

Birds of a Feather

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Our world gradually advances, and with the progressions of social media and communications, our interconnectedness no longer becomes a luxury, but rather, a utility. But despite our contemporary advancements, our progress is constantly hampered by dated matters. Society desperately clings to apathy and makes it the only thing it will ever know. We restrict our boundaries, disacknowledging the worlds that stray from our familiarity. Our perspective becomes limited, so we simply become content with our small corner of the world. However, we must not remain content, because time stops for the individual, for the families, for the communities that do not engage on an international scale.

International immersion can bring people closer to other cultures, ideas, values, beliefs, and environments, creating a gateway to new horizons. Through exposing oneself to the cultures and ideas, and also attempting to understand them deeply, mutual respect and cooperation may awaken, allowing the individual to relate and identify with those who differ from them. This form of personal growth is underrepresented within our communities—the reason for the diffusion of misunderstandings, tensions, and prejudice even in our modernizing world. With a wider world into our consideration, individuals and communities can harmonize social unity and peace through mutual understandings and attachments of our humanity.

Many communities have started to integrate the importance of international engagement into their day-to-day lives. Local culture festivals introduce the aspects of one's culture that differentiates

them, and metamorphosizes that difference into something that allows for people to come together and celebrate our shared humanity. Furthermore, global engagement is stressed in professional and educational fields; building overseas relationships and affiliations or studying abroad awakens one's passions and ability to cooperate when placed in various dynamics and environments. Through assimilating internationalizing opportunities within a community little by little, one small community at a time can become globally engaged and develop a mentality that is inclusive of all persons.

Society attempts to continue its long, long journey of social unity. Along the way, we must not leave behind the impact of the wider world. For the sake of our continuation to a better world of harmony and peace, engaged leaders must step forward and speak themselves about the importance of our oneness. Despite the cultural and social differences that separate us, our shared humanity is a firm universal language that overcomes these barriers. With consistent efforts starting from the individual to the community, to society as a whole, we can work together as birds of a feather to revive the significance of this underlying universal language and become an open-minded world that holds harmony and peace as our core values.