

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

VOICES

A Publication from the Language and Culture Center



"A Comma A" sculpture - p.7

Summer **2014**

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VOICES – Summer 2014

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From the **Director's** Desk

CONGRATULATIONS as you complete this hot and beautiful summer of study in the Language and Culture Center! You have been engaged in an extraordinary experience as you have worked and studied and laughed and celebrated with your friends and fellow students at the University of Houston. You will never be the same. You will go forward, and as you continue to grow and learn, you will make a real difference in the world.

At our First Assembly, I promised you that you would learn far more than English at the Language and Culture Center. As you have worked and studied with students from all over the world in LCC classes, you have engaged in intercultural communication, and you have made friends. These friendships will be important to you throughout your lives. I want you to know that, as I see you in the halls of the Roy Cullen Building and walking around on our beautiful campus every day, I realize how fortunate I am to know you and to work with you.

Several members of the LCC administrative and support staff team attended the NAFSA Conference in San Diego, California, this summer and returned to the LCC with renewed commitment to make our program one of the best in the world. NAFSA: Association of International Educators is a professional association dedicated to the support of international education. On the NAFSA website (www.nafsa.org), there is a report on the positive impact of international students on campuses in the United States. The report states that international students “build bridges between the United States and other countries; bring global perspectives into U.S. classrooms and research labs; support U.S. innovation through science and engineering coursework, making it possible for U.S. colleges and universities to offer these courses to U.S. students; and support programming and services on campus for all students.”

Your teachers and I thank you for choosing to study with us and for giving us the chance to learn about you, your language, your culture, and your country. We have been enriched by your presence, and we appreciate the positive contribution you make to our university.

As the summer term of 2014 closes, we wish you a safe and productive academic break. Summer classes will end on graduation day, August 7. We will miss you, and we want you to know that the LCC office will remain open through August and September as we work with any continuing students who need us and with new students who will be arriving for the fall term. Online registration for the fall term will begin on September 2, 2014.

If you are leaving our program for any reason, we encourage you to stay in touch with us through email, through Facebook, or through our web site <http://lcc.uh.edu>. We are eager to hear from students who continue their studies at the University of Houston or at another school in the United States or who return to their countries to continue their journey. We invite you to join a great network of former LCC students, now living all over the world.

We congratulate you on completing your term of study in the Language and Culture Center. You have been an important part of a dynamic Intensive English Program with an excellent history and tradition of service to students. You have also been an important part of an exciting urban university, which celebrates and welcomes international students.

This summer, we have been delighted to have 354 students from 38 countries in our program. We are working hard to make sure we give you the best education possible. LCC teachers, counselors, administrators, support staff, and I hope you have had great experiences in our classes and on the University of Houston campus. We wish you the best as you complete the summer term, and we look forward to seeing many of you again as you return in September for the fall term of 2014 in the Language and Culture Center.



Joy S. Tesh – Director

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Jesus Barrios Carvallo, Abdelrahman Darmousa, Nesrein Albaeer, and Medina Belem Receive **LCC Scholarships**

The Language and Culture Center awards four scholarships each term to returning students who best combine academic excellence and leadership with international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Traditionally, one full scholarship honors Joyce Merrill Valdes, the founder and first director of the LCC. A second full scholarship honors Joseph O. Davidson, who served as director of the LCC for 22 years before retiring in 2006. These two full scholarships cover the cost of tuition, fees, and medical insurance for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. In addition, the LCC awards merit scholarships of \$1500 each for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. At the spring graduation ceremony on Thursday, April 24, 2014, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to Jesus Barrios Carvallo, the Davidson scholarship to Abdelrahman Darmousa, and the two merit scholarships to Nesrein Albaeer and Medina Belem.

Jesus Barrios Carvallo was awarded the Valdes Scholarship. Mr. Barrios Carvallo is from Venezuela and is studying in level six. This is his second term at the LCC. After he completes his study of English, he will study in a combined program of a Master's of Industrial Engineering and an MBA with a concentration in Supply Chain Management. He said, "I am really thankful for the opportunity that the scholarship gave me to achieve my goal."



Abdelrahman Darmousa was awarded the Davidson Scholarship. Mr. Darmousa is from Palestine. This is his second term at the LCC and he is studying in level four having skipped from level two.

He has a BA in Business Administration and upon completing the intensive English program, he plans to pursue an MBA. Mr. Darmousa remarked that when his name was called he did not get up immediately. He said, "When I walked to the podium, I remembered all memories of the term. Now I say thank you a lot, Dr. Davidson!"

Nesrein Albaer was a recipient of a Merit scholarship. She is from Syria and is currently studying in level three. When she finishes her study of English at the LCC, she intends to complete a master's degree in Education. Ms. Albaer said, "At the moment of receiving the scholarship, I was amazed and couldn't believe it." She added, "After that, I realized that the scholarship would support me in my future. I feel grateful for my family, my teachers, and the LCC."



