

Letter: Vote Yes For Me



“A sunset over Silverman’s Country Market in Easton, Connecticut, in the fall of 2019.” — Photo by Astrid Y.

To The Editor:

My name is Astrid. I’m a 17-year-old Barlow senior. I ran varsity cross country for Barlow for three years and have volunteered as an EMT with Easton EMS for a short time. I’ve lived here my entire life. My favorite subjects are English, Biology, and Calculus.

March 2021 was a busy and exciting month. My friends and I were receiving college

acceptances and rejections, competing in the Northeast Science Bowl, and starting to plan prom. But the week of March 14 was something I could not plan for.

The tragedy caught me by surprise. And the newly prompted recounting of the past year of hate crimes made it impossible for me to shield and distance myself from the problem any longer. I could only see my mother in the photos of the six Asian women killed in Atlanta, Georgia. I could only see my grandparents, who live in New York City, in the photos of the Asian senior citizens beaten and killed across this country.

That week, when my parents went to visit my grandparents, I found myself telling my parents to be safe, to walk on the street as little as possible, to move as quickly as possible when they did, and to pass the message on to my grandparents.

My thoughts were consumed by anxiety and heartache. My mental health dipped under. I was distracted. I couldn't focus in class. I failed to see the relevance of solving antiderivatives while there was — and continues to be — a threat to the health and lives of my family. I felt crazy for being worried and ashamed that I was falling behind academically.

I didn't expect or need anyone to acknowledge the pain of every person in this country who looks like me, my parents, and my grandparents. I didn't need or expect special treatment. But what I did need was for someone to acknowledge my pain.

This Tuesday you have the power to do just that: to acknowledge my pain, but also the pain of folks who do and do not look like me. Please know that exercising this power is not taking responsibility for our pain, or the legal prioritization of us over you. Exercising this power is an act of neighborly kindness towards me — a runner, EMT, and Barlow student who adores the town of Easton.

Astrid Y.

Easton