

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Junior Sean Harris discusses his feelings towards the BLM Movement and the hope he holds for the future of America

Racism is something that has been prevalent in the United States since it was founded and continues to be prevalent today. Students like junior Sean Harris experience racism and bias on a daily basis. Harris supports the Black Lives Matter movement because of the meaning behind it and the experiences he's had and heard about.

"You see all these incidents with Black students and Black people in general in the media and stuff and it's scary to walk into a store or be driving down the street or taking a walk and people are giving you sideways glances because of the color of your skin," Harris said. "I definitely support the message behind BLM. All Lives can't matter when Black Lives don't and it's been that way forever really. Back when the slave trade happened, it's been happening since then. It's surreal to be a person of color right now in the United States."

According to Harris, the BLM movement provides Black people with hope for the future.

"To me it means furthering the notion of equality in the US because every Black student right now is kind of on edge about their future. It's a strange kind of feeling you have because right now there's a lot of, I think, systemic racism going on," Harris said.

Harris believes there is the opportunity for racism to go away in America and that it will require citizens to see each other for who they are, not by the color of their skin.

"When people stop viewing people for their looks and stuff I feel like racism definitely can go away. We all have the power to change that, to change the way we see other people. But, it's the people who are stubborn and are still stuck in their views from the 60s that are keeping this country where it is racially," Harris said.

Although Harris believes racism can go away, he believes seeing someone for only their race is usually negative, no matter the reasoning behind it.

"Areas of higher level education, they give out scholarships for if you're Hispanic, Black, or Asian and what not. I feel like that's a positive thing, but you also could be giving a scholarship to a person that doesn't deserve it because of their skin color," Harris said. "I want to be seen as someone who values their education, someone who chooses your institution to go there and learn not just a tool to boost their demographic."

Although racism has been prevalent for so long in the United States, Harris thinks it could go away if people change their mindsets. He believes if people see each other for who they are instead of the color of their skin, a change can be made.



written by Samantha Sussman and photo courtesy of Sierra Carey

DEMANDING JUSTICE

As one of the only Black wrestlers in the state, senior Taheim Hill explains how his race has affected his high school experience

Like many sports, wrestling involves respect and discipline. For senior Taheim Hill, sometimes the respect isn't mutual. Having grown up in a county that is 89.5% white Americans (census.gov), Hill has spent much of his life adjusting to and dealing with racially biased comments.

"I experienced [racism] last year at regionals. A kid got in my face and I looked at him in his eyes and the ref only looked at me and said, 'Hey, if you don't chill out I'll kick you out of the tournament.' It's like they only care about the white kids in Colorado but not of color," Hill said.

With the wrestling season in full swing, Hill has experienced an increased amount of racial injustice.

"I have experienced racism in my wrestling career, actually recently this Friday. The ref kept hitting me with penalties that were petty because I kept pushing the kid out of bounds or if I slammed the kid hard, the ref kept hitting me with unnecessary roughness and it was unfair. He just didn't like me because of my color. I swear, everything I did was legal," Hill said.

Hill has been dealing with racism since childhood, but as of lately it has been more obvious that the world is nowhere close to safe for people of color.

"I have experienced racism at Castle View High School. I was walking to the bathroom and it was racism all over the bathroom. It was during Trump running again for president. On the mirrors it said, 'F*** N*****', TRUMP 2020.' I was overwhelmed by what I saw; I went to the front of the office and yelled at them and said 'really, y'all let these kids write racist slurs all over the bathroom?' The security guards always patrol the bathroom and you guys telling me you guys didn't see that?" Hill said.

Even though anti-racism efforts have been on the rise since the worldwide protests in 2020, many would argue that there is still work left to do.

"I'm not racist, I swear, but with all disrespect I don't really like you white people; that's just where I'm at. Screaming 'All Lives Matter' is a protest to my protest. I'm tired of this systematic racism. The power in the N word is a different sin. We shouldn't say it but we do; when we use it, we know that's just how we greet each other. There's a double meaning under. Even if I wasn't picking cotton physically that doesn't mean I'm not affected by the history," Hill said.

With tensions high, empathy is more important now than ever.

"I love you, but I hate you at the same time. I wish we could trade shoes or change lives so we could understand each other more, but that will take time," Hill said.



written by Macy Key and photo courtesy of Sierra Carey