We congratulate Jesus Barrios Carvallo, Abdelrahman Darmousa, Nesrein Albaer, and Medina Belem on their outstanding records in the Intensive English Program at the Language and Culture Center, and we wish them great success as they continue to study in the United States. We all look forward to learning who will be the next LCC scholarship recipients at the summer 2014 graduation ceremony.

—Sandy Woodson, *Associate Director*



Medina Belem was also a recipient of a Merit scholarship. Ms. Belem is from Burkina Faso. She is currently studying in level five having skipped from level three. This is her second term of study at the LCC. She plans to pursue a Master's degree in Supply Chain Management after

completing her study of English. Ms. Belem commented, "I am very grateful and honored to receive this scholarship. I want to thank my teachers for their encouragement and all of the LCC for this opportunity and for the great environment provided."

The History and Significance of the LCC



By Braulio Cardoso, Abdel Aziz Outtara, Ayat Ali, Sheriff Selim, and Yaser Kapci - 6A

According to the LCC Website, “since 1975, the LCC has provided intensive English instruction for international students who want to study at universities in the United States or improve their English language skills to meet personal and professional goals. Over 20,000 students have increased their ability to use English correctly and effectively at the LCC.” Joy S. Tesh. However, in the beginning, the Language and Culture Center only had about 25 students from 10 different countries.

LCC reached the highest number of students in spring 2012. This is due to the fact that there were many students from China and Saudi Arabia.

The Chinese students came because of the raise of the economy in China, and the Saudis came because King Abdullah’s scholarship program expanded. LCC differs from other programs mostly because it gives a unique experience at an American university for the international students. On top of that, the LCC has a huge

range of well-qualified teachers. In fact, according to Andrea from the front desk, the teacher who has taught longest is Gregory Urquhart, who has been teaching at the LCC since 1977.

There have been numerous nationalities since LCC’s foundation. According to some information provided to us by our teacher Cory Stewart, the first Turkish students came to the LCC in 1980, and there were 5. Now in summer term they are 16. Also, Cory says that the number of Iraqi students was 2 in 1981, and it did not alter in summer 2014. However, in the year 1991, Angola registered its first student, yet that number has been increasing each semester, counting now 21 students. Likewise, Ivory Coast has written its name in LCC history since 1980 with 2 students, but that number has increased this term.

Abdel Aziz from Ivory Coast has been in the LCC for 5 months, and he claims that he is passing through a turning point of his life. “In addition, to ease my integration in this new world, LCC is helping me master English, which is the key of my success in United States”, he says.

“The LCC is an excellent and efficient English program. During my time in United States, I have been through different English Centers, but none of them compares to the LCC. Simply because their preparation consists on making sure that the student assimilates what is essential,” says Sherif from Egypt.

Yaser, a student from Turkey says that LCC means cultural exchange, it’s marvelous the fact that I have classmates from all over the world. Having highly educated teachers makes it even better. Also, feeling that international atmosphere experience while learning is great. I really love LCC, which I consider the most efficient English program I have ever been to.

Iyat from Iraq says that studying at the LCC is the key that will open many doors and give her a completely new life. She has been learning at the LCC to improve and study with dedication in order to succeed. Surely the LCC studies will help her to achieve her personal and educational goals by acquiring more knowledge rather than mere information.

Finally, Braulio Cardoso from Angola says “I have been in [here] for 9 months and since then, I have been learning culture beside English. In a personal point of view, the LCC turned me into a better person, it made me alter some bad preconceptions that I had for other cultures. In other words, it broadened my horizons. I clearly acknowledge all of LCC’s teachers, classmates, and staff.”

“A Comma A” – The History of a Masterpiece

By: Cedric Yeo, Ismael Keita, and Bassam AlHaddad - 6A

The artist Tim Sanborn has made many statues. Indeed, most of his sculptures are in public places around the world. One of his statues called “A Comma A” sits in front of M.D. Anderson Library right here on our campus. This work was first sculpted in 2003 and then later renovated in the summer of 2013.

According to UH Today News, Tim Sanborn wanted the sculpture’s text from different languages to attract student’s interest and develop some relationships among them. (UHT, 2004) Sanborn also added “I also hope students will interact with each other when translating some of the languages they are unfamiliar with.”

Even though no-one can decrypt the meaning of a work of art better than the artist himself, everybody can interpret a sculpture for himself/herself. As for us (the writers of this paper), while Cedric and Bassam may think that the sculpture relates to diversity, Ismael sees it as a way to mark a place where different people can sit together cohesively. Of course, there is no absolute answer on how to interpret this work of art, but that is what makes this piece of art unique.



