

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CHILDREN OF
IMMIGRANTS TO SCIENCE IN AMERICA**

BY STUART ANDERSON

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An impressive 83 percent (33 of 40) of the finalists of the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search, the leading science competition for U.S. high school students, were the children of immigrants. Moreover, 75 percent – 30 out of 40 – of the finalists had parents who worked in America on H-1B visas. That compares to 7 children who had both parents born in the United States. The science competition has been called the “Junior Nobel Prize.” These outstanding children of immigrants would never have been in America if their parents had not been allowed into the U.S.

Today, both the Trump administration and some members of Congress would like to impose new restrictions on legal immigration, including on high-skilled immigrants. Policymakers seeking to restrict high-skilled immigration should note that an important, underappreciated benefit of high-skilled foreign nationals is the contributions made by their children. The findings tells us that if we prevent high-skilled foreign nationals from coming to America, we will not only lose their contributions but the significant contributions that will be made by their children. It is likely there are many more children of H-1B visa holders who will make outstanding contributions beyond those who qualified for one of the coveted 40 finalist spots in the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search.

Among the key findings of the research conducted through interviews with children and parents:

- Even though former H-1B visa holders represent less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, they were 4 times more likely to have a child as a finalist in the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search than were parents who were both born in the United States. Under current law, an H-1B visa is generally the only practical way for international students or high-skilled foreign nationals recruited from abroad to work long-term in the United States. Due to the long waits because of low annual quotas and per country limits, a high-skilled foreign national typically must work in H-1B status before being sponsored for permanent residence (a green card). That will continue absent a major change in U.S. immigration law.
- Parents who were international students were also more likely to have a child as a finalist than native-born parents. A total of 27 of the 40 children – 68 percent – had a parent who came to America as an international student. That means failure to facilitate the ability of international students to remain in America after graduation (through Optional Practical Training and improved visa policies) will deprive America of the potentially substantial contributions of their children.
- Three of the finalists, or 7.5 percent, had parents who came to America as family-sponsored immigrants.

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- Among the 40 finalists of the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search, 14 had parents both born in India, 11 had parents both born in China, and 7 had parents both born in the United States. To put these numbers in perspective, people of Indian and Chinese birth represent only about 1 percent of the U.S. population each, according to the Pew Research Center.
- In addition to China, India and the United States, the countries of origin for the parents of 2016 Intel Science Talent Search finalists represent a diverse set of countries, including Canada, Cyprus, Iran, Japan, Nigeria, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan.
- The evidence indicates that the children of immigrants are increasing their influence on science in America. Sixty percent (24 of 40) of the finalists of the 2004 Intel Science Talent Search had at least one immigrant parent. In 2011, that proportion rose to 70 percent (28 of 40) who had at least one immigrant parent. And in 2016, the number rose again to 83 percent (33 of 40) of the finalists of the Intel Science Talent Search who had at least one immigrant parent.
- At the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search, 7 of the 9 top awards were earned by the children of immigrants, including first place prizes for innovation and basic research. Amol Punjabi won the First Place Medal of Distinction for Basic Research for developing software that could be used by pharmaceutical companies to combat cancer and heart disease. Maya Varma won the First Place Medal of Distinction for Innovation for creative problem-solving skills. Milind Jagota was awarded the Second Place Medal of Distinction for Innovation for research on “a less costly alternative to the transparent conductors now used in touchscreen devices.”
- Afflictions among family members inspired many of the students to pursue medical research.
- The children of immigrants among the finalists interviewed greatly appreciated the sacrifices their parents made to ensure they received the best education possible. “Seeing what my parents did to make a better life for their children has inspired me to do everything I can to succeed. This is the land of opportunity,” said Augusta Uwamanzu-Nna, whose father, a physical therapist, came to America on an H-1B visa.

More than 95 percent of winners of the Intel Science Talent Search (STS) traditionally have pursued science as a career, with 70 percent earning Ph.D.'s or M.D.'s. One of the unintended consequences of new immigration restrictions is that America could lose the substantial contributions made by the children of immigrants. In 2017, the talent search competition was renamed the Regeneron Science Talent Search after its new sponsor Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. A new group of 40 finalists – young scientists, engineers and mathematicians – will meet in Washington, D.C. from March 9 to 15, 2017, to compete for awards and scholarships.

