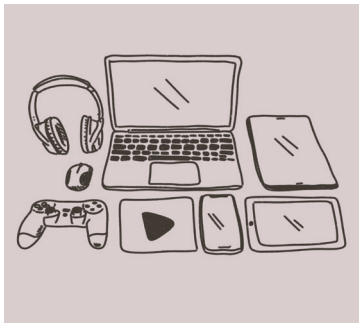


EDITORS COLUMN

Generation Alpha: a Digital Generation



Alexis Choi
Grade 11
South High School



Generation Alpha is now emerging as the youngest generation, raised in an entirely digitized environment. [Source: Author, Alexis Choi]

According to those thirteen-year-olds and below, “slay” and “queen” are out, and texting should be in all-lowercase with correct grammar only when you are angry or upset. You might be a “Vanilla Girl” or a “Coconut Girl,” and words like “sigma” and “gyat” have actual meanings and are incorporated into everyday conversations.

Born between 2010 and 2025, this new generation of kids is called Generation Alpha—also

dubbed, less flatteringly, as “iPad kids” by the older generations. Unlike the preceding Millennials and even Gen Z, members of Gen Alpha were the first to be born into a fully digitized world. They were raised with access to all modern technology; artificial intelligence such as Siri and Alexa have been fully incorporated into their daily routines, and a majority of the children are given their own iPhones at around nine years old. This unprecedented exposure to technology, especially during their formative years, has led to a prominent difference in the trends and behaviors of this younger generation—especially when compared to the generations that forewent it.

Screenagers. Generation Glass. Rather than rattles or stuffed animals, smartphones and tablets act as the pacifiers of this new cohort of children. The constant exposure to screens and digital devices has caused concerns about the social skills and attention

spans of those in Gen Alpha. TikTok, Gen Alpha’s growing platform of choice, offers stimulating and diverse information within short 30-second clips, which affects the brain’s ability to engage in non-digital activity that does not move as quickly. Additionally, with lack of parental controls, these younger individuals can gain access to explicit and inappropriate content without proper restrictions.

Moreover, most of the current Gen Alpha experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and online schooling during key phases of their education, which further cemented online interactions and technological learning as a norm. Many Gen Alpha use the voice type feature to type their essays for school and struggle to read and write at grade level. Though this can be attributed to the inadequate schooling caused by the pandemic and lockdown, the role of constant screens and social media exposure cannot be ignored.

Naturally, there are positives brought on by their unique environment. Gen Alpha understands and adapts to new technology faster than any other generation. Being born into a world where social and political spheres are hot and being connected to a constant flow of information about global issues, Gen Alphas can express a greater sense of empathy and express more care about ending various issues, including racism and climate change.

Additionally, it is important to note that not all individuals within Gen Alpha follow these generational trends and embody the same stereotypes. There are exceptions and diverse groups within every generation, and the same applies to Gen Alpha. Though this generation will likely face challenges, with the right guidance and support from the older generations, these challenges can be transformed into opportunities for growth and success.

EDITORS COLUMN

Making the Holidays Merrier Through Volunteering!



Sean Kim
Grade 12
Los Alamitos High School

Volunteers from Los Alamitos High School partnered with local nonprofit Transitions In Motherhood to launch the second annual Blessing Bags Project: a community service event devoted to helping those in need during the holiday season.

This year, the high school’s California Scholarship Federation club organized a donation drive to provide hygiene kits for the homeless in Los Angeles and Long Beach. With Transitions in Motherhood handling the delivery side, high school volunteers were only responsible for gathering as many masks, hand sanitizers, soap, winter clothing, and other supplies as possible. For two weeks, the donation drive was advertised through presentations during lunch meetings and word-of-mouth from club board members. Over a span of two weeks, Los Alamitos students dropped off bags and boxes in the school activities office, complete with labels of items and names. Our donations contributed to the non-



Los Alamitos High School volunteers spent their Friday night creating hygiene kits for the homeless! [Source: Author, Sean Kim]

profit’s existing supply, forming an impressive quantity of items for the upcoming hygiene kit assembly.

From there, the National Honor Society club took up the torch. Similar to the donation drive, the hygiene kit assembly was advertised through lunch meetings, as well as through online flyers on Google Classroom and social media accounts. Find Your Passion, a small volunteer organization on campus, joined the partnership with its own members, and the service event grew in popularity after a repost from the official school account. It

was imperative to match the success of the donation drive with a sufficient volunteer force, and Los Alamitos High did not disappoint. In just a few short days, a passionate group of Los Alamitos volunteers agreed to devote their Friday night and last day of the semester to helping the community through service.

From six to eight, the Transitions in Motherhood headquarters was busy packing hygiene kits. First, the large amount of donations were sorted into neat boxes. The first fifteen minutes were spent rummaging through the

pile of donations and collecting groups of items. Then, the boxes were arranged on a line of tables—volunteers adapted an efficient system of walking down the line holding a bag, putting an item from each box with each passing. With nearly twenty volunteers on site, the assembling process went quickly; as the time wound down, over one hundred fifty hygiene kits were created! The room was filled with complete donation bags, festive music, and wide smiles. The work done that night would help keep people safer and warmer in the cold winter season!

