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Campolindo football focuses on diversity and inclusion

By Jon Kingdon



Varsity lineman Matai Bell and wide receiver Maxwell Weaver, both seniors at Campo, serve food to guests in the front of Canyon Club Brewery. Photo Lauren Fritch

This past spring, racial incidents and videos by some Campolindo students became public and caused an uproar. Since then, the schools in the Acalanes Union High School District created a Diversity and Inclusion program, and on Oct. 26 the Campolindo Football Team and the Campolindo Football Moms for Diversity joined up for a fundraiser at the Canyon Club Brewery to raise money and awareness for the program.

Canyon Club Brewery donated 10% of all the proceeds from the night and the Campo Cougar Football Club matched donations up to \$1,000.

There are several facets within the Diversity and Inclusion group - fundraising, media, communications, athletics and extracurriculars - allowing the organization to focus on different initiatives and merge its efforts in the end. "We have been hosting virtual events and quarterly book club reads and our next book will be 'Across That Bridge' by the late Congressman John Lewis," said Emily O'Connor, whose son Miles is a junior on the baseball team.

"Every Monday morning, an hour is set aside where they have been learning about different aspects of racism," said Lauren Fritch, whose son Connor is a junior on the football team.

Campolindo head coach Kevin Macy strongly endorsed the Diversity and Inclusion program: "I like to think that the rest of the world is catching up to us. Our football program has been involved with outreach for years. I was an Oakland kid, played at Skyline and coached at Oakland Tech and Bishop O'Dowd. I've always wanted to keep those connections so everything we have ever done such as scrimmages, passing camps and summer camps has been at schools with different environments."

It's more than just the game for his players, Macy said: "Football is a very violent and intimate sport. Our kids get to bond with the opposing players and develop friendships and relationships where they can follow each other through the internet and Twitter. I'm glad that the rest of the school is getting involved with this program so like our players, the students get these experiences and hope that they will grow from the experiences."

Senior Maxwell Weaver, who plays football and basketball and is on the Campo Athletics Committee for Diversity, sees the program working through sports. "We just wanted to create this unifying message of starting out the school year on a great note, even with the coronavirus," he said. "It's all about equality, diversity, and inclusion. We need to recognize our differences and at the end of the day, we can all come together and unite towards one common goal."

"We love going out and playing schools that are more diverse," Senior Daniel Wheeler said. "It opens us up to a new environment and it's an opportunity to see how different things are outside of this bubble."

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