

# OUR TAKE

When Christopher Columbus “discovered” the “New World” in 1492, Native Americans had already been living in North America for upwards of 12,000 years. And even those peoples migrated from northeast Asia, arriving over a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska.

No one is truly native here.

Since the 13 original colonies, people from all different countries have come to America fleeing persecution, conflict and poor government. They’ve come looking for job opportunities and safer lives.

The Center for American Progress reports that by 2012, immigrants made up 13 percent of the total U.S. population. These hard-working people 40.7 million are starting businesses, doing jobs Americans don’t want to do and bringing new perspectives to our country.

Immigration is the reason why Clarke Central has a new graphic design teacher, Dea Pool, who came to America when she was six years old when her family fled from Bosnia during the Yugoslavian Civil War. She grew up in Lawrenceville, Georgia, and now she teaches at our school.

Immigrants aren’t some invasive species trying to destroy our nation or sap our resources.

Pool wasn’t born here, didn’t know a word of English when she arrived, and she’s proud of her Bosnian heritage. But in all senses, she is a proud American.

Many of those who come to America are the children of parents who want better lives for their families. These children grow up speaking English and going to American schools.

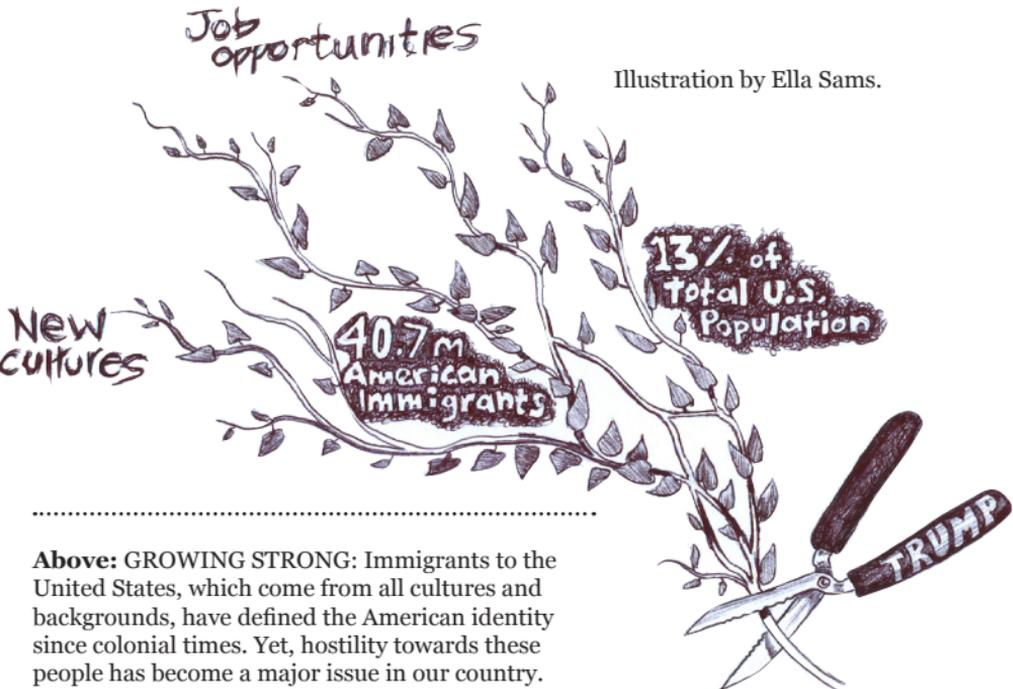
There’s no set mold to which all immigrants conform. Immigrants come from all corners of the globe for all different kinds of reasons.

But Presidential candidate Donald Trump and his supporters disagree. “Druggies, drug dealers, rapists and killers are coming across the southern border. When will the U.S. get smart and stop this travesty?” Trump tweeted.

What Trump and his followers don’t realize is this: not all immigrants are illegal, and not all immigrants take low-paying jobs.

Less than half of the foreign-born population in America is Hispanic or Latino, and according to the Economic Policy Institute, 46 percent of immigrants work in traditionally white-collar positions.

Immigrants aren’t some invasive species trying to destroy our nation or sap our resources. They’re people.



**Above: GROWING STRONG:** Immigrants to the United States, which come from all cultures and backgrounds, have defined the American identity since colonial times. Yet, hostility towards these people has become a major issue in our country.