Los Alamitos High volunteers spent their Friday happy to have helped others in need. For the majority of the volunteers, the event was well worth the time—working alongside the Transitions In Motherhood staff proved to be an invaluable experience to witness the power of volunteerism. Hopefully, next year, Los Alamitos High will return to bring more joy to the holiday season.

Student Reporter

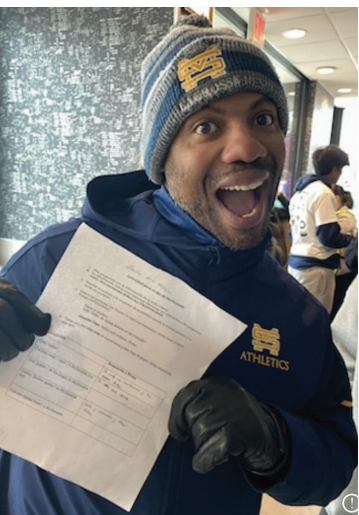
New Year’s Resolution Discipline



Justin Kim
Grade 10
St. Mark’s School of Texas

With the new year dawning, many have begun to write up new year’s resolutions in order to improve themselves over the course of the year. Often, these goals are lofty due to an excess of hope, but they also represent great opportunities to display or increase willpower and determination.

So, how long do most resolutions last? Surveys find that 36% of resolutions are kept through the first month of January, while only 9% last until the end of the year. Researchers have found that people were more successful at keeping approach-oriented goals, such as changing habits or exercising, as opposed to avoidance-oriented ones, which are motivated by a desire to avoid something. This article will provide some tips to enter the 9% of successful resolutions.



Staying motivated for the new year will help you keep your resolutions. [Source: Author, Justin Kim]

First, it is important to choose a specific goal in the beginning. An ambiguous resolution such as “becoming more productive” or “getting in shape” is unrealistic. Rather, pick a concrete goal that is easier to track and achievable. This also allows you to establish a

plan or daily routine.

Second, not only should you choose a specific goal, you should choose a manageable number of goals. Accomplishing even one small goal can increase self-confidence, making future goals easier. In the case of a large resolution, consider breaking it down into smaller portions to work on one at a time, gaining momentum as you go. Taking on too much at once is difficult, as behavioral habits are hard to adjust and require sustained effort and time.

Third, find ways to stay motivated and hold yourself to the standard of your goals. During the first days of a resolution, you will likely commit to confidence and motivation to reach your goal. Creating change may appear simple then, as there hasn’t been any reason for discomfort

or temptation associated with changing your behavior. However, after dealing with the reality of dragging yourself to the gym at 6 a.m. or keeping yourself glued to your chair to study, your motivation may dwindle. When you face these moments, reminders are key. Consider the gains of achieving a goal or find another person to provide support.

Finally, sudden complications or setbacks are common reasons people give up on resolutions. Relapses are learning opportunities, not failures. The path to success is going to be challenging, but staying motivated and keeping up good habits can help you overcome any difficulties. Make sure to keep records of progress and challenges, either online or in a journal. By doing so, creating an adaptive plan becomes much easier.

Student Reporter

How American Youths Show Solidarity Towards Palestine



Gianeelle Kim
Grade 9
California Academy of Mathematics and Science

Teens can’t actually make a huge political difference, right?

Wrong.

In light of recent events that have been occurring between Israel and Palestine, many teens in the US have changed their daily lives to show solidarity with the Palestinian people. Some skeptics question their effectiveness—after all, what do a couple of high school students know about a decades-old conflict—but really, when will you be old enough to spread global awareness and support?

My friend, Uzoamaka Exechukwu, or Uzo, as we affectionately call her, is an avid supporter of this cause. She wants to educate others on the topic that she is so passionate about; reaching out and helping the Palestinian people in their time of great need. With so many accounts of false news spreading around, Uzo doesn’t let her bias



The U.S has decided to donate millions annually to Israel, furthering its weapons and military technology. [Source: Author, Gianeelle Kim]

seep through while she states facts. However, her smart words and quick wit immediately give our peers an understanding as to why she stands with Palestine. When asked about how she shows solidarity from thousands of miles away, she replied with, “...just [by] boycotting the businesses that support Israel, educating people who don’t know about the situation, reposting information about what both sides are doing and going through, and signing petitions.”

Her response mentioned boycotts. The majority of them have

been successful due to the fact that an industry is supported by clients, not money. One prime example of a business seeing a huge decrease in value is Starbucks. The global chain has been known to donate millions of dollars to Israel. There are countless jokes about how the younger generations love and even depend on Starbucks. But their morals are stronger than their need for caffeine. My friends, Alinka and Rose, agree with the mentioned statements. Rose, in response to my question, said she “supports Palestine, and I try to help by liking posts and trying not

to support companies that support Israel.” I have also found myself reaching for pro-Israeli companies’ products less.

