

2009 TYAF Outstanding Taiwanese American Youth Award

Lynn Wu 吳琇琳



My Taiwanese background is the foundation of my cultural, academic, and family life. I'm active in the sports and extra-curricular activities that my high school offers, Taiwanese classes and extra-curricular teaching at the Washington DC Taiwanese School, and volunteering in my community. As a junior at the charmingly diverse Annandale High School, my identity as a Taiwanese American defines me in countless ways and trails me wherever I go.

To begin, I've always been one of those kids who are all-around pretty good at sports. As a little girl, I remember taking ballet and tap dance classes. Quite honestly, they weren't especially exciting for a tomboy who would rather climb trees and play tag than prance around in a tutu or tap shoes. So, I became involved with the sport of tae kwon do at a local dojo. Three years later, I had punched, kicked, and jabbed my way all the way up to a brown belt, along with two years participating in the "best of the best" demo team. By then, in the fifth grade, I had discovered a passion for another sport: horseback riding. I was absolutely in love with horses and wished to ride one cantering across a field, just like in the movies. Well, I certainly learned to ride like the wind at my riding school, while participating in a few small in-school horse shows. Beginning in high school, I participated in Varsity cheerleading and sprinted on the Varsity track and field team for the Annandale Atoms. I am also a member of the National Honor Society.

I have been a student at the Washington DC Taiwanese School since the tender age of two. At first, this was definitely a compulsory activity every Sunday. I'm not going to lie about enjoying Taiwanese School as a kid. Seriously, normal young children who already attend five days of regular school per week are typically displeased if forced to attend another school on the weekends where they must learn tedious aspects of language. Gradually and eventually, as I reached an age where I began understanding the significance of my native tongue, culture, and background, I actually began to enjoy Taiwanese school. A couple of years ago, I started coaching a mini-cheer squad in Taiwanese School; showing them cheers in English and Taiwanese, mini-stunts, and tumbling skills for a performance in front of a large audience a couple of times a year. We always have a blast and I feel exceedingly proud of our team.

Furthermore, I have also volunteered outside of the Taiwanese community by assisting at my local public library, a thrift shop that receives money and donations on behalf of Capital Hospice, and at the Fairfax INOVA Hospital.

Whenever I go back to Taiwan with my family, I feel a great sense of belonging. I'm ecstatic to be surrounded by people who look like me and speak the language that my parents have contributed so much effort to instill in my everyday dialogue. Even so, I know that the people walking around in the streets of Taiwan and even my relatives regard me as a foreigner; an American who looks Taiwanese but doesn't behave or stand like a Taiwanese girl, who speaks flawless Mandarin and can carry a legitimate conversation with a person her age, but can hardly read street signs and newspaper articles, much less write a paragraph, and a granddaughter who understand everything her "akofng" says in Taiwanese, but responds in Mandarin because it would take too long for her to find the right words in Taiwanese. Because of this, I know that I am a Taiwanese-American. Because of this, I know that I belong in a world where writing essays in English and conversing with my parents in Taiwanese and Mandarin meet in a perfect mix of language, lifestyle, and culture.

Lynn Wu is the daughter of Dr. Bill and Li-Ing Wu (吳倍茂, 劉麗英夫婦).

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Jonathan Jang 張語哲



Jonathan Jang is a first generation Taiwanese American that currently lives with his family in Potomac, Maryland. Born in Iowa City, Iowa, he has learned to take pride in his culture. He hopes he is able to take what he has learned about his culture and apply it to his future as well as to others in the Taiwanese community.

Jonathan Jang is currently a senior at Winston Churchill High School. Throughout his high school experience, he takes pride in his participation of various activities Churchill has to offer to its students. In his junior and senior year, Jonathan has been a member of the National Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society and the Academy of Creative Arts. *Jonathan is currently the vice president of the History club. Through this club, he hopes to achieve a greater understanding of life for people in the earlier time periods by analyzing documentations. He is also an active member of the Biology Club and the Environmental Club. These both clubs help him educate others about how to make the world a better place for people to live. Both inside and outside of school, Jonathan is an enthusiastic cello and tennis player.* As the principal chair for his school orchestra, Jonathan performed in numerous concerts and a musical production in school. This year, Jonathan Jang participated in the Miss Saigon musical production. Outside of school, Jonathan has been a member of the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra for 7 years *as well as competing in many statewide competitions such as All-State Music Orchestra.* Jonathan shows the same enthusiasm he has for cello towards tennis. In school, Jonathan is a member of the varsity tennis team that won the county championship last season. Outside of school, he enjoys playing in tennis tournaments *which include WACTA and USTA.*

Jonathan would like to thank his friends and family for supporting *him all the time.* Jonathan hopes that he is able to continue his success and is greatly honored to have received this award. He will be attending Emory University this fall with his sister and his cousin.

Jonathan Jang is the son of Mr. Jounwern and Pei-Ling Jang (張仲文, 李培鈴夫婦).