if two people worked alone and then added their pieces together. When people are unified they accomplish more and when they are diverse the end result is better.

America's history has been greatly affected by the fact that there is unity in diversity. The Lewis and Clark Expedition had an African slave, a Native American, some Frenchmen, and some Caucasian Americans. Lewis and Clark were said to excel where the other one faltered and they were good friends. The whole expedition was diverse and therefore unified and so they made it from St. Louis to the Pacific and back with only one death. It's a good thing they were unified through diversity.

All in all there is unity in diversity. Where there is diversity you will find that those people will be unified. When a town is unified by its diversity it prospers and grows. Columbia is a great city because of our diversity and our unification.

West Junior High School, 8th Grade
Ms. Barnes

Differences

By Kirstin Roderick

Differences make us special,
In many different ways.
Varieties of colors,
Even different colored hair,
Red, orange, & yellow.
So many differences,
In the world everyone is special.
The world is one big lffe,
Yippy! Diversity is good!

Rock Bridge Elementary School, 4th Grade
Ms. Blackburn

Unity in Diversity

By Martha Miller

Sister, daughter. mother,
Son, father, brother
Black, Indian, Asian
Mexican or Caucasian

All the same yet so different
As people we remain as one
America became our nation
And yet we still divide.

Some against, some still for
Martin Luther King had the right idea
We fight for each other then we fight another
So much chaos for no reason

Open minds, open spirits
Who can tell one from another?
Walking silence. bold pride
Both American. but diverse

The Black soldier fighting for our lives
The white soldier fighting for our lives
The woman teaching, the man preaching
To anyone, to everyone, to us

We may be different, but we are together
Don't try to tear us apart.
Without each other we are no nation
We are not American we are not whole
Rock Bridge High School, 12th Grade
Ms. Black-Cone

Everyone has a different smile

Beni Adelstein

If everybody was the same,
The world would be a boring place.
There would be no unique people...
No different beliefs,
No different clothes,
No different food,
No different skin color,
No different smiles.
But, that is not true,
For everyone **isn't** the same.
The world **is** an interesting place.
There **are** interesting people --
unique people.
There **are** different clothes --
different food,
different skin color, and
Everyone has a different smile.
Everyone has a different smile!
Windsor Street Montessori School, 4th Grade
Ms. Hyatt-Hensley

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

By Shania Hayes

I Shania Hayes believe that our nation's differences make the community mighty. Unity in diversity means to me that our differences make our community unite to each other and not be a separated nation.

I Shania Hayes think our nation should be one whole community, unite to each other, and get over that we are not exactly the same on the outside, but in the inside we are just alike. I have a dream that our nationalities can get along and can live together with WORLD PEACE. I know for a fact that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wanted everyone to live together with peace and just have our nationalities united with each other.

I Shania Hayes believe that we may be different, but that does not mean we can't live with each other and be one BIG NATION. If we can just give it a try and unite our nationalities we would be a HOMOGENEOUS COMMUNITY.

I Shania Hayes think that we should give to receive the world greatest gifts. I think we should respect each other and treat everyone equally so you will get the same respect they get.

I Shania Hayes know for a fact that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated... "If you have weapons, take them home... We must meet violence with nonviolence... We must love our white brothers... We must hate with love... Amen, free at last, thank GOD all mighty free at last."

I Shania Hayes believe that we should not have to do any more boycotts, we should be able to live in a world with no out racism. Why just why can't we live in a world where little black and whites boys and girls unite to there own differences? Why do people still insist on negative instead of positive? Why is there racism still going on? These are my questions that seems like they can never be answered. This is the stuff that pounds in my head day and night.

I Shania Hayes believe that I can change things in life. I think I can make a BIG DIFFERENCE in life. I know I can make a big change like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. did.

I Shania Hayes think that our future will be bright and fulfilled with peace if we believe in ourselves This is my dream and my wishes now let me hear you shout yours.

Thomas Hart Benton Elementary, 5th Grade
Ms. Arnone

Unity In Diversity

By Mallory Schmidt

Diversity is being different. Everyone is diverse. The keyword is unity. Peace, Justice, and equality is what people unite together to protect. People of every race, ethnicity, religion, and belief join together to form a community that respects each other's and everyone's differences. That's what unity in diversity means.