The last, but not only action on my list is support through social media. While these platforms are mainly used for a good laugh, the majority of uploads should also be used to further education on ongoing political topics. Reposting, liking, and commenting on posts can increase the number of users viewing them, which is a great way to spread awareness and show your political stance. Many celebrities have taken to Instagram to speak about their thoughts on the issue, which has boosted Palestinian support.

From 6,700 miles away, the citizens of Palestine ask for support and resources. And it is empathy that drives our solidarity, not “lack of worldly experience.” When adults decide not to speak up, we will.

Student Reporter

Enhancing Community Safety Through Snow Plowing



Jiyong Kwak
Grade 9
Juniper Christian School



I worked diligently to clear the snow-covered pavement, which heaven has bestowed upon us. [Source: Author, Jiyong Kwak]

“I’m dreaming of a white Christmas Just like the ones I used to know.” This famous melody is from an old-time Christmas classic, White Christmas, originally composed by Irving Berlin. This song was reproduced by Bing Crosby, which sold over 100 million copies internationally, according to the Guinness Books of World Records. The dream of a white Christmas, however, is a nightmare to most, if not all, South Korean public servants, as they need to plow the snow relentlessly for safety concerns. If not the public servants, however,

will our days be merry and bright the coldest season of the year?

South Korea’s climate varies widely with its four seasons, unlike California, which has dry and rainy seasons. As it snows regularly in South Korea, its past calendar system, which has 24 months a year, there are months named after snow. For example, the 20th month, or Soseol, standing for ‘Little Snow,’ is accepted to be when the first snow falls, and the 21st month, or Daeseol, standing for ‘Large Snow,’ is known to be when it snows

the most throughout the year. One other interesting fact related to snow is an old saying that snow is a barley’s blanket since the snow protects the barley from freezing in cold temperatures.

Black ice is a thin and slippery layer of ice that could cause unfortunate accidents, which could lead to paralyzation. To prevent this ice from forming, plowing the snow is crucial. To raise situational awareness of the problem, the government hosts campaigns to encourage snow plowing in front of one’s home. I, personally, participated in this campaign by clearing the walkway with snow for a safer neighborhood.

Sean Na Kim, a ninth grader from Juniper Christian School said, “I personally dislike when snow comes because of the inconveniences that come with it. In Korea, though snow may be removed from the roads, the sidewalks are

often left untouched, which can be dangerous to those walking. The snow around crosswalks also melts or freezes, and due to people and cars going through the crosswalks, a grey slush forms, which is inconvenient.”

Despite the unappealing aspects of snow, street cleaners like Pan Soo Lee work diligently to clear the streets. “I go to work before sunrise and clean the streets until sundown, and there is still snow left untouched, which I can do nothing about. However, I try to clean the sidewalks the best as I can.”

One might see snowfall as a dream, whereas others might view it as trash from the heavens. Regardless of the perspective, cleaning the street with snow was a fruitful experience where I was able to interact with other members of the community and contribute to making the world a better place.

Student Reporter

Welcome to DECA!



Reanna Lee
Grade 9
North Hollywood High School

Welcome to the Distributive Education Clubs of America, or DECA, a student organization for high schools and colleges seeking career development. DECA provides a wide array of competitive events to test personal knowledge and communication skills, such as business management and administration, entrepreneurship, finance, hospitality and tourism, marketing, and personal financial literacy. Whether or not students want to pursue business in the future, DECA is a great opportunity to spark inspiration among individuals.

As the new year began, the first conference was held on the first weekend of January, from the 5th to the 7th. Throughout the year, there will be three main competitions: district, state, and international. This event, the SoCal DECA District Career Development Conference (SoCal DECA DCDC), took place in Anaheim, Southern California, as a three-day, two-night trip. As a first-year competing in the hospitality and

tourism field, I can definitely say that this experience was memorable and has helped me learn many new things.

The first day consisted of the comprehensive written exams, which were taken by participants in all competitive events. Each person had a total of 90 minutes to complete the exam. Each exam is also event-specific—for example, those who are competing in the Principles of Business Administration events (Principles of Business Management and Administration, Principles of Hospitality and Tourism, Principles of Finance, Principles of Marketing) would take the Business Administration Core exam. The principle events are for first-year participants like me, so I took this exam as well. The same goes for the other individual series events. An opening ceremony was held on the first day as well. During this ceremony, the DECA Leadership spoke and gave a welcome to all who were present. To ease the air after exams, the ceremony transi-



A group photo of North Hollywood High School’s DECA after awards. [Source: Alena Jin on the North Hollywood High School DECA Instagram]

tioned into a more social event with activities after introductions and reception.

None of the actual events started until the second day, the busiest day of the competition. The day consisted of scheduled role-plays, which are problem-solving business simulations that are performed in front of a judge. These role-plays are scored along with the exams to create a total score for your performance in the competition. A second written exam took place as well for those partaking in multiple events, and optional workshops were held for students

wanting to improve or develop new skills.

The conference concluded on the third and final day, when awards were held. Awards were split into multiple categories within events, first component-specified, then overall. Awards were given to the top three performers in each category; however, a badge was also given to finalists (top 20 performers). Although this was only my first experience in a DECA competition, I can already see that it is a great way to develop new skills, meet new people, and spark inspiration in individuals.