



**UNAPOLOGETIC.** For DeVante Gallegos, a typical outfit includes band tees, a battle jacket, chains, bandannas, spikes, and huge boots. That was the way Gallegos expressed himself. "Expressing myself authentically is something really important to me because I think it's important to not care what other people think about. Gallegos said. For Gallegos, there was no trend worth sacrificing his authentic self.

Photo by B. Green

# EXPRESS YOURSELF

I was never really happy with myself until I started expressing myself the way I wanted to.

- D. Gallegos

Whether through eccentric style or underground music, bright hair dye or chunky accessories, your fun hobbies or your strong opinions, there are millions of ways to express your most authentic self.

Along with the ways individuals express themselves in the hallways, there are also many clubs that provide students with ample opportunity to be themselves and find peers that love and accept whatever that entails.

As a member of many clubs, including alternative club and Gender/Sexuality Alliance (or GSA), Jacob Gould heavily values authenticity.

**"I THINK BEING AUTHENTIC IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO ME TO LIE ABOUT WHO YOU ARE, CONSIDERING WE HAVE ALL THE FREEDOM IN OUR LIVES TO BE AUTHENTIC. WITH THAT SORT OF EXPRESSION YOU'RE ABLE TO FIND OTHER INDIVIDUALS THAT SHARE SIMILAR INTERESTS AND QUALITIES,"** Gould said.

For them, the ability to have their external image match how they viewed

themselves internally was a great way to honor their identity and their interests.

Oftentimes, self expression is more than how you dress and do your makeup. Instead, it can be the things that occupy your time. For Jolie Nguyen, this was art.

**"I EXPRESS MYSELF BY DRAWING THE THINGS I LOVE. IT'S NOT ALWAYS EMOTIONAL, BUT IT'S JUST SOMETHING THAT I LOVE AND HAVE A PASSION FOR."**

Nguyen said.

She used it as an outlet to discover things about herself in unconventional ways.

**"DRAWING STUFF MAKES YOU CONNECT WITH YOURSELF. I THINK IT'S A GREAT WAY TO GET TO**

**KNOW WHO YOU ARE AS A PERSON."**

Nguyen said. Through her art, she was able to display her most authentic self.

Throughout their high school careers, students utilized many pathways to display the most authentic versions of themselves.

They developed new clubs and met new people that motivated and inspired them to be true to who they are.

