OHS graduates form dance group, perform 'cultural vogue' at Wharton Center

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Did you ever want to start a dance group when you were younger?

Well, Okemos High School Alumni Linda Yang and Tenaya Lane did just that.

It all started in eighth grade. Chippewa Middle School was hosting its annual talent show. The middle school performance was an event where students could participate in to show off their passions, hobbies and of course, talents.

"In eighth grade we both got into K-pop" said Lane. "And that was our beginning of wanting to dance."

Both Lane and Yang performed in the Chippewa talent show and soon fell in love with dancing. Their duo, Obsidian K-dance, would soon become something more than just a once-a-year talent show performance.

Performing at the talent show sparked their love for dancing in front of audiences. Obsidian K-dance wanted to be special, they wanted to be original.

"We played around with being our own," said Lane.

Lane and Yang became known as the duo Obsidian K-dance. Whenever the opportunity arose to dance they would come and take it, in front of peers, students, faculty members and family.

Now, almost six years past their original debut at Chippewa, Obsidian K-dance got an opportunity of a lifetime to dance at the Cultural Vogue.

The Cultural Vogue is a performance of different acts from Asian backgrounds held once-a-year at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts in East Lansing. This event was held by the Asian Pacific Organization.

The theatre held about 300 people with many performances, Obsidian K-dance being one of them.

"[It was an] out-of-body experience, it was huge, almost 300 people came to watch us dance," said Yang.

The two dancers performed for more than five minutes in front of the largest crowd they have ever danced for.

Jeana Park (12) was one of the OHS students in the crowd for the Cultural Vogue event. Park thought the events fell anything but short.

"All of the acts were amazing," said Park.

Chloe Majzel (12) was also in the crowd that evening. She found out about the event through advertisements.

"I saw the event on Facebook and decided to go," said Majzel.

The duo was the first non-MSU organization to perform in Cultural Vogue. Lane and Yang's statement was a first for the campus.

"It felt like a milestone for us," said Lane "It felt like we're getting somewhere."

The duo wishes to perform as much as they can, hoping to expand to different cultural dances in the future.

Lane and Yang want people to see their upbeat performances.

"We want people to see our energy and our sync."

Photo courtesy Tina Henderson and Obsidian K-dance

'Little Mixed Girl' by Amira Rinker

Photo by Ewan Woolcock

Rinker originally shared her poem "Little Mixed Girl" at the Okemos High School Diversity Assembly

To the little mixed girl who never really knew where to sit.

You're white. You talk like it, you dress like it, you listen to the music, you are white.

You are white because you can straighten your hair to fit in and say intelligent things, it's okay. A little shocking, but allowed.

You are white because you may sit with the white kids, talk about books and trade little ziplock bags that your mothers packed full of the expensive organic stuff.

You are white because you know how to conduct yourself, you can be the token "ethnic friend," its okay.

That's okay because you chose the right side. You chose the white side.

And yet...You aren't white enough.

You can't get your hair wet? Why does it grow so slowly?

You have to check yourself when you get mad because that south side twang will break through and make you sound dangerous.

You are not white enough, because being well spoken is one thing but an emo chick who isn't pale is just...funny.

A wanna be of the wannabes if you will.

You are black. You look like it, dress like it, you listen to the music and eat the food, you are black.

You are black because you can relate to the struggle of strange white woman wanting to touch your curls in the grocery store.

You are black because you are loud and talk very fast with very poor grammar.

You are black because you may sit with the black kids and talk crap really loud, laugh, start fights, and dance to no music because let one of these white girls stare at you sideways.

You will be offended, you want to be offended.

You may be a light skin but you're still a sister and you are black. You chose the black side. Not the wack side.

And yet...Ya not black enough.

You can name more pop artists then rappers? Gimme your black card.

Ya Not black enough, you don't like Koolaid? Get outta here! That's crazy!

You play what? Soccer? You go to school with those rich white kids right? Nah you not black

You ain't black enough cuz ya mama is white. Your daddy is out of the picture though so you can have a few extra points.

"They can't be racist to me because I'm not full black."

Wrong.

They can.

They will.

Mixed isn't a color sweetheart nor is it a race.

There is no clean cut reality for your blur of a face.

Mixed is the hell that is purgatory, so close yet so far.

No matter which way I aim, my shots are sub par.

I'm being flattened, spread so so thin.

Torn between one world and another, it is not just skin!

My friends, I have two groups. Torn between one life and another, I was beginning to take solace in the gray in between because the white was too bright and the black was too dark, so i sat alone. I curled up on that sharp painful line that is the middle. What if I just want to dwell in the center? I'll fall to one side eventually I can't balance forever. So thin yet indestructible, now that is just unacceptable. What if I don't fall though? What if I stay absolutely still, let it slice me right in half, would it help? I'm not sure it will.

Well,

To the little mixed girl who never knew where to sit im sorry.

I'm sorry I let them tear us in half, dissect our identity.

Im sorry little mixed girl for ruining our beautiful natural curls with the heat of the hate that bared down on us.

I'm sorry for making you dumb yourself down because that's how we thought it had to be.

I'm sorry we had to choose all I can ask is that maybe this time...you chose you.

Lansing's first all-female football team gears up

Photo courtesy April Krepp

Lucy Potter
Staff Reporter

For their first season, the only United States Women's Football League (USWFL) team in the mid-Michigan area is showing loudly and proudly that women are just as strong and savage as men.