BACKGROUND

To examine the prevalence of the children of immigrants in science, I interviewed both students and parents at the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search finals in March 2016, in Washington, D.C., and conducted follow up interviews as necessary to gather additional information. Previously known as the Westinghouse Science Talent Search or the “Junior Nobel Prize,” more than 95 percent of winners of the Intel Science Talent Search (STS) traditionally have pursued science as a career, with 70 percent earning Ph.D.’s or M.D.’s. Earlier research supports the findings in this study that the children of immigrants are a vital part of America’s future in science and mathematics.¹

“Alumni of STS have made extraordinary contributions to science and hold more than 100 of the world’s most distinguished science and math honors, including the Nobel Prizes and National Medals of Science.”² More than 1,700 high school seniors enter the contest each year by completing a detailed entry form and submitting a research paper that documents his or her findings, including possible laboratory results. The project should display evidence of “research ability, scientific originality, and creative thinking.”³ The top 40 finalists gather in Washington, D.C., every year for the last phase of the competition.

THE IMMIGRANT PARENTS OF INTEL SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH FINALISTS

Interviews determined that 83 percent (33 of 40) of the finalists at the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search had at least one immigrant parent. This is significant because it demonstrates that the children of immigrants are a key part of America’s next generation of scientists and engineers.

Interviews also determined the immigration category for each parent. Seventy-five percent (30 out of 40) of the children of immigrants had parents who worked on H-1B visas. This is an impressive figure in at least two respects. First, the number of former recent H-1B visa holders residing in the United States is likely well less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, which means it is extraordinary for such a high proportion of the students to have parents who worked in that status. Second, given that only 7 of the finalists were the children of two native-born parents, it means 4 times as many finalists of the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search competition had parents who worked on H-1B visas than had parents both born in the United States. Third, the findings tells us that if we prevent high-skilled foreign nationals from coming to America, we will not only lose their contributions but the perhaps even more significant contributions that will be made by their children. This is particularly true since if these findings are any

¹ Stuart Anderson, *The Multiplier Effect*, *International Educator*, Summer 2004; Stuart Anderson, *The Impact of the Children of Immigrants on Scientific Achievement in America*, NFAP Policy Brief, National Foundation for American Policy, May 2011.

² Intel Science Talent Search, *Finalists* booklet for 2016, 2011 and 2004, Society for Science & the Public; website for Society for Science & the Public. In 2017, the competition was renamed the Regeneron Science Talent Search after its new sponsor Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

³ *Ibid.*

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indication it is likely there are many more children of H-1B visa holders who will make outstanding contributions but simply did not qualify for one of the coveted 40 finalist spots in the Intel Science Talent Search.

A related finding is that 27 of the 40 finalists had parents who first came to America as international students, and all of them later obtained H-1B status to stay in the United States. That means failure to facilitate the ability of international students to remain in America after graduation will deprive America of the potentially substantial contributions of their children. Absent major changes in U.S. immigration law, it is expected to remain necessary for most international students to obtain H-1B status (often after first receiving Optional Practical Training) before obtaining permanent residence due to the long wait times in employment-based immigration categories.

Table 1
Immigration Category for Immigrant Parents of 2016 Intel Science Talent Search Finalists

Employment (H-1B and Later Employer-Sponsorship)	30
International Student*	27
Family-Sponsored	3

Source: National Foundation for American Policy. Based on interviews conducted with finalists and parents. A 4th parent was also family-sponsored and married an H-1B visa holder. *Note: International students who stayed in the United States after graduation did so on H-1 or H-1B visas.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Among the 40 finalists of the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search, 14 had parents both born in in India, 11 had parents both born in China, and 7 had parents both born in the United States. To put these numbers in perspective, people of Indian and Chinese birth represent only about 1 percent of the U.S. population each, according to the Pew Research Center.⁴

Five of the finalists had two parents born in South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore and Nigeria. One child had a parent born in the United States and another parent in Canada. Another child had one parent born in the U.S. and the other born in Cyprus. And a third had a U.S.-born parent and a parent born in Iran.

⁴ Anna Brown and Renee Stepler, *Statistical Portrait of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States*, Pew Research Center, April 19, 2016.

