



"Class-based Affirmative Action" Gaining Attention

As the affirmative action debate rages on, talk of another under-represented group on college and university campuses is lurking in the shadows. And it's focusing on students from low-income families.

"Class-based affirmative action" is an idea championed by certain education reformers. Some proponents believe that social class and economics should take the place of race and ethnicity when it comes to affirmative action. Others, such as Anthony P. Carnevale, vice president of the Educational Testing Service, believe it makes more sense to add low-income students to the current affirmative action policies.

Carnevale just co-authored a recently released study that showed low-income students as the most under-represented group at top U.S. colleges and universities. Here are a few of the findings:

- 3 percent of freshmen at the nation's 146 most selective schools (as ranked by Barron's Guide to Colleges) came from families in the bottom 25 percent income level
- 10 percent of freshmen at these same schools came from the bottom half of the income scale
- three-fourths of the entering students at these top schools come from the top fourth of the income spectrum

"There is even less socioeconomic diversity than racial or ethnic diversity at the most selective colleges," Carnevale said. "There are four times as many African-American and Hispanic students as there are students from the lowest (socioeconomic status) quartile."

"Opportunity and upward mobility is what America is all about," he continued. "Americans want strivers to be

given a chance. But we don't like to talk about class anymore. We know from our testing that a lot of kids out there are qualified to go to these schools, but they don't, and the truth is, nobody much (cares) about it."

According to Richard Kahlenberg of the Century Foundation research center, the most disadvantaged students in the United States today are those whose family income is lower than \$25,000, whose parents didn't graduate from high school, who went to school with other low-income students and who grew up in a poor neighborhood.

C. Lani Guinier, a Harvard Law School professor, agrees, calling the top college admissions policies "the great inequality machine" due to their bias in favor of wealth. "In testing, people talk about the 'Volvo effect,'" she said. "The test scores correlate with family affluence."

Source: *The Houston Chronicle*, April 6, 2003.

Web Site Review

Survey Monkey • www.surveymonkey.com

Assessment is a buzzword that may feel like a mosquito near your ear—always buzzing around yet difficult to pin down. And at the end of the year, there may be programs, training sessions or other initiatives that you'd like to assess, especially before writing your end-of-the year report. Don't know quite how to do this without it taking up tons of time, though? In swings Survey Monkey, to the rescue!

Yes, Survey Monkey offers a fee-based subscription that allows you to do fancy evaluations online. Yet, they also offer a free Basic Subscription that could be right up your alley as you try to get a simple read on how certain initiatives turned out.

To help you in this quest, you can choose the types of questions you'd like to ask. From rating scales to drop-down menus to open-ended questions and more... it's available. A sample survey is also posted to get you started as you write your own.

When your survey is ready to go, you can send it out to your desired cyber audience. And, once the responses start coming in, Survey Monkey can collect them and analyze the results for you. It's magic!

Basic subscribers are limited to a total of 10 questions and 100 responses per survey. Still, if you're looking to evaluate last night's in-service or poll your peer educators on a specific topic, this tool can make data collection a breeze. Don't go bananas over your simple assessment efforts anymore now that Survey Monkey is on the scene.

The Campus Diversity Report

News & Views

What happens in the world directly impacts the campus community. Here we strive to round up pertinent News that can be used for educational discussions while also providing "Views" to help facilitate these discussions.

Addressing Issues of Bias and Censorship within Educational Publishing

Educational publishers continue to get pressure from all angles when it comes to what's "fit to print." Some people believe banning discriminatory, sexist, racist images and words from printed works is the most sensitive thing to do. Others believe these alterations—often made without the original author's permission—are overly sensitive and constitute censorship.

So, what to do when references to dolphins are removed from test questions because inner-city kids who don't have access to the ocean might be at a disadvantage? Should references to God be deleted so no one is offended? Has political correctness gone overboard?

"In the topsy-turvy world of educational publishing, advocates for social change have set their sights on controlling reality by changing the way in which it is presented in textbooks," according to Diane Ravitch, an education historian who presents her research in the book *The Language Police*.