The Capital City Savages serve to not only tackle their opponents on the field, but to also tackle real and relevant issues regarding the perception of women.

"It also gives them a sense of strength out there; these girls are definitely hitting hard and doing everything the guys are doing out on the field," April Krepp, one of the general managers for the team, said.

The team is one of two USWFL teams in Michigan (the other being in Detroit) and one of twenty nationwide. That makes the Savages easily the only feasibly accessible female football team to many Michigan women.

It's often hard for women to receive the same level of support and encouragement as their male counterparts, particularly in a sport; not to mention one as traditionally male as football. Lillian Covell (11) observed a likely explanation.

"What discourages girls to not play is that they're taught from a young age that [football] is such a manly sport and that they should be so feminine," Covell said. "Then you're looked at as strange and weird if you're into the sport. There's connotation with a girl in football: she's so masculine. That's the stereotype that goes with it. And a lot of girls don't want that because of what they're taught to be."

And with no other options around, these players have virtually only one outlet for the game: the Capital City Savages. Krepp spoke about the meaning the team gives for its members and others.

"For a lot of our girls, [playing football] was always one of their dreams," Krepp said. "Now they're able to play on a semi-pro women's team, and it's huge for them; it's huge for the community; it's huge for girls of all ages."

But the team isn't just the only outlet for football-playing females, it also actively supports the empowerment of women and girls, especially when it comes to them getting mean and nasty. And their motto, "Savage, not Average," lets that sentiment be known, and is an excellent rhyme. Bigger than advocating aggressive ladies, though, the team wants women to keep following their passions, and spread the idea that we can achieve what we believe. (Yes!)

"All of our girls love to play football, so that is, obviously, one of the reasons we're out here," Krepp said. "But we are also out here because we want to empower girls. We want to make an impact on both young girls and adult women: to let them know to not ever stop dreaming; you can always achieve your dream."

To the outside, the Capital City Savages act as a great football team and visionaries to the future of powerful women, but to each other, they're a family. Albeit the ages range greatly, the players can all agree that the best part of the team is the bond they share.

"If you were to go out and ask any of the girls on the field, 'What is the one thing about this team that makes it so amazing?' They would immediately talk about how much of a family it is," Krepp said. "It's a team, but more importantly, it's a family. We have each others' backs on and off the field."

The team practices on Sundays for three hours. Girls can start playing with the Savages at age 18, and there is no age limit, as long as the person can still play football. The experience levels vary anywhere from zero previous years to many years.

"We have girls that just started, and we have girls that have been playing for multiple seasons," Krepp said. "All the way from this is their second season, to girls that have played 13 or 14 years. Actually, last year, on our other team, we played against a woman that was 53 [years old]."

Tips for surviving especially relentless flu season

Cameron Muzzall
Staff Reporter

This years flu has arrived and has swiftly taken the lives of over 32 children along with it. This is one of the most lethal flus in recent years; according to the CDC, in the third week of January over four thousand people died from a flu related illness. You may be scared that you will die, chances are you will at some point, but not from the flu if you follow these tips.

My first bit of advice for you is to sanitize. Cleaning up your hands is not only a great way to score a Sadies date, but also a great way to avoid the "achoo" and, in turn, the flu. If someone coughs on your hands, sanitize as fast you can. In this scenario you can probably find a sanitizer dispenser somewhere in any classroom. If you are in class and can't find any sanitizer, tell your teacher you're about to vomit, then run to the bathroom and wash your hands. Sanitizer kills germs like germs kill us, except on a mass genocide scale. Soap, on the other hand, gently lifts the germs off your hands and washes them down the drain. If given the choice between washing your hands and using sanitizer, you should wash your hands—for the sake of germkind.

As someone who has suffered from severe ADHD my entire life, I understand the appeal of touching things. Things can be so fun to touch! But during flu season one must touch with extra caution. Things you should not touch include: your eyes, your nose, your mouth (and all the parts on the inside of your mouth), priceless paintings (unrelated) and people who do not want to be touched. Touching is great and you should not give it up, but just touch with more caution during the flu season.

Another tip for staying healthy is to stay hydrated. Staying hydrated not only keeps your skin looking A1, but it also can keep you healthy. If you're puking and or crying due to the flu, drinking lots of fluids can help prevent you from dehydration. Dehydration doesn't sound like a big deal, but it can be fatal. If reading this has made you start to chug water, PLEASE STOP. While drinking water is great and all, drinking too much can also be fatal. The recommended daily intake is 2.7 liters for gals, and 3.7 liters for boys.

Zoey Williams obviously did not follow this advice, due to the fact that she got sick on finals week.

"I was throwing up, had a massive headaches, and had a temperature 103°F. Dont Touch your eyes, I learned that from Diane Dockus," Zoey Williams (11).

While being active is an absolutely fantastic way to spend your day, if you are sick you may as well be kissing typhoid mary. Even though you may want to go outside and play a game of b-ball with the boyz, you should stay home and rest. Resting gives your body an opportunity to recoup and fight off your illness. So sit on the couch watch some Maury and just *chiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii*. While watching the tales of infidelity presented on Maury can be fascinating, it is also important to take naps to prepare your body for a speedy recovery.

"Stay home until you are symptom free, so you don't continue to spread that virus everywhere," Tammy Hetfield (Science).

While being sick can be fun, I hope you take my advice on avoiding the flu. If you are terrible at following instructions and get sick, I hope you get well soon. See a doctor if you are starting to feel symptoms because only they will be able to properly help you. If they can't help you then you're screwed I guess.