



Have We Made Progress?

While many advancements have occurred 50 years after the Civil Rights Movement, students here say acts of racism still happen in the Carmel community

IT STILL HAPPENS:

Freshman Tamia Golden says she has experienced racial discrimination despite national efforts to stop it. Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, but incidents still occur.

CRYSTAL CHEN / PHOTO

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Freshman Tamia Golden, who is African-American, sat in the public library one day after school during her freshman year studying for her biology test. An older woman who looked to be about 70 years old came up to her and asked Golden to move. Golden didn't understand why, but she thought the woman needed a place to sit. Golden offered her a seat, and the woman declined.

"I will always remember how, after that, she said she felt uncomfortable sitting by someone who looked like me," Golden said. "I asked her what she meant, and she said that people with my skin color cause trouble. I didn't know what to say, so I just got up and found a new place to sit. I couldn't concentrate on my homework, though. All I could think about was those lady's words."

Golden is among the many members of the black community, especially students, who still feel the effects of racism in their daily lives. 2014 will mark the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed major forms of discrimination against many groups, including racial minorities. The act also ended racial segregation in schools, workplaces and facilities that served the general public. But, after all of that time, cases involving racial issues still occur. Just this year, the U.S. Supreme Court began hearing the case *Schuetz v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*, a policy favoring those who tend to suffer from discrimination. The case discusses whether or not states are constitutionally allowed to ban racial preferences in the admissions procedures of universities.

"It never ceases to amaze me how 50 years after the Civil Rights Movement, Martin Luther King Jr. and The Civil Rights Act, discrimination is still so common," Vernon

Williams, vice president of communications at the Indiana Black Expo, Inc., said.

According to Williams, the Indiana Black Expo's mission is to be an effective voice for the social and economical advancements of African Americans. The organization also helps African-American youth and families achieve their highest potential and show pride in their ethnicity.

Williams said, "Obviously the situation is much better than it was in the 1960s, but there is still so much more to be done. The reason the Black Expo exists is to fight against this kind of discrimination. I'm thankful I get to help with this organization, but I wish there wasn't a need for it."

A study from Aug. 22 conducted by the Pew Research Center shows that 55 percent of all Americans say the country has not made substantial progress toward racial equality. Furthermore, 49 percent of Americans say more