Some publishers have developed "bias and sensitivity guidelines" to address the issue. For instance, in California, the state issued a list of "foods to avoid in textbooks." These foods, such as cream cheese, french fries and fruit punch, were banned because they were deemed unhealthy. The state even asked that an illustration of children around a birthday cake be removed, according to one publisher, because "the state does not consider (cake) nutritious."

Ravitch also found in her research that some publishers tend to gloss over

certain religious problems, like Islamic fundamentalism, but focus instead on more "minor" references such as "cabin boy" being changed to "ship's steward."

Source: *USA Today*, April 20, 2003

Views:

Is it a good idea to have "bias and sensitivity guidelines" for educational publications? Why or why not? In your opinion, are there certain terms and images that should be banned from textbooks? If so, what are they? How do you view actions such as the state of California issuing a list of "foods to avoid in textbooks" because they are unhealthy? Are sensitivity and censorship mutually exclusive?

April Fools' Day Edition Leads to Campus Paper Closure

Quite a few school papers publish an April Fools' Day spoof issue. Yet, at Stetson University in Deland, Fla., the published "jokes" resulted in school officials firing the student staff and closing down the paper for the remainder of the academic year.

The traditional April Fools' Day issue of Stetson's *The Reporter* newspaper is called *The Distorter*. It typically makes fun of itself and other campus constituents. This year, however, "There's not much in this year's *Distorter* that you can laugh about," said Dean of Students Michelle Espinosa, to CNN Student News (April 12, 2003). "We believe very strongly in students' needs for autonomy. But the students do assume responsibility for their editorial decision."

Those decisions this year included a weekly sex column written in Eubonics that advocated rape and domestic violence and an ad with profanity in large letters "Because we are allowed to print it," the ad said. A campus lecture series

meant to promote racial dialogue was twisted into a fake article about a beer-drinking Civil War enthusiast. And another ad featured a spray that "Kills townies dead."

Student staffers were given 15 minutes to clear out of the office, they said, and some who had nothing to do with the editorial content lost their jobs, too. Administrators say they received many upset emails and calls from alums, students and faculty after the April 1 edition hit the newsstands.

The Reporter was founded in 1887 and is touted as Florida's first college newspaper. A new paper will be started in the fall, according to Espinosa, as a joint venture between student leaders and administrators. Those students who were fired from *The Reporter* will have an opportunity to reapply for positions with the new publication. "We've learned a lot in the last week as students and journalists," said Teresa Schwarz, the previous editor-in-chief. "I think that's something they're overlooking."

Source: CNN Student News, April 12, 2003

Views:

Based on what you've read here, do you think shutting down the paper and firing the staff suddenly was the best response? Why or why not? What part, if any, does free speech play? Have there been similar uproars regarding items printed in your own campus paper?

Unpopular Decision to Eliminate Affirmative Action and Protection for Gay Students/Staff Reversed

When Virginia Tech's governing board decided back in March to eliminate

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affirmative action in hiring and admissions and to do away with official protection for gay students and employees, they set off a firestorm of protests. One board member told *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 8, 2003) that they heard “almost daily” from people unhappy with the board’s decision.

So, a special session was called and, by a vote of 8 to 5, the decisions were rescinded. “We messed up,” said one board member. “We just messed up. We didn’t realize the magnitude of what we had done, and so once we did, we called a meeting and we fixed it.”

This reversal was an attempt to address an original decision that “cast a shadow over Virginia Tech in the eyes of many universities across the country,” according to the board president. Edd Sewell, president of the University Council (faculty senate) at Virginia Tech and an associate professor of communication studies said, “The voice of the people was so loud and so constant that it had to be heard. The coalition of students, faculty and alumni came together and let their opinion be known to the board, and it made a difference.”

Source: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 8, 2003

Views:

Do you believe that the board did the right thing? Why or why not? What does this example show about the power of dissent? How does the governing board work at your institution? Who are the members and how are they chosen?

Financial Aid for Students from Terrorist-Sponsoring Countries in Question

Should state aid go to students from six countries listed as sponsors of terrorism by the State Department? That’s the question being considered in a bill sponsored by State Rep. Dick Kravitz, a Republican from Jacksonville, Fla.

The bill, which is currently on the Florida Legislature’s agenda for consideration, would go into effect in July if passed. It seeks to bar state financial aid from going to students from Syria, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya and Sudan, all countries that have been listed as sponsors of terrorism. “These people do have to go back, and whatever they learn here is going to be used for their country,” said Kravitz. “I felt as though those dollars, which we needed, would be better spent on taxpayers in Florida and their children.”