Table 2
Country of Birth for Parents of the 40 Finalists of 2016 Intel Science Talent Search Competition

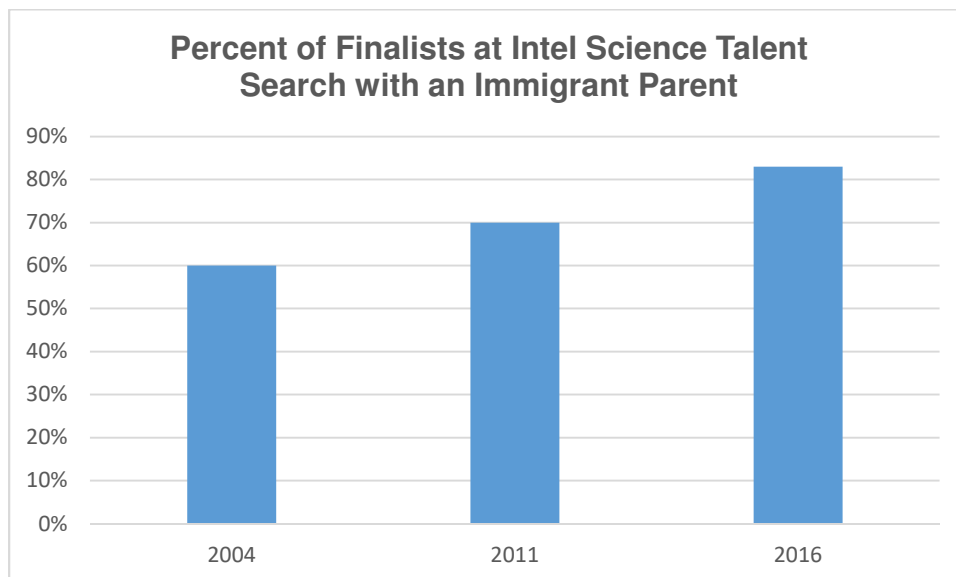
India (both parents)	14
China (both parents)	11
United States (both parents)	7
Canada and United States	1
Cyprus and United States	1
Iran and United States	1
Japan (both parents)	1
Nigeria (both parents)	1
Singapore (both parents)	1
South Korea (both parents)	1
Taiwan (both parents)	1

Source: National Foundation for American Policy. Based on interviews conducted with finalists and parents.

INCREASING PERCENTAGE OF IMMIGRANTS AT INTEL SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH

In 2004, I found that 60 percent (24 of 40) of the finalists of the Intel Science Talent Search had at least one immigrant parent. In 2011, 70 (28 of 40) percent had at least one immigrant. In 2016, that rose further to 83 percent (33 of 40) of the finalists of the Intel Science Talent Search having at least one immigrant parent. This is likely evidence of an increase in the influence of immigrants and their children on science in America.

Figure 1



Source: National Foundation for American Policy. Based on interviews with finalists and parents.

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In 2004, nearly half – 18 of 40 – of the finalists at the Intel Science Talent Search had parents who were admitted to the country on H-1B visas, more than the 16 children whose parents were born in the United States. In 2016, as noted, 75 percent (30 out of 40) of the finalists had parents who worked on H-1B visas, while 7 of the finalists had both parents born in the U.S. (and 10 had both or one parent born in the United States).

CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS: 7 OF 9 TOP WINNERS IN 2016

At the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search, 7 of the 9 top awards were awarded to the children of immigrants, including the first place prizes for innovation and basic research. Amol Punjabi won the First Place Medal of Distinction for Basic Research for developing software that could be used by pharmaceutical companies to combat cancer and heart disease. He has co-authored articles on nanoparticles. Both of Amol's parents were born in India and came here as international students and obtained H-1B visas. His mother became a physician and his father worked as an engineer. In college, Amol plans to continue “applying computer science to pharmaceuticals.”⁵

The Second Place Medal of Distinction for Basic Research was awarded to Meena Jagadeesan for her investigation of “an object in algebraic combinatorics, or the mathematics of counting, to reveal a novel relationship between classes of graph.” Meena's mother was born in India, sponsored by a family member and immigrated to America as a child. Her father came to America as an international student and was sponsored for an employment visa. Meena credits her parents for encouraging her interest in math. “I've been solving math puzzles since I was little,” she said. Her brother is majoring in math at college.⁶

Kunal Shroff won the Third Place Medal of Distinction for Basic Research for examining the potential benefits of “random nanowire networks” as an “alternative to the transparent conductors now used in touchscreen devices.” Both of Kunal's parents were born in India, came to America as students and stayed on employment visas. “My parents taught me to never be a quitter, to strive through adversity, which I found necessary to conduct research.”⁷

Maya Varma won the First Place Medal of Distinction for Innovation for creative problem-solving skills. “Varma used \$35 worth of hobbyist electronics and free computer-aided design tools to create a low-cost, smartphone-based lung function analyzer that diagnoses lung disease as accurately as expensive devices currently used in medical laboratories.” Both of Maya's parents were born in India, came to the United States as international students and became engineers. “My parents encouraged my early love for engineering,” she said. “When I was young I

⁵ Interview with Amol Punjabi, “Innovative Teen Scientists Win More Than \$1 Million in Awards in Intel Science Talent Search 2016,” press release, Society for Science & the Public, March 15, 2016.

