



the NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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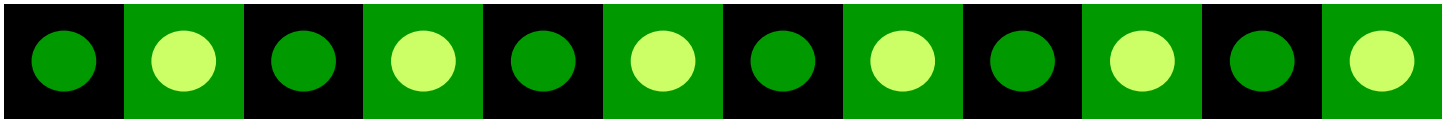
Welcome to the August 2019 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to respond to the question “*What is your Family Cultures?*” This topic allowed members to share their

thoughts on Familial culture and how you express culture as a family. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this August, 2019 edition of *The Noodle*!

Current Members:

John Baldino
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Alexander Gonzalez
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Dakota Smoot
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Christina Waldron
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Family Culture

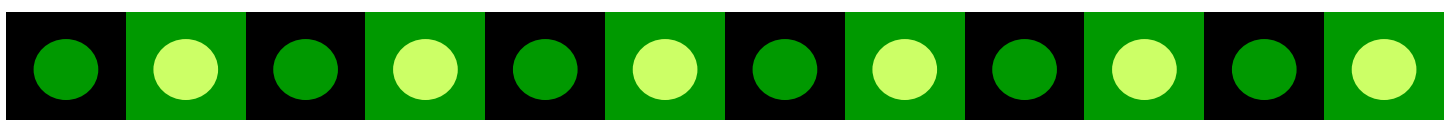
When I contemplate my culture, I reflect on the traditions passed down from generation to generation. Specifically, I recall certain holidays with my family and how we have built on the customs created from our past and changed them to make these holidays our own.

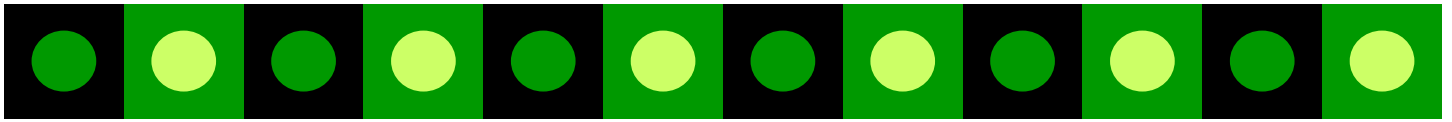
The most extravagant holiday tradition is Christmas day, which for my family begins with my mother creating a massive breakfast consisting of a creamy egg and cheese casserole, strong coffee, toasty cinnamon rolls and chilled sparkling cider, after which we all gather in the living room to exchange gifts and enjoy each other's company. Following a massive lunch, we prepare to host our annual Christmas party where we take pleasure in our neighbors and friends as they sample berry pies, mountains of cookies, and more of the delicacies of the season.

The next tradition I adore is birthdays, and this traditional celebration comes with a twist from my mom's family. Your day of being treated royally begins with your favorite breakfast served in bed, complete with cake, candles and the whole family singing Happy Birthday. Essentially, you start your day on a sugar high, but mom is intelligent and sends you to school; so, it's your teacher that must manage the crash.

The last tradition is how we commemorate the last day of school. To demonstrate, on my last day of fifth grade my brother and I leaped off the bus and written on the driveway in chalk were the words: CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON WISELY. Instantly, we noticed the two super soaker squirt guns and multi-colored water balloons all over the yard. Suddenly, my mom jumped up from behind a bush holding the garden hose turned on full blast and started showering us; then we understood it was our turn. So, we snatched the super soakers and went after mom. By the end of the afternoon, we were all soaking wet, lots of smiles and a memory I still cherish today.

My brother's last day of high school occurred just a few weeks ago. It's both a sorrowful and thrilling time, so, how do you celebrate? Silly string! Six cans of silly string to be exact. When my brother arrived home, we layered him, and eve-





ryone got tangled in multi-colored strings till we couldn't see anymore.