Florida colleges and universities spent \$308,717 on financial aid for students from these six countries in 2001 and 2002. Cuba was originally listed on

the bill, too, but removed via an amendment.

Hadia Mubarak, president of the Muslim Students Association at Florida State University told the Associated Press, “What he’s (Kravitz) saying is if you’re born in Libya or Syria, you’re more likely to be a terrorist than anyone else.” Kravitz said that, through consideration of the bill, “We’re going to find out if we’re going to give them the money to potentially use against us, or if we’re going to give it to our kids.”

Source: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 7, 2003

Views:

What is your first impression after reading this article? What is your second thought? What does banning aid from students due to their nationality mean in the context of what the United States is supposed to stand for? What do you think of Kravitz’s proposal? What will it mean if this bill passes?

New History and Culture Guide

An Interactive Time Machine

Nationalgeographic.com has launched its new History and Culture guide at www.nationalgeographic.com/history/, offering visitors access to all of the site’s award-winning historic and cultural features, related maps, photo galleries, news, lesson plans, special kids’ programming and more. From tracing the journey of Lewis and Clark to experiencing the attack on Pearl Harbor to taking a trip on the Underground Railroad, the History and Culture guide is a truly interactive time machine.

Each month, the guide highlights topical features geared toward the time of year and current events. During African-American History Month, for instance, the site focused on lessons about Harlem, the Underground Railroad, the courage of Rosa Parks, African-American cowboys and the accomplishments of African-American explorer Matthew A. Henson, who was part of Robert E. Peary’s 1909 expedition to the North Pole.

Resource Review



Writing for Change • Teaching Tolerance's Resources for Educators

www.tolerance.org/teach/expand/wfc

As you delve into the summer “planning months,” a comprehensive resource is at your fingertips. Teaching Tolerance’s *Writing for Change* guide offers over 50 free activities that focus on language and writing. They can be used in forums such as:

- diversity and social justice programs
- freshmen seminar courses
- RA classes
- student leader workshops
- staff in-services
- retreats
- classroom projects

According to authors, Janet Lockhart, M.A.I.S. and Susan M. Shaw, Ph.D., “Language is a paradoxical tool—we use it consciously to shape our thoughts and experiences, yet patterns and structures in the language itself can shape us in return.” They show through-

out the guide that “American English frequently both reflects and reinforces systems of oppression in U.S. society.”

Hence, the purpose of this guide. “Our words create our worlds,” they quote. *Writing for Change* offers tools so educators can “examine the negative and harmful underpinnings of this powerful but often invisible tool [language], and refocus them to begin creating a language of equality and inclusion.”

Multiple “-isms” are addressed within the activities while variations are offered to best meet your group’s needs. Each lesson is available as a pdf document for free download. Directions, objectives, materials and handouts are all included within each document.

The Offerings

Four different types of activities are available for adaptation to your group. For instance:

Within Section 1, you’ll find 5-10 minute activities that include:

- Rating Your Behavior
- Generating a Description
- Creating Gender-free Nouns
- Questioning the “Norm”
- Challenging Your Assumptions
- Comparing Instead of Contrasting
- Looking at Looks
- Developing Definitions
- Adapting to Cultural Differences
- Seeing the Whole Person

Sample Activity

The “Looking at Looks” five to 10 minute activity is fairly straightforward.

- **Objectives include** “Explore feelings and attitudes around discrimination based on appearance,” “Discuss strategies for dealing with this kind of discrimination” and “Discuss effects and outcomes of this kind of discrimination.”
- **Materials include** pen, paper and/or a copy of the handout.
- **The instructor is provided with directions and a ready-made handout** (with reflective questions on it such as “What aspect of your appearance was disparaged?” and “Was your response effective in minimizing or ending the discriminatory behavior?”).
- **Variations are also included;** in this case, shifting the focus to discrimination based on religious affiliation.