“A comma A” in front of the M. D. Anderson Library



CLASS Pictures







...more
CLASS Pictures



Places I Like on Campus

The CALL Lab Munirah Alsaqer

3D – Saudi Arabia

Most people like the CALL Lab because of many reasons. First of all, I can practice English on many programs, such as TOEFL, DynEd, and Focus on Grammar, so I can improve my English. Secondly, it is a good place to study. Most students feel bored because every day they study in the same classroom. When we go to the CALL Lab, we can focus more. Finally, some students don't have access to the internet at home, so they can go to CALL Lab to browse websites and check email. In short, most students enjoy when they go to the CALL Lab.

Classrooms Abdulaziz Salman

3D – Saudi Arabia

The classrooms are so amazing and fabulous because we have a lot of activities. Our teacher gives us many things to do every day, for example, homework, review what we learn in class, change the student sitting next to me, and practice our speaking and listening. Before, it was hard for me to understand some of my classmates, but now it is so easy to understand them. All my classmates are friendly and helpful. LCC teachers are very efficient and helpful. You can get a good education at the LCC, so my classroom is my favorite place to be.

The Fountains in Front of the Ezekiel W. Cullen Building

Nam Viet Nguyen

3D – Vietnam

My favorite place on campus are the fountains in front of the Ezekiel W. Cullen building. There are many reasons I like to be there. The first reason is that I like to feel close to nature. I feel comfortable and very relaxed when I sit on the bench facing the fountains. I can hear the birds sing and see them flying around me. I can hear the running water and enjoy the silent space around. I can sit there for many hours to study. I think a relaxed feeling is very important for a student. There are many good places where students can study, such as the library, the classroom, the CALL Lab, etc., but I think that studying outside is very good for my health. I can leave the stuffy air in a room. I can inhale and exhale the fresh air of nature. For me, the fountains in front of the Ezekiel W. Cullen building will always be my favorite place on campus.

The Rec Center Ivan Reva

3D – Ukraine

I like the University of Houston Campus. My favorite place there is the Recreation Center. It is a modern and comfortable building. The first reason why I like it is because there is gym in it. I like to work out, and a big gym is very important for me. There are a lot of different trainers, a big cardio zone, places where we can play soccer and basketball, and a swimming pool. Students can play with their friends, or they can watch someone else play. We can ask different questions about things, and the assistants there always help. The second reason why I like the Recreation Center is because it has a big TV and comfortable chairs. This is good because I can watch different World Cup soccer matches there. It is very interesting to watch games with different people, and I have fun with new friends. For me, this is helpful because I can improve my speaking skills too. Lastly, there is a very comfortable recreation area where students can rest after classes or working out in the gym. Also, there is a shop where we can buy food or different energy drinks. Because of these reasons, my favorite place on campus is the recreation center.



Nam Viet Nguyen



Chinese Star Restaurant

Junwei He

3C – China

My favorite place on campus is the Chinese Star restaurant. It's a Chinese restaurant where there is a huge variety of Chinese food that I can buy. The taste is better than other Chinese restaurants on campus. I like the mixed fried rice. This dish is made with shell fish, meat, vegetables and chicken. In China, I usually ate this kind of food, but now I am living in the USA. I don't like American food like burgers, pizza, and fast food. I miss Chinese food so much, and this restaurant is in front of my house. I can see this restaurant through my window. I can speak Chinese in that restaurant, and it's a good thing for me that I can order food in Chinese. These are the reasons why Chinese Star Restaurant is my favorite place on campus.

The Gym

Marta Gomez

3C – Venezuela

On campus, we have a variety of places. My favorite place on campus is the gym because I can relax and exercise. Also, I can do many recreational activities like play tennis, climb the rock wall, and swim in the pool. At the gym, I can also do many activities that are good for my health. In my free time, I go there to relax my mind. In my opinion, the gym is the best place on campus because it is a good place for everyone. All the students can go there and relax; they can go with friends, play soccer, tennis, basketball, etc. In conclusion, the gym is a good place for everyone. Students can improve their health at the gym, and health is the most important thing for a person.

Library

Norah Alshahrani

3C – Saudi Arabia

My favorite place on campus is the library. It is the best place for me because of several reasons. The first reason is that I love to read, so the library is the best place for me. When I go to the library, I find and borrow a lot of the books that will help me develop my English language. Secondly, I can study in the library by myself or with my friends. The library has quiet places to study and do different things. Moreover, the library has enough computers to use. In addition to many of the services and the above reasons, the library is the best place for me.

