

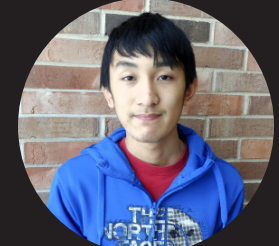
I think I deserve a GOLD medal for ...



"Procrastinating for homework." -Sam Shin



"Knowing a lot about geography." -Ryan Gamble



"Playing the clarinet." -Charlie Zheng



"My sense of humor." -Razan Nour



"Being a good person." -Frankie Rodriguez

176 JUNIORS

Emily Jetton  
Nick Johnson  
Cardaeja Jones  
Simon Jones



Keirsten Jordan  
Fatima Kammona  
Laurel Kelley Fischer  
Ainsley Kellogg



Veronica Kharunda  
Sidney Kiersch  
Crystal Kim  
Connor King



Jacob Klein  
Aubree Klink  
Molly Klutts  
Emma Koch



Hunter Kopf  
Ellie Kouba  
Sidney Kout  
Noah Krchak



DENIZ INCE

CLICK! AS THE SOUND OF THE TIMER TICKS, Deniz Ince passes the finish line and takes several deep breaths while volunteers pass her a cup of water.

After finishing her cross country race, "everything hurts," she said. But it's worth the ache because "after you're done and you can like reflect on it, it feels really good knowing that you accomplished that."

As an upperclassman on the team, she takes on extra responsibilities, such as hosting team bonding events and cheering on teammates.

"There's some people who ... I see their work ethic and it's just super. They work really hard," she said. "I think I need to be more like them."

Ince mentioned senior Claire Ronnebaum as someone who "deals with a lot of stuff. Claire goes through a lot, and I look up to her."

But Ince leads the way, according to Ronnebaum.

"She always has your back. Not only does she push herself, but she pushes her teammates by encouraging others ... Deniz also is a great leader because she always offers rides for the younger folks."

"She always has something fun to say," Ronnebaum said. "We understand each other's jokes. She has a positive spirit wherever she goes."



Coleson Krupp  
Joseph Kuehn  
Brandon Kuenster  
Taylore Kuenster  
Jared Kula  
Yajatra Kulkarni  
Mykhaylo Kuznetsov



Mukeh Lamin  
Avery Lawler  
Erin Lidral  
Wei Jie Lin  
Changhao Liu  
George Liu  
Ava Locher



Mitch Locher  
Devlin Lockman  
Kaila Loew  
Mary Longmire  
Evelyn Lopez Garcia  
Madelyn Luegering  
Cole Mabry



Kiah Martin  
Noah Martinez  
Casey Marvin  
Stany Masumbuko  
Austen Mattingly  
Owen McAreavy



Kiel McBrearty  
Caleb McCall  
Noah McCarragher  
Lucas McCool  
Matthew McDonnell  
Maggie McGlaughlin

A positive spirit flows into Ince as she speaks English and Turkish, as well as when she learns Spanish at the University of Iowa and French with a private tutor.

"It's important to learn different languages because that also makes you able to communicate and learn different cultures. I find that interesting when you're traveling to different places," she said.

Ince proudly speaks all of these languages.

"I can communicate with many different cultures and I have friends from many different places," she said. "I'm an open person in general to different ideas and cultures. Just like when we go back to Turkey every year ... I'm happy I have mixed ideas from a lot of different places."

Every summer, Ince and her family try to visit relatives in Turkey, where she can speak in her first language, Turkish.

"[Turkey is] a really pretty country ... I like how scenic it is compared to Iowa," she said. "Like Iowa has corn fields and stuff, but I really like being next to the sea there."

While Ince loves most food, she especially loves Turkish food.

"The food that my grandma makes is really good when she makes Turkish food, but it takes a lot of time to prepare and stuff so we don't really like get to eat it very much here ... My grandma

makes this thing that's similar to ravioli I guess, but you know like ravioli is usually stuffed with cheese and stuff like that, instead she puts ground beef inside of it and then you close it and then you make that. I really like that."

Her first name, Deniz, means "sea" in Turkish. "Not like to look, but like the ocean and wavy," she said with a giggle.

Back in Turkey, she remembers a time with her grandparents and one of her fears.

"In Turkey my grandparents owned a beach house by the sea of Marmara, one of my favorite places to go in the summer," she said. "I used to be afraid of seaweeds and the first like 60 meters going into the sea was full of its so I used have to be carried in."

Overall, Ince said she appreciated the opportunity to be exposed to other cultures.

"It's really cool to grow up with a different background and just to know that you're a little bit different than everybody else," she said. "Especially at first, when I thought it was really cool that I could speak a different language than everybody else and then now it's just like it's a part of who I am."

-By Emily Shie

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