Within Section 2, you’ll find more involved 20-60 minute activities such as:

- Writing About Racial Identity
- Considering the Oppressor
- Responding to Bullying
- Putting the People Back into Language
- Shedding Light on Color
- Identifying Euphemisms
- Considering Body Size, Shape, and Movement

Within Section 3, you’ll find activities requiring an hour or more, including:

- Participating in a New Community
- Exploring Your Mobility
- Understanding Pejorative Terms
- Formulating Your Stance on an Issue
- Dealing with “-isms”

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A Self Tutorial

Want to examine your own attitudes when it comes to issues of difference, power and discrimination? Consider using *Writing for Change* activities as part of your own summer tutorial. You could:

- reflect upon a topic once a week in your personal journal
- start up a “self-awareness group” to discuss the different topics
- create an informal in-service series for interested colleagues

These activities stir up a wide variety of thoughts and feelings regarding social justice issues. Raise your own awareness while contemplating how to use these tools with your students in the fall.

What's Working

The "I CARE" Campaign at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

During this time of campus contention and conflict, one university is seeing to it that students know where they can turn to express their emotions, whatever they may be.

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (UWW) "I CARE" campaign has a simple premise: to create a supportive environment that is respectful of all views. Buttons have been disseminated to faculty, staff, administrators and students "who wish to wear them to communicate that they believe in a supportive campus environment that is respectful of all views and opinions," says the Leadership Center's website. Posters bearing the "I CARE" logo are also available "for offices to display—to let students know that a particular office is an open, supportive environment."

This take on the "Safe Zone" program that is popular on so many campuses addresses those differences in opinion

stimulated by the war with Iraq. The button and sign agreement is simple, stating:

"By choosing to wear this button or post the 'I CARE' sign, I agree to the following:

- to listen to others without sharing my personal views
- to respect all points of view
- to be prepared to offer referral sources when necessary or when asked
- to maintain appropriate personal boundaries and not engage in therapy
- to maintain confidentiality of conversations
- to return the button and/or sign to the Leadership Center if I cannot follow the above agreement"

For more information, head to UWW's Leadership Center website at www.uww.edu/LeaderDev/Ic/index.htm.

World No Tobacco Day Tobacco Free Fashions, Tobacco Free Films, ACTION!

Every year on May 31, the World Health Organization (WHO) celebrates World No Tobacco Day around the world. This year, the WHO has partnered with medical associations, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Smoke Free Films project at the University of California, San Francisco to "focus on the role of the fashion and film world in fostering the worldwide tobacco epidemic and urge them to stop being used as vehicles of death and disease" (Tobacco Free Initiative site at www5.who.int/tobacco/page.cfm?sid=86).

Hollywood and Bollywood (Indian film industry located in the city of Mumbai, India) were particularly invited "to join the worldwide movement to rid films of their tobacco-promoting role."

Print ads have been taken out in *The New York Times* and other publications. Free downloadable materials—from posters to folders to a brochure—are available in pdf format at the Tobacco Free Initiative site (www5.who.int/tobacco/page.cfm?tid=181).

Recognize World No Tobacco Day on May 31, even if your students have already left. This can be a positive way to focus on smoking among professional colleagues, to hold in-services and to encourage smokers to get help, if they so desire it.

Resource Review

And Section 4 offers further collegiate activities such as:

- Acting on Your Agenda
- Reporting on Religion
- Examining Class
- Noting Variety
- Learning About Leaders
- Recognizing Social Justice Issues in Your Field
- Thinking About Gender in Your Major

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- Comparing Benefits
- Examining the Mechanisms of Power

Whether you're looking to communicate in more equitable terms, expose bias in language or simply get the conversation flowing, *Writing for Change* offers a wealth of invaluable resources. Consider making it a part of your efforts to raise awareness of difference, power and discrimination.



Grover Goes Global

“Sesame Street’s” loveable, furry blue monster, Grover, kicked off the show’s 34th season this April with a new segment entitled “Global Grover.”

Grover will travel all over the world, according to the Associated Press (April 15, 2003), to teach children about different cultures. Central America, Mongolia and more are on his itinerary. In addition to introducing new cultures, this globe-trotting monster will also emphasize commonalities to children so they can see what a small world it can be.

“The most interesting thing I learned (during his travels) was, despite how different we all are, no matter where you go, people are people,” Grover told the Associated Press, “unless they happen to be monsters.”

