

**"Confessions" continued
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years from now, the things you remember will not be the little letters on your report cards or the number of times you held the highest grade in a class. It'll be the names and the special moments that hold the most solid place in your memory - the long talks, the laughs, and the tears.

Success at Science and Math is a collective effort. You can pick up more from your interactions with your peers than you ever can from a textbook. The cliché is true: people are what make NCSSM special. Don't be too hasty in your judgments; there is a reason that each person is qualified for this school. Everyone carries a deeper story. And don't be intimidated if there always seem to be

smarter people to challenge you; this is how we learn from each other.

Never be too proud to ask for help, and never be too arrogant to give it. Remember to be considerate of your roommate(s) and hall-mates; you may see their worst days, but remember that they will see yours as well.

With every year that passes, we learn more about ourselves. Your passions speak volumes about who you are as a person. Academically, the most valuable achievement lies not in making straight A's - instead, it's to explore all disciplines, to unravel and chase these passions, and get closer to finding an avenue to follow for a lifetime.

Also, consider putting time into some solid extracurricular activities. Get

involved in things you are sincerely interested in, not just things that look good for college applications. Be careful not to spread yourself too thin. Remember that everyone can join a club, but it takes special devotion and hard work to be a leader.

Because of the myriad of opportunities offered here at NCSSM, doing well in all that you do requires skills in time management. Be prudent in choosing your activities when time is limited, whether it be homework, AIM, sleep, athletics, or late-night talks. However, prioritizing the things in your life is not about cutting things out. It's about realizing what is most important to you. It's about identifying and indulging in the things that provide you with the greatest sense of fulfillment.

And be careful what you do with your freedom. Some of you may find less freedom here than you did at home; others may suddenly find yourselves with more freedom than before. But one thing stays the same for all of us: we're on our own now, and we're making our own decisions. Think about the consequences before you act, not just how it affects yourself, but how it affects those who care about you.

We are lifelong learners but great friendships only come when the right people meet at the right time. You are going to meet people here that you'll want in your life thirty years from now. You would hate to say that you left S&M without having appreciated some of the best people you will ever meet because you were too busy trying to

gain all the wisdom of mankind from books while forgetting that mankind is great because we get there on the shoulders of other great giants.

Take what you wish from what we have written. What we can offer you are merely insights from our perspective. Your Science and Math experience will be shaped by your own choices and attitudes toward life.

Do we wish that we can do junior year all over again? You bet. Not to do anything differently but just to re-experience some of the best moments of our lives.

But just like any other place on earth, Science and Math is not perfect. However if you are willing, you can make it into one of the best experiences of your lifetime.

Election of 2004

JONATHAN SMITH

With the Democratic National Convention over, and the Republican National Convention nearing, the newly nominated John Kerry is in a dead heat with George Bush in the popular vote. But as the election of 2000 showed, it is not the popular vote that matters.

The Electoral College, an antiquated system originally imposed to limit the common man's powers in government, is what ultimately decides the election. Electors are chosen to decide the President. Each Elector is given one vote, and each state is given the same number of electors as it has Congressional representa-

tives, with a minimum of three. But even these Electors are not bound to vote as their state's people say they should. This Electoral College is what the candidates fight for. The nomination of John Edwards as Kerry's running mate has made North Carolina a battleground. Since 1980 our state has voted for the

Republican candidate for

president. However this might change this year. Many local individuals have already pledged their support to Kerry-Edwards. The speeches at the DNC have further consolidated support. Edwards' plea of "Hope is on the way" has inspired many in our home state. True, it will be a great uphill battle for the Democrats, but it might be won.

The Holland Sentinel

Florida, the center of a massive controversy in 2000, is also a key battleground. With Jeb

Bush as governor, the Republicans are hoping that the vote will swing their way. But many of the Democrat's traditional demographics felt as if their votes did not count last election, prompting a much higher than expected turnout among Florida's women, blacks, and underprivileged.

While it is still far too early to call a winner for this election, it seems as if a few key issues will rise to the top. Security post 9/11 is surely a key concern, as is the future of Bush's "War on Terror." Key domestic concerns include civil rights violations from the PATRIOT Act, the ever present economic issues, and social concerns such as the fight for gay marriage.



Bearded, Turbaned, and Misunderstood

ANEESH KULKARNI

On Saturday, September 15, 2001, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a 52-year-old father of three, was doing landscaping work outside his Chevron gas station in Mesa, Arizona. At 2:45 pm, two pickup trucks approached, with four men inside. Balbir Singh was shot three times. He died on the spot. In the wake of the September 11th attacks, attacks such as these were not uncommon. Balbir Singh's assassins killed him in retaliation for the 9/11 attacks, believing he was a Muslim and associate of Osama bin Laden. Balbir Singh was an innocent Sikh and has nothing in common with Al-Qaeda ter-

rorists. To date, 366 such hate crimes have been logged, most in the week following 9/11.

Members of the Indian Sikh community say they are being targeted because their men wear turbans and long beards as part of their religious dress. Often mistaken for Muslims, hundreds of Sikh have been denied service and physically and verbally assaulted. Six police cars in Los Angeles recently chased and pulled over an innocent Sikh man, pointed their guns at him, and handcuffed him. He was later released and the police apologized.

Radical citizens are

not the only offenders - government agencies are guilty too. In New Jersey, Amarveer Singh was renewing his license at a DMV. When he

"Members of the Indian Sikh community say they are being targeted because their men wear turbans and long beards as part of their religious dress."

went for his photo, he was stopped and ordered to remove his turban. When he refused, the lady then asked him what religion he was, to which he promptly replied

"Sikh". She said, mockingly, "What kind of religion is that?" And just before the Democratic National Convention in Boston, a Boston College Sikh student was harassed by the Secret Service. He was simply walking on campus with his friends, when he was singled out because he was Sikh and detained by the Secret Service for seven hours.

On April 27, 2004, the reality hit home for the NCSSM community. On nearby Franklin St. in Chapel Hill, Gagandeep Bindra, a student at UNC and a Sikh, was brutally beaten, as was a friend who accompanied him. His attacker shouted at him and called him "bin Laden" simply because he had

dark skin and a beard.

"They don't know I'm from India and I'm a Sikh," he said. "They think anybody brown is Middle Eastern. Anybody brown is a terrorist."

Sikhs are not the only victims. Simply out of hate and misunderstanding, Hindu temples have been bombed and Hindu men have been attacked. And countless incidents of unprovoked violence against Muslims have also been recorded.

It is unfortunate that these attacks happen, but even more unfortunate that their perpetrators are ignorant and that the attacks are preventable simply by increasing awareness. These innocent men should not be mistaken for terrorists.