

By Jia Ramakrishnan

Our Voices Count

Asian Americans are underestimated. We can do things to change the world. One way is the Census. Our responses take part in making a new future. We can speak out against many unfair issues. Asian Americans are powerful. Everyone is. I am Asian American, and I can change the world. Our voices count.

2020 isn't just a new year, it's a whole new decade. Every decade, the Census is taken. The Census is more than just a headcount of the people living in the U.S. It's so much more. It's about people being represented in our huge, diverse country. And not just one race, every race and religion is included, and that's important. It's important for us Asian Americans' voices to be heard loud and clear. We are important. We get to make decisions too. *This is why we count.*

It's important for people to hear what we have to say. There shouldn't be just a few people who make the decisions. It's crucial for everyone to have a say in things, because everyone has a different opinion, and, I'd bet, a good argument to support that opinion. That's why we live in a democracy, so everyone's voices can be heard by voting. But still, there are some people who think that certain ethnicities shouldn't be allowed to vote. But everyone should be heard. I as an Asian American know that this racism is horrible, and we should all stand up to it. Our voices *will* be heard loud and clear, because our voices *matter*.

My voice is unique, and I can use it to change America for the better. For one thing, I'd speak out against stereotypes. Stereotypes are terrible, and one reason why is that they're usually not true. I love blue and hate pink, I like playing sports, I don't gossip, I don't care about clothes, I don't mind getting messy, I could go on and on. It's okay to fit into stereotypes and it's okay not to, but we'd all be better off without them. I'd also use my voice to give everyone an education. Many people around the world either don't have a good education, can't afford to go to school, or are forced to not go to school. Many girls are not allowed to go to school in places like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and many other countries. One Pakistani girl took a stand. Her name is Malala Yousafzai. She is my hero. I want to give all people, regardless of their gender or race, an education and end stereotypes once and for all.

Everyone should be included. Everyone should be able to do anything. Let's speak out. We can show the world just how amazing Asian Americans are. People can underestimate us as much as they want, but we will hold our heads up high and make a difference in our towns, our communities, our countries, our world. We can give everyone

an education. We can end stereotypes. We can do anything. We are Asian American, and we are proud. Our voices count.