

## Austrians, Japanese make international exchange

BY NICK HAMDEN

For two weeks in October, NCSSM will have foreign exchange students from Austria and Japan on campus.

"We welcome this opportunity to get to know students from other countries," said Dr. Alina Hunt, German teacher. "This is a great first hand experience to hear other languages. Just don't want what happened last year to happen again, where some of the German exchange students felt unwelcome."

The first group of twenty exchange students came from an international school in Linz,

Austria, at which classes are taught in English. They stayed with host families and students in the German program from October 2 to 8.

Twenty students from Iwate, Japan will be here from October 13 to 20. The first part of their stay is during extended weekend, so they will be live with neighboring families from October 13 to 18 and move to school on October 19 or 20.

"It will be fun and something different," Junior Jodie Greene said. "A good learning experience. Having an extra person in my room might be interesting."

NCSSM is also sending students to other countries, such

as Germany, Japan, China, Ireland, and Spain during the summer and for mini-terms.

"I am very excited about going to Japan for my mini-term," Senior Travis Cianciulli said. "It is a good opportunity to learn about other cultures."

Senior Molly Jones went to Austria last summer. "I loved the trip," she said. "Linz was different because we felt like we experienced what it's like to live there. By the

end of the week, I had gotten into routine with my family, and I could find my way pretty much

anywhere in the city... I would recommend it to anyone if it ever happens again."



Austrian visitors assembled before a field trip to RTP and Raleigh

## HSD program allows students cultural sharing

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when you compared someone's eyes to a thousand thunderbolts."

These pick-up lines were especially useful on Date Night, when each American was paired up with a Japanese student.

"One of the best parts [of Date Night] was teaching my date how to waltz," Winder said.

Chu recalled that a lot of American students had to teach their dates how to dance, since most of the Japanese did not have parties to go to at home. "It was my date's first, and I wish I could have been more helpful, but at least I taught him how to slow dance and copy whoever's next to you," Chu said.

In return, the Japanese students taught the Americans about their culture through activities like the Japanese Festival, Field Day, Karaoke Night, and the Talent Show. They displayed their skills in traditional Japanese dancing, teaching the intricacy of the Tea Ceremony, singing, doing magic tricks, and "ichiban" break dancing. Additionally, High School Diplomats were required to prepare a presentation about a specific part

of their country before the program.

"After getting a taste of Japanese language," Winder said, "I've decided to pursue it in school."

The HSD program has left its impression on all of its participants. The exposure to Japanese culture made many American diplomats appreciate a broader worldview.

"I still wear my Happi coat around campus just as a reminder of the great time I had," Winder said.

Chu, Courtney, and Winder learned of HSD in an all-student e-mail sent out by Counselor Ollie Burrell in December of last year. Prior knowledge of Japanese was not required; Courtney was the only student who had previously taken Japanese. The application included basic personal information, short essay responses to various prompts, a few yearbook-style photos, and a teacher recommendation.

Juniors interested in HSD can visit the program's website at [www.highschool-diplomats.com](http://www.highschool-diplomats.com) for more information. Applications are due in December and can be requested by emailing [HSDApplication@highschool-diplomats.com](mailto:HSDApplication@highschool-diplomats.com).



Apparently those pick-up lines worked well for James.

## Administration explores gender lines

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twelve years and has taught the subject at NCSSM.

Boarman said that he disagrees that the class is an example of segregation. "If a girl does not wish to be part of the all-girl section, she may be transferred," he said. Ideally, he explains, the course will "change the culture of the school." He said that he sees it as a temporary measure; once female participation in computer science goes up, the all-girls section will be discontinued. "This," Boarman said, "was a difficult decision for me to make [because] I am basically against single-sex classes. I had never seen the need, but you can't ignore the research."

According to the Special Interest Group for Computer Science Education (SIGSE), the ratio of women to men in such fields as programming and computer science is extremely low. An article printed in the group's bulletin suggests that

since boys are often exposed to computers at an earlier age and in different ways than girls, female students may already feel behind when entering an introductory course. Boarman feels that, due to the hands-on

with if one feels that he or she is behind from the beginning.

The SIGSE also cites "compelling evidence" that all-girl computer science classes and other team-oriented learning methods can benefit young women who might otherwise quit such classes or even refrain from taking them altogether.

Dennis Yeh, who is new to NCSSM this year, will teach the course, which will differ from the other sections only in style and format. "I am excited; I anticipate seeing how it works out," Yeh said. "I don't know if it will improve things, but that is the aim."

Several students and teachers expressed a concern for those boys who have had limited computer science experience. "Why," Craft said, "shouldn't they also get a chance?" "I think they should make a topics intro class for the people who already know a little bit about programming," said Radhika Deshmukh. "That would let the real beginners of either gender ask questions without feeling dumb."

Some students acknowledge the problems with gender disparity in computer science, but feel that a single-sex class will send the wrong message to girls. "Out in the real world beyond high school, no one is going to give you a special, separate workplace so you won't be scared of the boys. I think separate classes in high school will just give girls an unrealistic view of the industry, and do nothing to prepare us for reality—the reality that yes, the computer industry is statistically dominated by males, but girls can still excel if they have [enough skills and determination]," junior Rebecca Holmes said.

"Out in the real world beyond high school, no one is going to give you a special, separate workplace so you won't be scared of the boys."  
Rebecca Holmes

nature of computer science, practicing it individually is more difficult than studying math or Spanish. This makes it a much more difficult class to catch up

## RCRs press painting rules, create decorating restrictions

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not see anything in the room condition report about her faulty chair, and wonders if when the time comes, she will be asked to pay for it.

Another topic that has been under much debate is the recent limitation put on color choice for painting the dorm rooms. Students who wanted to paint their room during Hall Beautification day were faced with limited options after the school put forth a new rule that only allows rooms to be painted the color beige.

Many students were angry with this new rule, saying it severely limited the ability to feel at home in their dorm rooms. "They said it was to make everything more uniform," said senior Sam Carey, "I think that it makes it feel more like a hospital." Others do not care for the new rules, but do not understand why the new limits had caused such a commotion. "I wish that when it came to painting our rooms, we had more color options," said senior Nathan Cox, "but I would never paint my room anyways, so it really doesn't matter much to me."

Although the rules have restricted some, many people are turning to alternative ways for decorating their dorm rooms. Some are lining the walls with painter's tape, one of the few adhesives approved by the administration, to give the wall a protective covering before using masking tape or other unapproved substances on it.

Senior Kelly Walsh has also discovered a way to give her room a colorful feel with an ironic twist. "Since we couldn't actually paint our walls the color we wanted, we decorated them with the hundreds of multi-colored paint chips I brought from home. If they wanted to encourage students to paint their rooms, beige was not the color to pick."

The administration hopes to create a stronger sense of uniformity to make it easier to maintain a quality living space. "True," said senior Kelly Walsh, "but the color of creativity is not beige, and NCSSM has always prided itself on its diversity and unique personalities." Still, there are other ways of expressing oneself, and as junior Wendy Hua said, "It's just paint."

### NCSSM Statistics

NCSSM students taking introductory computer science since 2002:

82% male  
18% female

### NCSSM student body:

51% male  
49% female