⁶ Interview with Meena Jagadeesan, press release, Society for Science & the Public.

⁷ Interview with Kunal Shroff, press release, Society for Science & the Public.

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remember watching my Dad code on the computer.” Today, Maya is considered proficient in 5 different computer programming languages and hopes to continue working on medical devices and to pursue a Ph.D.⁸

Milind Jagota was awarded the Second Place Medal of Distinction for Innovation for research on “a less costly alternative to the transparent conductors now used in touchscreen devices.” Milind’s parents were born in India and both earned Ph.D.’s in the United States.

Kavya Ravichandran received the Third Place Medal of Distinction for Innovation for examining “the use of nanomedicine to destroy potentially fatal blood clots that can cause heart attacks and strokes.” Both of Kavya’s parents, who were born in India, came to America on H-1B visas to work as computer engineers. “From a young age my parents encouraged me to be involved in science and to ask questions,” she said. “I think my interest in science comes wholly from my parents.” She is interested in pursuing research that combines computer science and medicine.⁹

The Second Place Medal of Distinction for Global Good was awarded to Michael Zhang for engineering “tiny virus-like particles to deliver gene-modifying proteins to target cells for medical therapy by altering the genome of those cells in a controlled way.” His parents were born in China and came to America to pursue graduate studies. One of Michael’s ambitions is to become an entrepreneur focusing on the intersection between biotechnology and health care.¹⁰

Two children of native-born parents also deserve recognition for their achievements. Paige Brown, whose father is a mechanical engineer, was awarded the First Place Medal of Distinction for Global Good for her study of “the water quality of six environmentally impaired local streams with high *E. coli* levels and five with high phosphate contamination levels.” Nathan Charles Marshall was awarded the Third Place Medal of Distinction for Global Good for his study of marine sediment and climate change.¹¹

AFFLICTIONS OF RELATIVES OFTEN INSPIRE RESEARCH

Afflictions among family members have inspired a surprising number of children to pursue medical research. “My mom almost died from kidney disease,” said Demetri Maxim.¹² Demetri’s mother was born in Cyprus. “Motivated by his mother’s life-saving kidney transplant when he was seven and his own diagnosis of polycystic kidney disease, Demetri set about finding a way to grow kidneys from human pluripotent stem cells (hPSCs),” according to the Intel

⁸ Interview with Maya Varma, press release, Society for Science & the Public.

⁹ Interview with Kavya Ravichandran.

¹⁰ Interview with Michael Zhang, press release, Society for Science & the Public.

¹¹ Press release, Society for Science & the Public.

¹² Interview with Demetri Maxim.

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Science Talent Search. “Derived from a patient’s own skin cells, kidneys grown from hPSCs could eliminate the need for anti-rejection drugs. To turn hPSCs into the various types of cells found in the kidney, Demetri treated them with the same factors they receive in a developing kidney. He then provided the cells with a 3D tissue scaffold to help them organize into functional tissue. He believes his research could one day be the basis for growing complete human kidneys.”¹³ Demetri is interested founding a business in the biomedical field.¹⁴

An aunt’s battle with epilepsy encouraged Andrew Ethridge Amini to “create software that predicts the onset and severity of epilepsy seizures.”¹⁵ Andrew’s father was born in Iran, while his mother was born in the United States. “The high predictive accuracy and low consumption of computer resources combined in Andrew’s technique may lead to development of portable early warning devices, such as embedded scanners or cell phone apps, to safeguard and improve quality of life for people with epilepsy.”¹⁶ Andrew “loves biology” and plans to pursue research in neurology and neuroscience.¹⁷

George Hou’s father was born in China and his mother in Taiwan. But it was his grandfather’s hearing difficulties that inspired George to pursue his research. “My grandfather suffered hearing loss and hearing aids often amplified background noise,” said George.¹⁸ His hope is that by using “signal processing” newer hearing aids can filter out more background noise.

