

WE ARE GENERATION Z

WHO ARE WE?

by Grace Halupnik '20 and Sam Rothbardt '20

The simple definition of Generation Z is anyone born between 1995 and 2015. However, the question of what characteristics define those born within this period is often more difficult to address.

One defining feature of Generation Z is its availability of technology since birth. The first iPhone was released on July 29, 2007, meaning that many of this generation grew up owning or using a cell phone from an early age. Internet access became readily available shortly before 1995, and throughout Generation Zs' lives, technology has grown at an exponential rate.

The factor of technology in Gen Zs' lives can come with many advantages and downsides. As Jean M. Twenge puts it in her book "iGen," "In the next decade we may see more young people who know just the right emoji for a situation—but not the right facial expression."

Another essential factor of the identity of Generation Z is their willingness to advocate for what they believe in. Many events experienced in their lifetimes have fueled them to create change and leave passiveness to past generations.

For example, the rise in school shootings created the Never Again movement and a lack of LGBTQ rights expanded Pride activism in the past two decades. Speaking up is one of the differences between Generation Z and others in the past. This quality has also created a more tolerant atmosphere among Gen Z's and is a possible explanation for their general greater desire for equality

While activism and tolerance are usually seen in a positive light, other trends of Generation Z prove more troublesome. It is reported that Gen Z is slower to grow up compared to past generations and has a tendency to involve themselves in addictive behaviors.

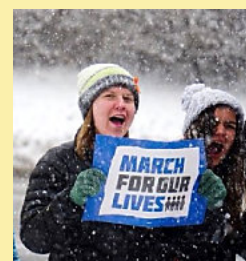
As Generation Z begins to rise from young children to working adults, defining characteristics begin to take shape. The prides and pitfalls of Gen Z have the potential to shape the world for the many generations to come.



94%
of Gen. Zers say
being "true to myself"
is important.



32%
of the population will
be from Gen Z. by
2020



93%
of Gen-Zers say they
visit YouTube at least
once a week.

The members of Teens for Tomorrow, including PV students Margaret Huang, Gavin Sears, Amulya Pillutla, Prakruti Pancholi, Riya Bhandarkar, Alyce Brown, Sam Eliassen, and Kiran Marla. It is a youth philanthropy group, is creating waves of change through their donations of \$10,000 to local nonprofits. Operated by the Quad Cities Community Foundation in Davenport, those apart of this organization are learning how to make their dreams of creating change a reality.



PEOPLE WITH PASSION: ACTIVISM AT PV

by Ingrid Hofmann '21

As generations grow up, they tend to form their own ideas about society and take action against the ideas they perceive as wrong. Generation Z is no different. With a broad number of topics to be passionate about, activism within today's youth is on the rise.

A defining part of Generation Z is activism, and the youth of today are using their voice to talk about whatever cause they are passionate about. Through social media, marches, writing, and countless other forms of protest, Generation Z activists are sparking international conversations and igniting change across the globe about the issues they care about.

One prominent area of activism within the youth is gun violence. Following the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School was the creation of the national Never Again Movement. The Never Again Movement advocates for tighter gun regulations and restrictions in order to prevent future gun violence. And in the spring of 2018, PVHS had its own chapter, known as March for Our Lives.

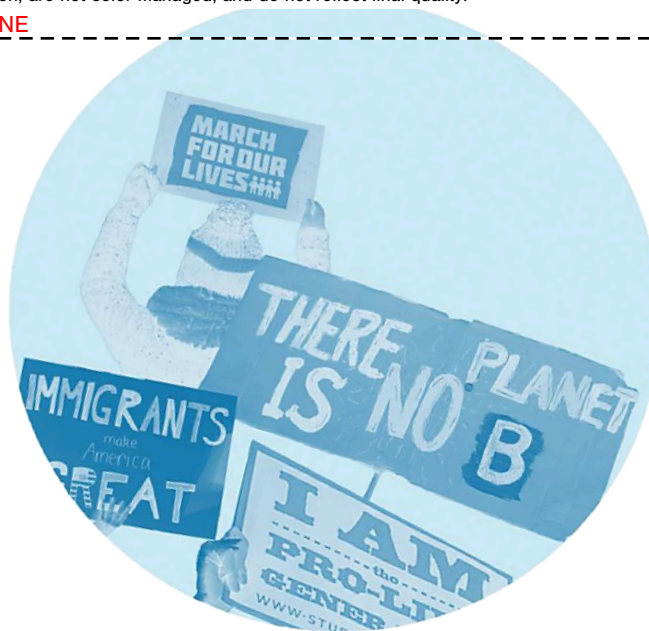
Junior Muskan Basnet, who joined as a freshman, says, "I joined March for Our Lives because, after hearing about the Parkland shooting, I

realized that a shooting could happen anywhere in the US and I wanted to raise awareness about it. Never Again aimed to raise awareness and make a change in regards to gun control in America." Basnet also said that "By keeping ourselves educated on current issues, we were able to have discussions and plan events that got attention. This way people who are not involved in March for Our Lives also knew what was going on around the country and what they could do to help." Although Pleasant Valley's chapter of March for Our Lives no longer meets, the national organization is continuing to make headlines and fight for change.

However, Never Again is not the only Pleasant Valley organization that aims to make a change on a broader spectrum. PV's Girls Learn International group, commonly known as GLI, meets every other Tuesday at 3:30 in room 289 to discuss current events and topics such as internalized racism, human rights, and LGBTQ+ rights.

Led by juniors Emerson Peters and Muskan Basnet, GLI attracts members from all backgrounds. Peters says, "We discuss a range of topics and our members include all genders! GLI also facilitates fundraisers and community actions to better education and human rights standards. Leading GLI is such a great experience because I can learn with others," Peters went on to say, "I'm not a human rights expert but sitting down and learning something so that I can explore it with all our members is a great way to learn and take action as a group."

Another group at PV is working towards a greater cause as well: the environment. Environmental Club meets the opposite Tuesdays of GLI in room 4 at 3:30. Environmental club is led by senior Margaret Huang and junior Allison Suen and discusses various topics such as sustainability, clean water, and various other ways that people can help the earth. In addition to the discussion, environmental club participates in various volunteer activities throughout the year such as tree planting, t-shirt and



water bottle sales, helping out at the botanic center, and many more activities.

Suen, who first joined environmental club after hearing about their plans to restart the greenhouse, says "I'm passionate about the

environment because there is so much to learn about it, and when you think you've learned all there is about something, there is always something else to learn or a new problem that will arise." Suen went on to comment about her passion for the club, saying "And when you join a club where everyone is in love with the world we live in and they all want to try their best to protect it, it makes my passion soar even more."

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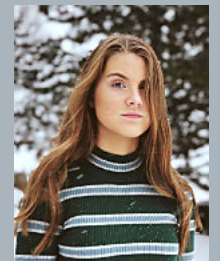
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CHASING DOWN THE DREAM

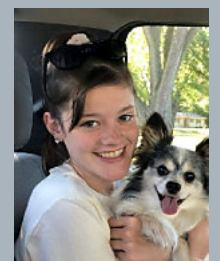
PV students dream big, knowing hard work and determination can get them anywhere. Here's how these Spartans are chasing their dreams.



Carson Albrecht '22
"To achieve my dreams I think: life is too short, don't sweat the small stuff."



Dana Johnson '22
"A dream I've accomplished is learning a really cool tik tok dance."



Nora Zimmermann '23
"I dream to be a choir teacher. Music education provides so many opportunities to students and it's something I'm really passionate about."

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