Britain’s “Bend It Like Beckham” Brings Indian Family to Life

Another indie hit a la “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” is creeping into American movie theaters this spring. “Bend It Like Beckham” is a British movie about an Indian girl from the London suburbs who wants to play soccer. Made for \$4.5 million, it has already grossed \$50 million abroad since opening a year ago.

The story centers on 18-year old Jess (played by Parminder Nagra) who is forbidden to play soccer by her Sikh par-

ents. She and blonde soccer player Jules (played by Keira Knightley) work together to make their soccer dreams come true. The title refers to their U.K. football hero, David Beckham.

“Bend It” is being likened to last year’s “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” as it slowly but surely becomes a word-of-mouth hit. It was written by an Indian woman, director Gurinder Chadha, who was inspired by her own adolescence. Look for it soon at a theater near you!

Molson Ads Designed to Give Men & Women a Reason to Interact

This month, according to NYTimes.com (April 8, 2003), Molson Canadian ads will hit the pages of *Cosmopolitan* magazine as part of a campaign to help men and women connect over their beer. The ad will feature a handsome blonde man holding two puppies and his bottle of Molson Canadian. The tag line will read “His address: the intersection of confidence and compassion. His beer: Molson Canadian.” Readers can then log on to www.molsonman.com for a biography and more photos of the model.

In the meantime, ads in four men’s magazines, *Playboy*, *Gear*, *Ramp* and *FHM*, will tell their readers about the “hundreds of thousands of women” seeing the *Cosmopolitan* ad. Advice on how to capitalize on this fact will then ensue: The women’s magazine ad “is a perfectly tuned combination of words and images designed by trained professionals,” men’s

magazine readers will be told. “Women who are exposed to it experience a very positive feeling. A feeling which they will later project directly onto you. Triggering the process is as simple as ordering a Molson Canadian.”

Readers will then be directed to a website, www.molsonwinadvertising.com, where they can download wallet-size photos of the aforementioned puppies to initiate conversations with women at bars. The site also offers tips, proving that “no other beer works as hard for you.” Looks like the battle of the sexes is once again being used to stimulate sales.

“Soul Food” Has Staying Power

Showtime’s “Soul Food” is heading for a record fourth season, according to TV Guide Online. The family drama focuses on an African-American family and has surprised critics with its staying power. It chronicles the lives of three adult sisters and their efforts to keep their family together.

First Native American-produced Documentary Airs on Major Network

“The World of American Indian Dance” aired on NBC in mid-April. It was the first Native American-produced documentary to air on a broadcast network. The project was put together by the Oneida Indian Nation.



“Why can’t I just WRITE?!”

Contending with Writer’s Block

The writing is piling up. There’s that end-of-the-year report to finish. Several students have asked you for letters of recommendation. And a grant application awaits your attention, too. The absolute *last* thing you need to contend with in the midst of all this is writer’s block

Unfortunately, writer’s block hits us all at one point or another. That gut-wrenching, “Why can’t I just WRITE?!” feeling when we stare at a blank computer screen in hopeless despair is very common. And, luckily, there are some easy methods that can help you snap out of it.

Shake Up Your Environment

Why do the best ideas come either when you’re driving or in the shower? Is it just cruel luck? Or could it be that those are the times when your mind is most lucid due to a change of scenery? Whatever the case may be, we can learn a good lesson from this frustrating dilemma. We need to shake up our environments in order to shake up our minds.

Changing environments can help you crash through writer’s block. For instance:

- **Take a break to write someplace else in the middle of the day.** Half an hour spent at a colleague’s computer, in a corner of the dining hall during off-hours or in a quiet conference room with a wipe-off board at your disposal can help you get some good writing done.
- **Get outside!** Sitting at a picnic table or by a lake can produce a healthy calm that’ll get those writing juices flowing in no time.

Don’t Be So Hard on Yourself

When writer’s block kicks in, there’s a tendency to start kicking yourself, too. What’s wrong with you that you can’t pound out a simple memo? Why are you having such trouble with that evaluation? Before your self-defeating talk goes any further, consider the following:

- **Grammar and punctuation don’t need to be present within a first draft.** Just let the ideas loose! Sometimes a free-flowing stream of consciousness approach to writing can loosen you up just enough to bump writer’s block out of the way.
- **Write incomplete sentences at first.** In his book *The Basics of Business Writing*, author Marty Stuckey suggests starting with sentences such as “The main thing about... is ...” and “This is important because...” You can fill in the complete thoughts later.
- **Start right in the middle of your writing project or go directly to the end.** If you know how something is going to wrap up, it may help you decide how it should begin. That first paragraph can be a killer so, skip it altogether during the first draft!