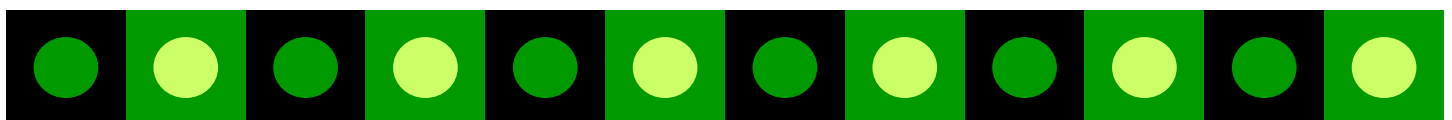
Traditions old and unforgettable are what make our lives more momentous. I don't know where some of the traditions came from, or how my mom innovates these new ideas, however, I await each holiday with anticipation because I don't know about the adventure in store.

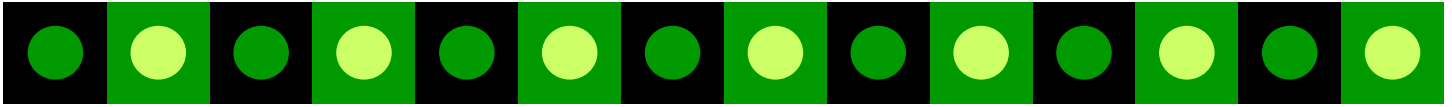
By Emma Massey



My Family Culture Comes a Long Way

My family culture comes a long way; it has so much history and also a mystery. My grandfather was born in 1917, the same year Puerto Rico became an American territory. Believe it or not, my grandfather had 23 brothers and sisters! Yes. As unusual as it sounds, my grandfather did. Throughout time, he worked as a farmer in Puerto Rico. Even though he never had much of an education, he is one of the most hard-working men I know. He met a beautiful Hispanic woman with African descent (my grandmother). In a long story short, the two were married and spent the rest of their lives together. Fast forward to 1979, when my parents met for the first time. They were both high school sweethearts, and they were dating for six years. In 1986, my parents finally tied the knot. Later,





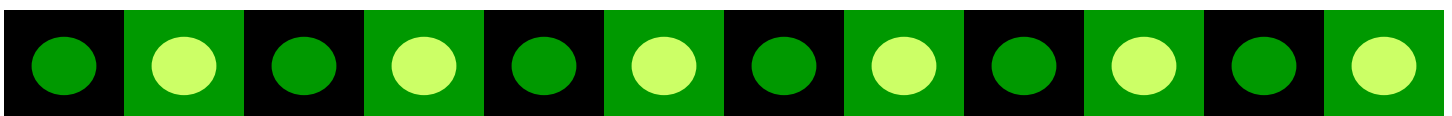
throughout their time together, my parents ended up having four boys (myself included), and for the last 30 years, my mother and father have raised us to be independent individuals. To this day, my parents have spent the previous 40 years together. Once I got older, I started learning more about our country's history, the specific towns my ancestors thrived in, and the beauty of the island where my family comes from. Now I share the love for our food, the music, and what our traditions represent.

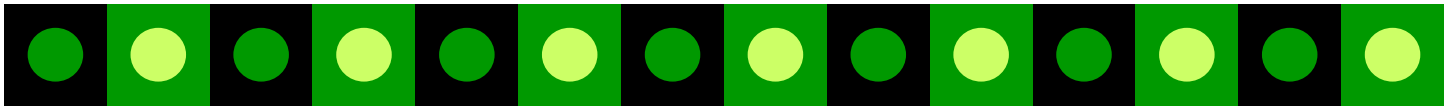
Puerto Rican people have such great cuisines like Arroz y habichuelas, Tostones, and Amarillos, Mofongo. You name it! From the artists like Marc Anthony or Daddy Yankee, to the landmarks like the El Morro or El Yunque, Puerto Rican bloodlines and culture evolved through a mixing of the Spanish, African, and indigenous Taíno and Carib Indian races that shared the island. It is so important to have everyone understand that our FYC has many people from different backgrounds and share our stories with others. There is so much more that can be discovered through about my family's history, and not all the answer are lying on the table. I will keep up my tradition that was passed down to me so that one day, I can pass it down to my children.

By Alex Gonzalez

My Special Culture

Culture is something that we all have, but we don't always think about. It's so normal to us, we don't realize that it is a part of our everyday lives. My family culture seems pretty mundane compared to other more diverse cultures. I guess my family culture is like the majority of Americans with European ancestry. We celebrate Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter, often with family or friends by having parties and in general enjoying people's company. On the surface, it seems like a very typical American life. But if you look closer, you might see a very different story. Everything from how we typically get up in the morning until we go to sleep at night is unique. My cerebral palsy makes our boring life more interesting.