While Helen Liu did not have a family inspiration that led her to study Gaucher Disease, she has co-authored two journal articles on the topic. Both her parents, born in China, work in the medical field and that encouraged Helen’s interest.¹⁹ “Learning that deficiency of the digestive enzyme glucocerebrosidase (GBA) causes Gaucher, and that recent studies link the protein progranulin (PGRN) to therapeutic effects on the disease, Helen sought the mechanism involved,” according to the Intel Science Talent Search. “She demonstrated that PGRN binds to and delivers GBA to the cellular structure that contains it. She went on to isolate the fragment essential for the bonding and engineered a PGRN-derived molecule that may become a novel drug candidate for Gaucher Disease.”²⁰

¹³ *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*, Society for Science & the Public, 2016.

¹⁴ Interview with Demetri Maxim.

¹⁵ Interview with Andrew Ethridge Amini, *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*.

¹⁶ *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*.

¹⁷ Interview with Andrew Ethridge Amini.

¹⁸ Interview with George Hou.

¹⁹ Interview with Helen Liu.

²⁰ *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*.

ENCOURAGED BY PARENTS TO ACHIEVE

Augusta Uwamanzu-Nna appreciates all her parents have done to give her the best education possible. “They sacrificed so much for me,” said Augusta, who experimented with ways to improve the properties of cement, which has practical applications that include helping to prevent oil spills. “My father grew up during the civil war in Nigeria and couldn’t afford an education.”²¹ Despite the obstacles, Augusta’s father, Tobias Nna, overcame the odds and was trained as a physical therapist. He came to the United States on an H-1B visa. “Our goal in coming to America was to provide an opportunity for our children to study, have access to journals and computers. I’m very happy they have taken advantage of these opportunities,” said Tobias Nna.²²

“Seeing what my parents did to make a better life for their children has inspired me to do everything I can to succeed,” said Augusta. “This is the land of opportunity.”²³

Many of the student finalists interviewed at the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search spoke about the debt they owed to their parents. Joshua Choe recalls fondly how when he was 8 years old his parents bought him a DNA science kit. Both of Joshua’s parents were born in South Korea and earned graduate degrees in the United States. Their early encouragement paid off. Joshua’s (cancer) research focused on identifying a “diagnostic marker and potential therapeutic target for lung squamous cell carcinoma.” He plans to continue medical research in college. He calls his parents “a very good influence.”²⁴

Sanath Devalapurkar’s mother encouraged him to study calculus in the 3rd grade. Not surprisingly, Sanath’s research at the Intel Science Talent Search focused on advanced mathematics.²⁵ Sreya Vemuri, whose Indian-born parents work as a physics professor (father) and computer scientist (mother), recalls dinner table conversation that often focused on science, including Schrödinger’s cat.²⁶ Jessica Li Huang remembers “growing up in a family of math nerds.” She said, “This love of learning made me comfortable with math and inspired me to apply math in school.”²⁷

Anjini Karthik is exploring a patent for her research on a “low-cost, virus-imprinted polymer film that captures target viruses and dramatically reduces the time required to detect them.” Both her parents are software engineers born

²¹ Interview with Augusta Uwamanzu-Nna.

²² Interview with Tobias Nna.

²³ Interview with Augusta Uwamanzu-Nna.

²⁴ Interview with Joshua Choe, *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*.

²⁵ Interview with Sanath Devalapurkar.

²⁶ Interview with Sreya Vemuri.

²⁷ Interview with Jessica Li Huang.

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in India and she credits them for sparking an interest in innovation.²⁸ Catherine Jessica Yihui Lai can cite expressions her Singapore-born parents taught her to understand the importance of perseverance. She said that encouragement came in handy when her research on “new treatment options for multi-drug resistant pneumonia” required 10 tries before bearing fruit. “My parents told me: Always believe in yourself, as corny as that might sound,” said Catherine.²⁹

Clare Zhu’s parents, both born in China, taught her independence and self-reliance. Clare’s parents allowed her, while still in high school, to live on her own for two months in Baltimore to work on her biochemistry research. “I have very special parents,” she said. “They never forced me to do things. Do what makes you happy, they told me. And I’ve found research makes me happy.” She added, “They showed me great love by trusting me to be on my own.”³⁰

EXPLANATIONS FOR HIGH ACHIEVEMENT BY CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS

A question that often arises is “Why do so many children of immigrants achieve great academic success?” There are several explanations for the success of the children of immigrants, particularly in math and science fields.

First, many immigrant parents work in technical fields and it is natural for them to encourage their children also to enter technical fields. The children at the Intel Science Talent Search competition did not necessarily enter the same fields as the parents but were inspired by their mother and father, particularly after being instilled with a love of learning or exploration.