Use Incentives

Often called “the reward system,” different incentives work for different folks. You know what motivates you so, tap into it. Some methods to consider:

- **Give yourself a timeframe.** Challenge yourself to see what you can get done in 30 minutes. The adrenaline rush of competing against the clock may be just the push you need to get going.

- **Write with a colleague.** Talk briefly about your respective writing projects in the central office and then go off to your separate offices to plunge in. Just knowing that someone else is writing at the same time as you are can provide positive support. Check in with one another periodically to offer encouragement.
- **And, yes, there’s always the “when I finish this, I can...” method.** Whether a game of racquetball, a call to a faraway friend or a Popsicle tempts you, use an appealing end reward as your incentive.

Loosen the Load

A simple jostle can help you shake off writer’s block. Try:

- **Engaging in a great, creative, right-brained activity** such as listening to music, drawing or looking at different images and posters. When you return to your writing, you’re more likely to feel inspired.
- **Moving around by getting out of your chair, stretching to the sky and then touching your toes.** Shake your body, pace around your office... whatever it takes to get things moving again.
- **Doing a left-brained activity** such as balancing your checkbook or crunching numbers for next year’s budget. Some researchers say that logical, analytical activity can jostle your right brain effectively, making you ripe for writing!

Inspirational thunderbolts don’t typically hit at the right moment. Sometimes, inspiration just needs a little boost so that you can get past writer’s block.

by Julie Phillips, a member of the PaperClip editorial staff



Educational Moments

Interactive exercises or discussion items that can be adapted for use with your group.

Support for Low-Income Students

This month's cover story talks about "class-based affirmative action" and the small numbers of low-income students attending top universities. As you ponder this dilemma, think about how much you know regarding your *own* institution's support services for low-income students. For instance,

- ➔ What does the financial aid office offer?
- ➔ How is housing handled?
- ➔ What about health insurance?
- ➔ Are there grants/funds for incidentals such as books, transportation and materials?
- ➔ How many students drop out annually due to financial reasons?
- ➔ What do Admissions reps talk about to encourage low-income students that your school is a possibility for them?
- ➔ What academic services are available?
- ➔ Are there flexible food plans?
- ➔ What on-campus employment is available and how are employees picked?
- ➔ Is there easy-access public transportation for students who don't have cars?

Taking some time to investigate these questions and more with your students can lead to a few things... For one, you'll be better informed and better able to adequately assist and refer low-income students. For another, you'll have a better feel for your institutional culture. You may find that your university is doing everything it can to support this population. Or you may find some areas where you can make suggestions.

Consider putting your group findings together into a brochure or pdf document that can be shared with other campus constituents. Share the knowledge—and encourage advocacy on the part of students who may need some extra assistance.

MAKING A —Difference

"I am only one, but still I am one, I cannot do everything, but still I can do something, and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something I can do." —E. Hale

Well-known Asian Pacific-Americans

May is Asian Pacific-American Heritage Month. Here are just a few of today's well-known Asian and Pacific Americans...

- Korean-American actress Keiko Agena plays best friend Lane on the WB's "Gilmore Girls"
- Chinese singer Coco Lee is crossing over into mainstream pop music
- "ER" actress Min-Na Wen has become more of a presence on the long-running show
- Cellist Yo-Yo Ma is one of the best-known musicians in the world
- Wellness author Deepak Chopra continues to publish self-help books for millions of readers
- Architect Maya Lin designed the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial (The Wall) and other structures
- Fashion designer Vera Wang is in demand, particularly for wedding dresses
- Olympic figure skaters Michelle Kwan and Kristi Yamaguchi continue to be some of the best-loved and most-admired skaters of their generation
- "Today Show" co-anchor Ann Curry is a vital part of the team
- Golf sensation Tiger Woods is part Asian

And that's just the beginning!

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