

**MAYOR HART'S VIEW ON RACIAL DIVERSITY**



Waterloo's mayor, Quentin Hart is the first African American elected to be the Mayor for the City of Waterloo.

“Racial diversity is WHO WE ARE as a country and a world. The more we work together and realize that we have more in common than apart, the GREATER the future we will collectively create. Overcoming racial obstacles doesn't mean avoiding, minimizing, rationalizing, or running away from the challenges. It's addressing them. Racial discrimination and bias are real, but we cannot allow others to weaken our belief in our own potential or put limits on our God given GIFTS.”

**Minority students open up about race relations**

by senior Caleb McCullough

“Diverse” is not the first word that comes to mind when looking in the halls of Hudson High School. We're a small town in one of the least racially diverse states in the country.

Student population: 723, 94% White. But what if you're in that 6%. What is life like for you as a minority student at Hudson?

The prevailing impression from most of these students, is that race, for the most part, is a non-issue.

“People don't treat me any different than others at Hudson,” said sophomore Trey Germain, who is African American.

Senior Ashley Polendo, who is Hispanic,

agrees that race isn't really a factor at HHS.

“I feel like we don't talk about it,” said Polendo, and to her, that is a good thing. “I'd prefer we talk about it if it's an issue, but at Hudson, it's not an issue.”

Ironically, though one might expect a small school in the Midwest to breed intolerance, high school social studies teacher Paul Simmer, who is Asian, thinks the reason race isn't an issue at Hudson is precisely because we're a small school.

“The longer people are around me (and get to know me and others of color),” said Simmer, “the way I look literally disappears. They just know me as (me).”



**A MESSAGE FROM BARACK OBAMA**

The *Pirate Press* newspaper staff received an email of a lifetime Oct. 17 from former President Barack Obama. In preparation for the October issue's feature on race relations at Hudson, seniors Hailey Elder and Abby Lashbrook reached out to Waterloo mayor Quentin Hart, and, on a whim, President Barack Obama- both the first African-Americans in their respective offices- for comment. Hart's office replied almost immediately with a response from the mayor. Much to her surprise, managing editor Lashbrook later received a reply from the 44th president of the United States. It read:

**“At the heart of America's founding is the idea that we are all created equal, and I'm glad you took the time to tell me how you feel. Our country is home to people of every background and belief. While we may look different or come from different families, all of us deserve the same rights and opportunities. And as Americans, we share a lasting responsibility to show each other kindness and respect and to treat each other the way we want to be treated. The more we practice those values in our own lives, the better off we will all be. By speaking out, you are helping hold our nation accountable to our highest ideals, and I hope you'll stay engaged on the issues that matter to you.” - Barack Obama**



photo by senior Olivia Kolterman  
juniors Jacob Murray and Izik Rodriguez

**NOT A LAUGHING MATTER**

by senior Caleb McCullough

Because there's less diversity at Hudson, junior Izik Rodriguez sees his race brought up in what seems just friendly teasing. But Rodriguez doesn't always find it funny.

“It's annoying when it's their go-to thing,” he said.

Other minority students agree with Rodriguez. While the jokes don't

offend them, they can get annoying.

“Race jokes don't bother me, but I feel like people should know where the line is to stop,” said Germain.

Despite these sometimes tasteless jokes by their friends, both Rodriguez and Germain said they've never felt targeted or outcast because of their race.

**77%** of students at Hudson High School share the same racial views as their parents.

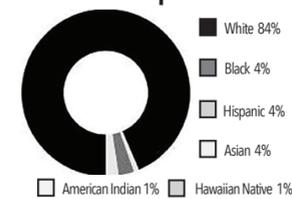
**Diversity in our school Hudson High School**



**Diversity in our town Hudson, Iowa**



**Diversity in other schools Cedar Falls High School**



**Color blind: Hudson embraces diversity, unity**

by senior Grace Jorgensen

African American. Asian. Caucasian. Hispanic. When initially meeting someone, people tend to label others by the color of their skin. Yet those from multiracial families and those in multiracial relationships know that such labels are only skin deep.

At-risk coordinator Jeff Bell belongs to the small percentage of multiracial families that call Hudson home. After deciding that they wanted to grow their family, Bell and his wife, Miekka, adopted Camden from Mississippi in February of 2006 when he was just a day old.

“We always say that we have had two by birth and one by heart,” said Bell, referring to Camden and his two biological children, Maddie, 20, and Owen, 9.

“It never was and still isn't different because he is black,” said Bell.

Regardless of the physical or biological distinctions between them, the Bell family motto has always been “family first”.

Camden, now 11 years old, has never experienced racism at Hudson, but Bell acknowledges that Camden will have to confront it in his future.

“There will come a day when Camden will have to face ignorance and stupidity towards his race,” said Bell. “But when that time comes, we'll face it together- as a family.”

Not only have multiracial relationships flourished in Hudson families like Bell's, but in the halls of Hudson High School as well. Senior Katelyn Pint's perspective has changed since dating biracial sophomore Trey Germain.

Pint admits that she was hesitant at first to tell people that they were dating.

“Since dating someone of color isn't common, I was nervous how others would react,” said Pint. But within just a few weeks, her feelings

changed.

“I realized that I was happy, and that was all that mattered,” said Pint. “I didn't care if people judged me.”

Now, five months later, Pint doesn't think twice about the color of Germain's skin.

“When I look at Trey, I don't see who his friends call ‘Black Trey,’” said Pint. “I see him for the caring person he is.”

Racism also doesn't interfere between the “bromances” at Hudson. Juniors Jacob Murray and Izik Rodriguez became friends when Rodriguez, who is Hispanic, moved to Hudson in the eighth grade.

“No one has ever singled him out because of his race,” said Murray. “He has always been just one of us, one of the guys.”

Best friends Murray and Rodriguez share inside jokes, goofy nicknames, and have each others' back, just like any friendship.

“Rod (Murray's nickname for Rodriguez) would get made fun of at his old school because of his race,” said Murray. “But here, we don't tolerate that- here we care,” said Murray.

Students like these and Bell all share a dream that is decades old: The dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1963 during the March on Washington, King said “I look to a day when people will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

I guess one could say here at Hudson, we're living the dream.



photo by sophomore Lexi Bergemeier  
senior Katelyn Pint and sophomore Trey Germain



photo by sophomore Harley Schley  
at-risk coordinator Jeff Bell and his son, 6th grader Camden



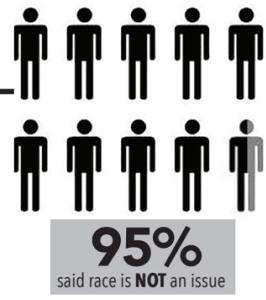
**COMING TO TERMS WITH RACE**

“BLACK” - sophomore Trey Germain  
“AFRICAN AMERICAN” - The City of Waterloo publications

According to The Huffington Post, “African American” was used to describe Americans with direct African descent or those who have traveled from Africa to America, hence, African American. “Black” is used to describe those of color who are of American descent.

**Do you think race is an issue at Hudson High School?**

“We are a mostly white school, but I think we are doing a good job of incorporating different RACES into SOCIETY.” - junior Lucas Lubben



**Do you think race is a national issue?**

“People have trouble accepting CHANGE or DIFFERENCES so having different colors of skin or race is TOUGH for some people to ACCEPT.” - sophomore Drew Stanfield

