

### **BSU (Black Student Union)**

Leaders: Lauren Sibley- [20lsibley@castilleja.org](mailto:20lsibley@castilleja.org),  
Athena Burrs - President- [20aburrsresident@castilleja.org](mailto:20aburrsresident@castilleja.org)

The Castilleja BSU (Black Student Union) is open to all students who identify as Black and want to explore Black identity together. Castilleja BSU aims to create a safe space for young Pan African students to engage in discussions, build between grades relationships, give back to our community, and celebrate our culture. We plan to learn from successful Black women, host events regarding African Diaspora heritage, and commemorate Black history in an effort to build a support network. Our ultimate goal is for students to feel empowered and confident with their Black identity.

### **JSA (Jewish Student Association)**

Leaders: Hannah Middler- [21hmiddler@castilleja.org](mailto:21hmiddler@castilleja.org)  
Violet Glickman - [21vglickman@castilleja.org](mailto:21vglickman@castilleja.org)  
Alana Klapinsky - [20akaplinsky@castilleja.org](mailto:20akaplinsky@castilleja.org)

Our affinity group will be a safe space for Jewish students to explore what Judaism means to them, to learn how to advocate for themselves and their safety, celebrate Jewish culture in a fun and engaging way, and to create a sense of personal pride in their identity. Our meetings will include discussions, such as Jewish portrayal in the media or antisemitism on college campuses, sharing our personal experiences and traditions, and any other points of interest. We will explore Jewish culture by learning about Jewish values, the significance of holidays, and Jewish food. We are committed to creating an environment where students feel included, regardless of their degree of religiousness; if being Jewish is part of your identity in any way (regardless of your family's religious practices), then we welcome you into our affinity group. Additionally, we want our members to learn how to advocate to and educate the greater community about the values of Judaism and pluralism in the world.

### **South Asian Affinity Group**

Leaders: Emielyn Das - [20edas@castilleja.org](mailto:20edas@castilleja.org)

The mission of the South Asian Affinity Group is to provide a safe, comfortable, and brave space for members of the South Asian community at Castilleja. We want to find pride and joy in our culture and heritage, engage with issues such as representation and intersectionality in the South Asian community, and support each other with our shared common identity.

The affinity group meetings will be a time to explore our history and culture, celebrate cultural holidays and events, learn about the diversity within our affinity group, and engage in discussions. We will consider issues like media representation of brown people, the intersection of being queer and brown, the discrimination we may face, how our heritage shapes us today, and how we align and overlap with other communities. This affinity group is a space for people

who identify as South Asian (from the larger Indian subcontinent), and the floor will open up according to the interests of our group.

### **Chinese+ Affinity Group**

**Leaders:** Suzzana Wang - 20swang@castilleja.org  
Marie Williams - 20mwilliams@castilleja.org

#### *Mission Statement:*

The Chinese Affinity Group is dedicated to providing an educational and comfortable environment for members to connect with others who identify as ethnically Chinese. All members must be ethnically Chinese, but they do not have to be from Mainland China (ie: Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc.). They must also be willing to learn more about their culture and engage in meaningful discussion about the Chinese-American experience.

The purpose of this group is to educate our community on Chinese culture and to learn more about all ethnically Chinese people: this goal can take the form of anything ranging from enjoying delicious Chinese snacks during our meetings to hosting activities and speakers during Asian-American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May.

For some of our meetings, we will split off into two different branches: Chinese+ and Mainland Chinese Affinity Groups. Because many ethnically Chinese people have developed their own blended cultures separate from that of Mainland China but rarely receive any recognition, the Chinese+ branch of the Chinese Affinity Group will serve as a safe space for members to explore that side of their identity. Similarly, the Mainland Chinese branch will provide a place for Mainland Chinese students to dissect the nuances of their culture and the issues they face.

### **Latinx Affinity Group**

**Leaders:** Paulina Arguello - 20parguello@castilleja.org  
Anya Aya - 20aayala@castilleja.org

#### *Mission Statement:*

The Latinx Affinity Club is explicitly for Castilleja students who identify with as Latinx, through language and culture experienced at home and daily life. Although language is an important part of the Latinx experience, individuals can still identify as Latinx without speaking Spanish. As opposed to a Hispanic Affinity Club, however, the Latinx Affinity club is catered towards individuals in our Castilleja community who identify with a specific Latin American country.

Our club will provide a safe space for discussions surrounding our varied experiences as Latinx individuals. We also have plans to connect with the middle school students who also identify as Latinx in order to extend and further share our commonality with others on campus. We hope that by fostering personal relationships with the younger students, Latinx community members at Castilleja will become more confident in expressing, embracing, and developing a greater understanding of this facet of their identity.