Second, immigrant parents believe, correctly, that science and technology are good fields with great long-term job prospects. If you’ve come to a new country without connections you assume that to make it you and your children must show you can do a job better than expected, that you can’t rely on a well-placed father or in-law to pave your path. It is difficult to fake that you are good at math. Compare that to other fields, such as politics, where evaluating ability is more subjective or where connections are more important. Many elected officials have parents involved in politics, which gives access to donors and other connections as well as name recognition likely to be unavailable to immigrants.

²⁸ Interview with Anjini Karthik, *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*.

²⁹ Interview with Catherine Jessica Yihui Lai, *Intel Science Talent Search 2016 Finalists*.

³⁰ Interview with Clare Zhu.

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Third, many successful children of immigrants excel at time management.³¹ Fourth, immigrant parents appear more likely to reserve praise for actual results, not just the amount of time spent. When it comes to kids, research shows that genuine self-esteem comes from children achieving results that relied on both their head and their effort.

The authors of the book *Top of the Class, How Asian Parents Raise High Achievers and How You Can Too*, Dr. Soo Kim Abboud (a surgeon) and Jane Kim (an attorney), are the children of Korean immigrant parents.³² Their book lists a number of “secrets” to raising a high achieving student that are instructive to review. The first secret is “Instilling a Love and Need for Learning and Education.”³³ The authors note that children should view learning as a lifelong process and that it’s important for the parents themselves to show their kids they like to learn and read, and they are excited by their careers.

The second secret in the book is “Instilling a Sense of Family Pride and Loyalty.” If a child succeeds in school, celebrate as a family.³⁴ The third secret is “Instilling a Respect and Desire for Delayed Gratification.” The authors tell how their father’s family was so poor in South Korea that his father could not afford to eat steak. His father had told him you’ll be able to enjoy all the steak you want if you work hard and succeed. And the authors’ father, although from a poor village, excelled at all levels of schooling and even won a scholarship to study at the University of Southern California. Steak remains the food of choice in that family’s celebrations.³⁵

Another secret is for the parent to play an active role in their child’s education, including helping with homework and developing a child’s individual talents. A cultural issue, the authors note, is that in Asia, popularity is largely based on school performance. “By and large, the top students tend to be the most popular and well liked,” write Abboud and Kim. In other words, “Teach Your Child the Art of Valuing Academic Success.”³⁶

This next “secret” is more controversial. The authors recommend talking early and often with kids about what they want to do career-wise and encourage them to enter fields that are likely to have financial security and intellectual fulfillment.³⁷ Finally, “Accept Responsibility with Your Children for their Failures at School.” This returns to the idea of celebrating academic success as a family but also addressing when your child is not doing well.³⁸

³¹ Steve Olson; *Count Down*, (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2004), p. 145.

³² Dr. Soo Kim Abboud and Jane Kim, *Top of the Class, How Asian Parents Raise High Achievers and How You Can Too* (New York: Berkley Books), 2006.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

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The authors note one of the “secrets” that appears to be left out. “Right now you may be wondering why ‘instilling discipline’ was not one of the secrets included in our book; after all, discipline is a frequent subject in most parenting and family magazines in addition parenting and family magazines,” write Abboud and Kim. “Our answer to you is that our entire book is centered on instilling discipline in your child. For example, instilling a love of learning and education, getting your child to embrace being a student, teaching your child to delay gratification and embrace sacrifice, setting short- and long-term educational goals – all of those secrets build and require discipline.”³⁹

In their closing, the authors note, “In summary, Asian students excel in the classroom because we are raised to succeed academically. Early in our childhood, our parents instilled in us a love for learning and education, the ability to delay gratification and embrace a sacrifice, as well as a fierce sense of family pride and loyalty that would serve us well in the classroom for years to come. While we were attending school, our parents further impressed upon us the importance of competition, setting and achieving both short and long-term goals . . . Our parents were actively involved in all aspects of our education, and they ensured their daughters would be grateful for all the opportunities America afforded them.”⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

It is sometimes a cliché to say that children are our future. But in America, as in other countries, it is the truth. When America provides opportunity to immigrants, the country also provides opportunity to the children of those immigrants.

The research discussed in this report illustrates America gains a great deal from the opportunities offered the children of immigrants. In fact, 83 percent of America’s top high school science students in 2016 were the children of immigrants, which illustrates the key role immigrants and their children play in science in America.

When we deny opportunity to an immigrant we also deny to America the contributions that will be made by that immigrant’s child. The evidence from the Intel Science Talent Search shows those contributions can be substantial. The children of immigrants represent the next generation of America’s scientists and engineers and we should applaud and welcome their achievements.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 208.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 208-209.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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