Sometimes joining together with people who are different than you can be difficult. Some communities have many diversity issues. The people can be neighbors, but live completely sepa-rate lives without crossing each other's paths. The fact is that we live in the United States of America, which was formed and grown by people of many different cultures and beliefs, but made it through all of it's tough times by uniting together as one strong nation. People must re-spect and work towards learning each other's individual qualities that make them different. That's how unity in diversity works.

Embracing our differences is important among communities because that's what keeps them strong. The first step is acceptance and understanding. It takes effort, but if everybody in the community put forth such a honest effort by getting to better understand someone else's dif-ferent culture or beliefs, then it would create a stronger bond between the community as a whole. It would keep Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream of peace, justice, and equality alive. That is how communities can gain unity in diversity.

It's a simple concept that some communities have forgotten, but with a bit of work, can be regained. Strong communities full of diversity, but most importantly an understanding of it is very important. Everyone is diverse. How people treat each other's differences to join together is unity in diversity.

West Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. Fagan

Unity in Diversity

By Emma Johnson

Brown, white, glasses, no glasses, short, tall, republican, democrat, American, Indian, smart and not so bright. All of these are examples of diversity. Just by taking one look at a group of people, you can tell there is plenty of diversity and unity all around us.

I think diversity and unity play a big role in friendship and everyday life. Someone is talking on their phone at the trail. You hear them speaking in a very thick accent, and you start judging and thinking to yourself, "I would not want to be their friend. I wouldn't be able to understand them." The sad thing is you might be cheating yourself out of a very good friendship.

People say almost all the time that unity is the best way to have a true friendship. For instance, "so and so likes blue", and I do too. Or this person thinks a lot like me, so I will be their friend. Sometimes we forget that diversity can be good because it introduces us to new ideas.

Schools are the biggest and most often picked examples of both unity and diversity. We work together to achieve common goals, but we also come from many different cultures and backgrounds.

My main goal for writing this essay is to give people a better understanding of unity and diversity. We need both in our world!

Shepard Elementary School, 5th Grade
Ms. Hamilton

Unity in Diversity

By Callie Bassett

There is a difference in all of us
From our skin to our personality
Our little quirks that make us unique
And our memories can't even be compared
But, there is something that we all share
In a way, this similarity unites all
The fact that we all are different from each other creates an understanding
It creates a common ground, a level playing field
From the start we are all different
As we grow we might struggle with this
But as we get older we embrace our differences and learn to love them
Our skin and personality
Our little quirks that make us unique
And our memories we wouldn't ever exchange
Along with these things we love the common fact;
That we all are different

West Junior High School, 9th Grade
Mr. Swift

The Garden of Freedom

By Jinny Yoon (JinMyung Yoon)

See the beautiful sight that the gardens give
Where plants, butterflies, bees, and others live

We see the eggs hatch to the world
The caterpillars crawl to live in the world
The cocoons begging for freedom outside their world
Finally butterflies fluttering with their wings called 'the freedom' to the world

Bees buzz around and fly
They fly around the flowers and come by
Sipping some nectar from the flowers and they reply;
We'll always come by
We'll sip some nectar, but you won't die
We'll spread the nectar and new flowers will grow or at least try

The bees and flowers help
We, too need to help
We don't need to yelp
Just be a friend and help

They don't be cruel
While we were so cruel
Because of our selfishness and a bad rule

Finally, an angel had come
Dr. King was the wisest of all and had come
Made a speech and equal and free is what we had become

Now we are the world that's equal and free
Now we all shout out with joy and glee
Just like the garden that we see
Gentry Middle School, 7th Grade
Ms. Taylor

A Million Flowers

By Jessica Porter

A million different flowers
For you and for me.
That all make up
The bouquet of diversity.
Each one is similar,
In the way that people are,
But if we ignore that,
We won't get too far.
We might lose our way sometimes,
Throw out the wilted ones,
But we shall find our way again,
Or our once-diverse bouquet,
will surely come undone.
Jefferson Junior High School, 8th Grade
Ms. Donoho