



The High School View

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Community unites around Brazilian Culture Night

BY LILA MIKOS

On Thursday, April 14, community members gathered in the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) cafeteria for Brazilian Culture Night, a celebration of Brazilian culture organized by students and staff that included traditional Brazilian food, music, and dance, as well as educational displays introducing partygoers to different regions in Brazil and how to say various words in Portuguese. The idea was introduced to the school advisory council (SAC) by council member and special education teacher Keren Albiston who, after enlisting the help of Brumelha Magri, began planning for a night of cultural celebration. This is the first time that an Island-wide event to celebrate the Brazilian community has been held at the high school. "There is a huge desire on Martha's

Vineyard to learn more about the Brazilian community," said history teacher and Social Justice Club advisor Ena Thulin. "That's one thing I'm seeing here, is how much the Vineyard wants to support the Brazilian community." Sophomore Molly Sylvia enjoyed being able to immerse herself in a different culture for a few hours. "The event was really great for more inclusion and representation of multiple cultures in our community and as a school," she said. "I loved being able to have this exposure." Theater teacher Brooke Hardman-Ditchfield has been working with Brazilian students in her theater class for English language learners (ELL). When Ms. Albiston approached SAC about the idea of the Brazilian Culture Night, Ms. Hardman's students were thrilled by the prospect of having an

evening dedicated to sharing their culture. An important aspect they were particularly excited about was performing the Quadrilha, a traditional Brazilian dance often performed at weddings and in the rural regions of Brazil. "There is a huge desire on Martha's Vineyard to learn more about the Brazilian community." "[The students] brought the idea of performing to me," said Ms. Hardman-Ditchfield. "Our class is focused on helping them learn English through music and theater, so they were very excited about the opportunity to perform something they

already knew." In addition to the Quadrilha dance, Brazilian students sang "Aquarela," a popular children's song by Toquinho. "[ELL students] don't have a lot of opportunities to perform for the school community and members of their community in a public setting like this, so this was huge," said Ms. Hardman. Junior Clara Cabral is excited about giving everyone insight into Brazilian culture. "I think it is great because it's introducing everyone in the school to what Brazilian culture is from all different regions," she said. "It's good because once we all leave [tonight], we'll know a little bit about each region and its culture." Students and staff are hopeful that it will be a tradition that can continue. "I think we need to do a lot more of these events," said Ms. Thulin. **HSV**



Sindy Mendes enters the party in costume as the bride for the start of the Brazilian Quadrilha dance.

LILA MIKOS

Avery Mulvey keeps her eye on the (base)ball

BY JOSIE WELCH

The baseball diamond is a familiar place for freshman Avery Mulvey, but her decision to join the team this year marks the first time in Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) history that a girl has decided to try out for the baseball team instead of the softball team. When girls and boys get to high school, they typically diverge into softball for girls and baseball for the boys. For Avery, this switch felt irrational. "I've grown up playing and watching baseball my whole life. It just didn't make

sense for me to switch to a new sport I've never played just because of my gender," she said. Although baseball and softball have similarities, they also have significant differences, including different field dimensions, pitching styles, and ball sizes. Avery began playing Tee Ball when she was 4, and later transitioned to baseball. The youth baseball program on Martha's Vineyard offers Tee Ball for players ages 4 to 6. Players move up to Minors from ages 7 to 9, then Majors from ages 10 to 12, and finally play in the Babe Ruth League prior to entering high school. From Minors through Babe Ruth,



JOSIE WELCH

Avery Mulvey is the first girl in MVRHS history to try out for the baseball team.

the league is co-ed. Although transitioning from a co-ed team to an all-boys team might seem like a significant transition, Avery already knew most of her teammates. "I've been playing with these same kids on travel teams and in Little League for years, so it's not that new or different," she said. "It didn't make a difference to me that they were guys." Avery did experience some nerves when she first joined the team, but did not let that stop her from playing. "It was a little intimidating at first, as many things are," said Avery.

Avery's brother and fellow baseball player Ben Mulvey is used to seeing Avery out on the baseball diamond. "It feels normal to me, as it does for most other people. She has always played baseball, so it doesn't feel out of place," he said. Ben also respects the passion his sister has for providing equal access to athletics. "She definitely feels passionate about making it easy for boys and girls to play any sports they want to, and not pushing girls away from 'boy sports,'" he said. Junior varsity Coach Cole Wingate appreciates Avery's enthusiasm for the sport and contributions to a posi-

tive team culture. "She's a joy to have. She always has a smile on, and you can tell she loves baseball and enjoys being a part of the team," he said. "She's eager to learn and to get better, she's always doing the right thing, and always positive. She truly fits right in." Avery's decision to play baseball was based on her own love of the sport, but she's also aware that she might inspire people to pursue their own passions, regardless of their gender. "I love playing baseball. If I can show people that there doesn't have to be gender barriers in sports, then I am happy about that," she said. Avery will be playing alongside her team this Friday, April 29, versus Sandwich High at 3:15 pm. **HSV**

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