I guess you could say that my disability has impacted our lives and created a new culture in our family. While most people like to watch fireworks on the 4th of July, I loathe them because of the intense blast of noise that my sensitive ears can't stand. Many families love to go to Easter Egg Hunts, but I really don't like the Easter Bunny, and trying to hunt eggs from a wheelchair is not the most fun. Christmas was always interesting when I was little, trying to get pictures on Santa's lap, but somehow we triumphed! I suppose that the culture that we have developed is one of patience, adaptability, and understanding that one day I may pass along to my children. Whether it is a daily or seasonal challenge, we must always be prepared to adapt our culture for our family.

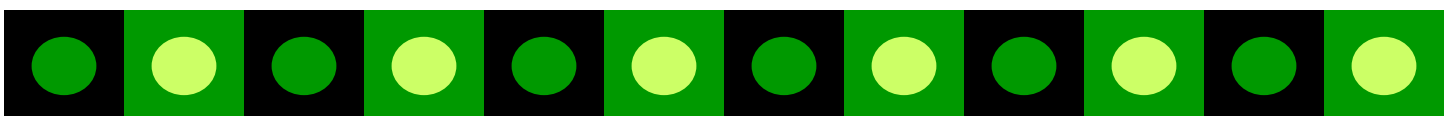
By Serena Wetmore

What is Family Culture?

Family culture. What is it? It's a set of ideas and such that are passed down to you from your parents and/or ancestors that help shape you and make you who you are. For me, there's a couple of things that come to mind. First, my family's faith. Our faith has played a big part in shaping who I am. I don't know where I'd be without it. It's the most important thing in my life. I'm so thankful my family has a strong faith and passed it down so I was exposed to it and could study and learn more about it. Next, another part of my family's culture is that we're fairly close. We have always loved getting together and spending time together, and yes, it usually also involves eating LOL. This is especially true around holidays; Thanksgiving and Christmas is an absolute must. It's not limited to just those two though. We do it for other holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions. Basically, anytime we can find a good excuse to do so LOL. This has been my family's culture and I'm so glad these things are a part of it because I couldn't have it any other way!



By Derek Carraway

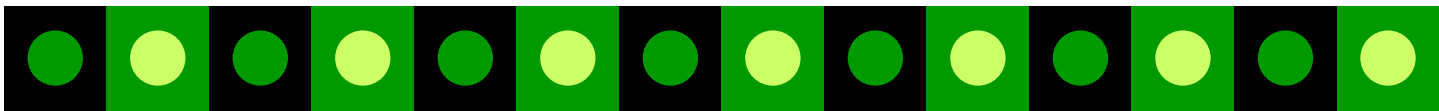


The Culture Within My Family

I was 3 months old when I was adopted. My parents were raised old fashioned but they raised me up in a Christian environment. Church is the best thing that I was raised in. My life is so good at times, and at others it's so hard. The best thing about my family is we look out for each other and want what's best for each other. My mom always told us we are a team that works well together, and there's no I in team. But just like me and my little sister have a sibling rivalry between us, I believe that my mom did with her sister as well. Any way you choose to view it, I have a family that I was chosen to be in and I've been blessed by this. I may never know what my ancestry is, but to me it doesn't matter. All that matters is that I have a family that loves me for me. My biological family visited me when I was little, and once again a few years back. I'm just glad to be part of a loving family that accepts me for me. I don't have to be something that I am not. Honestly, I don't even need my name in lights because I am famous in my own father's eyes. We may have different views on some things, but we love each other. My family has installed a Christian culture within me but I still struggle to do what is right all the time. However, if I am able to please God, then I'm pleasing my family, or so I was told as a teenager. So yeah my life is completely different from what I show people, because I have always struggled with not caring about what others think about me, and I'm still growing and learning as I get older. I can't wait see what the future has in store for me. All I know is that one day I will be a great parent like my parents, and I don't plan on letting my biological history repeat itself. The only way I can help my kid in the future avoid the pain of his or her own biological father not being there for them is to learn from the ones who raised me and let my life be centered around Christ and those I care about. This is how I was raised, and I hope to do the same thing for my kids if I'm ever blessed with kids one day. My family's Christ-like culture is something I don't ever want to lose sight of. It's full of love and compassion for others. Even though I make mistakes, I know my family always has my best interest at heart, and I love them for now and forever.



By Dakota Smoot



How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at www.floridayouthcouncil.com. The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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