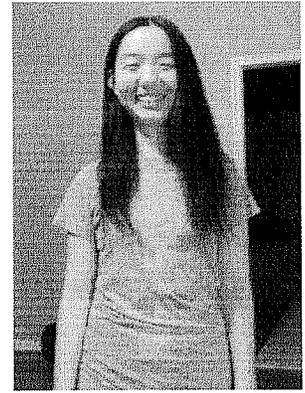


Jessica Horng



I was born in Gaithersburg, Maryland, to parents who had immigrated from Taiwan to the United States. As someone with two different cultures, I vowed to be knowledgeable about both American and Taiwanese cultures. As a small child, I had a voracious appetite for books, particularly fantasy ones. But one of my personal favorites was the ones my grandmother told me. They were magical, and always came with a value moral at the end. One of the most frequent lessons was that hard work paid off. This has influenced my values, and I always put in effort to whatever activity I am doing. I also loved my visits to Taiwan, because I could meet so many new people and pick up new information about Taiwan.

The things I have learned from my Taiwanese culture have assisted me with countless things, but most particularly, in school. I am currently a sophomore at Winston Churchill High School, which is in Potomac, Maryland. At Churchill, I have applied hard work to my studies, with success. I am in the Math, Technology, and Science Academy, so I can pursue my passion in science. I am also a member of the Engineering Honor Society. However, I also still enjoy reading and writing, and so I am in a club that publishes a monthly literary magazine. I am an active member of the Operation Smile club, which helps those with cleft palates by fundraising and giving supplies to those who need them. In addition, one of my biggest interests is music. I have been playing the violin ever since the second grade. I love how I am able to tell a story wordlessly, though a universal language—music. Because participating in an orchestra allows me to create great music, and meet others with a same common interest, I am in the school’s orchestra, and have also participated in the Potomac Valley and Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras ever since the fourth grade. I have also played in the All-County Orchestra.

My parents always made sure that I knew about the Taiwanese culture, and did so by enrolling me in Chinese and Taiwanese school. Every Sunday ever since I was in preschool, I learned both Mandarin and Taiwanese customs, traditions and culture. I was able to do Taiwanese arts and dance. That knowledge gave me a deeper understanding of my family and heritage. It gives me a unique perspective on many things, and instills in me many upright morals and values. My Taiwanese heritage is something that influences my everyday life, and I am extremely proud of my Taiwanese heritage.