

Although I was born in America, Taiwan and its culture has always been a vital part of my life. Both my parents who are first-generation immigrants from Taiwan raised me around a rich culture that consists of myths, riddles, and traditions. These forms of culture blossomed even more as I attended Washington DC Taiwanese School from the very early age of one and a half years old. At this school I started really loving the language and characteristics of Taiwan and this was reflected in myself eagerly greeting President Tsai at the Dulles International Airport before she got inaugurated. Additionally, it made me excited to represent the school in culture, karaoke film, and composition contests in which I succeeded in winning awards. On the other days of the week where I don't attend WDCTS, I go to a typical public school in the northern county of Virginia, but that didn't hinder me from spreading and connecting with the culture that I adore and appreciate. During international week where students get to introduce and spread their culture around, my mom and I would always bring in traditional clothing worn by the indigenous people, chopsticks, calligraphy pens, and many others to spread awareness and our love for these unique characteristics within us.

Ever since I was really young, I would travel back to Taiwan every summer to visit my grandparents, experience Taiwan's DIYs and night markets, and of course celebrate the amazing variety of delicious goods that are exclusive to the beautiful island. Taiwan does an amazing job with its DIY opportunities and over my lifetime I can proudly say that I've attended close to a hundred factories: from making my own chopsticks, indigenous jewelry, noodles, or even edible paper, every piece of that memory and learning experience represents a fragment of my childhood that I carry with me. I also got to experience what it is like to be a student and interact with the society and generations of Taiwan by attending summer camps at NTU and Yuan Ze. Through the camps, I got to experience the daily lifestyles of Taiwanese students, whether it'd be their mannerisms, sense of humor, style, hobbies, or habits, everything was extremely blissful and I found myself picking a lot of it up by the end of the week or two.

I've participated in the Taiwanese American community greatly and recently in the past few years I joined FASCA DC and it was most definitely one of the best decisions of my life. I got to input my help into coordinating events which included organizing the Taiwanese Overseas Youth Team in providing services for community parks and the environment. Other than environmentally, one of my biggest goals was for the local communities of America to share the love for my culture as I do. In making this dream come true, I organized my in and out of school dance clubs to perform at the Bubble Tea Festival and Rockville's City Hall Lantern Festival to incorporate two things I

enjoy: dancing and the layers of the Taiwanese culture and how fun both can be. We would be interacting with each other while playing popular Taiwanese pop songs to create a lively atmosphere. In the recent FASCA Taiwan-Japan-US youth exchange event, I welcomed Ms. Sakura into our community and explained the history and significance of Taiwan's detailed puppetry as well as connecting with her through our mutual experiences with Taiwan and Japan. A long term project I've been working on is coordinating an online culture exchange with local Taiwanese high school, Songshan Commercial Vocational School, students who are the same age. It is an exchange of about a hundred students in which friendships are bloomed from our online hangouts and social media chatting after the end of each monthly meet. This brings to reality how true friendships cross language or even time zone barriers as we are all connected by our culture.

Being a Taiwanese American is something I identify strongly with and I am blessed to be given so many opportunities that allow me to interact, participate, and give back to my community.