

ONE NATION

By Madelyn Mayer (p.c. a. woods)

This was a difficult story to cover. Upon sitting down to write this, several deep breaths and a moment of silent consideration were required before the cautious trek of typing began, and it felt essential to constantly keep in mind the nature of the situation at hand. "Election" became a sort of swear word when November came around, and tension climbed exponentially as our country seemingly split in two. It was a scary time for everyone involved, regardless of political affiliation: but that's not the story I'm here to tell. Despite the constant nerve-wracking news headlines and overall strange nature of this election, there was good ingrained in even the darkest moments. Young people in America voted in record numbers this year, topping previous elections and encouraging civic action among newly registered voters—Woodland Park teenagers being no exception. While most students enrolled here at WPHS are not old enough to vote yet, this election turned out to be an

incredibly educational process for future voters. When asked about their thoughts on the events of early November, one student brought up the importance of our role in civic action: "I think it was a very educational election. . . It is vital that the youth know the system, because they are the driving force of the future." This was clearly expressed by a wide variety of people this year, as upcoming adults began to find things they were truly passionate about, and—in the process—discovered that they really can play a role in changing our future. This was, of course, not perfect: at times, the very fabric of our nation seemed fragile. Although this could be uncomfortable at the least, it ultimately allowed for more healing than we may realize. As stated by another student, "I see it as bringing the younger generation together, more than I have seen in quite a while, to make a difference." No matter what stance you took this election, or how it made you feel, what matters most is that we are still standing. Not as Republicans and Democrats, Liberal and Conservative—but as one nation. Now is the time to mend our wounds and continue to tend to our honor, our connectivity, and our dedication. The student body here at WPHS puts it perfectly: "...the youth need to be able to look at the bigger picture and and not get caught up in the chaos—in order to create a better tomorrow.



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