**Filipinx Affinity Group**

Leader: Izzy Rivera - [21drivera@castilleja.org](mailto:21drivera@castilleja.org)

*Mission Statement:*

The Castilleja Filipinx Affinity Group is dedicated to providing an open, relaxed setting for students to explore their Filipinx identity and connect with other students of similar ethnic background. Members must be of Filipinx heritage and possess a willingness to explore the many facets of their own Filipinx identity. Given that Filipinx students are underrepresented at Castilleja, this group will give Filipinx students a setting where they are the majority instead of the minority. We also recognize that although Castilleja may have lower levels of representation, the Bay Area is home to a large Filipinx community. By strengthening the Filipinx perspective within Castilleja, our group will help make the Castilleja community more reflective of our local area.

The Castilleja Filipinx Affinity Group also plans to dedicate some meetings to expressing our culture in a larger setting; this would most likely entail hosting cultural events (e.g. dance performances, food events) open to the larger community (at Castilleja and beyond), both independently and in conjunction with other affinity groups (affiliated with Castilleja or other Bay Area schools/institutions).

**Mixed- Raced Affinity Group**

Leaders: Megan Orsak - [20morsak@castilleja.org](mailto:20morsak@castilleja.org)

Emily Debs - [20edebs@castilleja.org](mailto:20edebs@castilleja.org)

*Mission Statement:*

The Mixed-Race Affinity Group aims to create a community open to all members of mixed-race heritage. This identity encompasses the aspect of checking more than one box on demographic forms (i.e. Black, White, Asian, Pacific Islander, Latinx, Native American, Alaska Native) and can come with personal, cross-cultural experiences that are confusing to navigate. We believe exploring and embracing our multiple cultures and diverse identities is essential to understanding ourselves better both as individuals and community members.

Due to the expansive nature of this group, we look forward to foster intersectional dialogue and exchange, as well as cover a myriad of ethnic and cultural experiences that make up and affect members personally. We hope to encourage members to share the many facets of their identity through open conversations with fellow club members and by educating one another on topics such as the cultural history and historical movements, food, and language important to members' personal heritage.

### **Christian Affinity Group**

Leaders: Anna DeVitis - [20adevitis@castilleja.org](mailto:20adevitis@castilleja.org)

Sarah Pedley - [20spedley@castilleja.org](mailto:20spedley@castilleja.org)

#### *Mission Statement:*

Castilleja's Christian affinity group aims to provide members with a space to express their beliefs, values, and questions related to Christianity and its role at Castilleja. Our group aspires to produce a friendly environment for individuals who share the same religious beliefs, which is a large part of identity. This group will be a resource for people who feel or have felt a connection to Christ, regardless of their denomination. In this group, we will engage in prayer, share experiences, discuss the faith, and work towards building a supportive community. We hope to better represent the values of Christianity by sharing varying perspectives with the larger community. We will also offer optional times outside of school to attend Mass/ Service and youth groups.

### **LGBTQIA+ Affinity Group**

Leader: Julia Kirsch - [20jkirsch@castilleja.org](mailto:20jkirsch@castilleja.org)

#### *Mission Statement:*

The Questioning, Queer, and Here Affinity Group is for any Castilleja students who identify as LGBTQ+ or are currently questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. We intend to create a group on campus where LGBTQ+ students are unafraid to be themselves and feel unconditionally accepted on campus. In this affinity group, we will discuss LGBTQ+ issues in the news, host open sessions to preserve anonymity, educate ourselves about all of the terms and phrases within the greater LGBTQ+ community, and push ourselves to discover new ways we can impact the Castilleja community and further pursue Castilleja's diversity statement.

## **Parent Groups and leaders**

Parent/Guardian Affinity Groups are an important community building resource at Castilleja. We currently have three groups who welcome your participation if you share their affinity, and the ACE center is happy to help you brainstorm if you wish to start an affinity group. If you would like to learn more about joining a specific group or their next meeting date, please reach out to the lead:

***Parents/guardians of students in the Black Student Union: Odette Harris***  
***([oharris@stanford.edu](mailto:oharris@stanford.edu))***

***Parents/guardians of students in the Jewish Student Union: Shana Middler***  
***([shananelson@yahoo.com](mailto:shananelson@yahoo.com))***

***Parent/guardians of students in the Latinx affinity group: Lidi Ayala***  
***([ayalalidi@gmail.com](mailto:ayalalidi@gmail.com))***