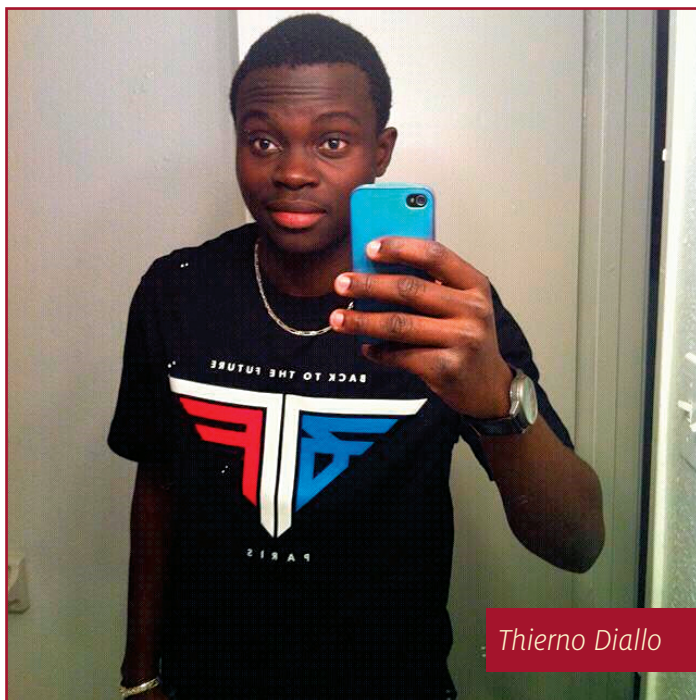
The CALL Lab

Saleh Al Zarer

3D – Saudi Arabia

My favorite place in the University of Houston is the CALL Lab. There are many international students at the LCC. We help each other in the CALL Lab. The second reason why I like the CALL lab is that if I need help with grammar and English, I can get it there. The third reason is that I can communicate with other students with the interpreters. In conclusion, the students are in the LCC CALL Lab, and I am happy. Those are my reasons why I like it.

Places I Like on **Campus** *(continued)*



The Recreation and Wellness Center

Thierno Diallo

3D – Burkina Faso

There are many interesting places on campus, but my favorite is the Recreation and Wellness Center. I like this place for many reasons. First, it is the perfect place to make friends and talk about whatever I want. For example, when I came to Houston, I didn't know anybody, and I was always alone. I went to the Center just to enjoy myself, and I met some great and interesting people. By interacting with these people, I improved my English. Next, I think that this is the only place where I can forget some of my problems. I can do anything I want such as train, eat, watch TV, study, surf on the internet, and swim. It allows me to relax and stay healthy. For these important reasons, the Recreation and Wellness Center is my favorite place on campus. I feel good over there.

The CALL Lab

Yunyun Peng

3D – China

My favorite place is the CALL Lab at the University of Houston. First of all, we can use computers to study. It is very convenient. For example, the last time we had a test, we could write the answers on the computer, and we could check the answers by ourselves. It had an automatic timer which controlled our time for every question. Secondly, there is a big screen in front of the CALL Lab, so we can see the instructions on it clearly. We can also use it when we have presentations to show pictures to other students. For these reasons, I like the CALL Lab and like to study there.

The Gym

Ammar Alalawi

3D – Saudi Arabia

My favorite place on campus is the gym. The first reason is because it has different sports. For example, there is soccer, swimming, volleyball, and other different activities. The second reason is that the trainers teach us how to exercise. The trainer's cost is cheap, and I really like it. Finally, my opinion about the gym is that many students need to go there because there are many activities and the service is cheap.

The Gym

Khalid Alamoudi

3D – Saudi Arabia

My favorite place on campus is the gym. It is an interesting place where you can find new friends. You can go every day to play soccer, basketball, or whatever. Sometimes you meet the same people, and other times, you see new people. The gym is a place that can benefit your health. There are many different machines for each part of your body. You can make a different daily schedule, or you can have the same schedule as your friends, so you may go with them. There are two different swimming pools, and one of them is outdoors. It is an amazing place where you can swim and stay under the sun to relax. The gym is my favorite place on campus.

Classroom at the A.D. Bruce Religion Center

Genoveva Pastrana

3D – Mexico

Some people think that the library is the best place on campus at the University of Houston. I don't agree with them. The first reason is because I prefer to be in a place where I can laugh and talk because I don't want to be silent all the time. The second reason is that in the library, one cannot eat or drink anything. Finally, in the library, a person cannot see the sky or many people. Because of all these reasons, I prefer to stay in the classroom with my classmates at the A. D. Bruce Religion Center, where we can study and talk all the time.

101 Café

Weibo Jiang

3D – China

My favorite place is 101 Café in the University of Houston. I have some reasons to explain that. First of all, I think the 101 Café is the most delicious restaurant here. For example, their Kong Pao Chicken is very tender, juicy and crispy. Also, the lemon black tea is very tasty. Your perfect meal is ready to go. Finally, they offer a lot of different dishes from many countries. This is why I like this place.



Aicha Savadogo

Fountains

Aicha Savadogo

3C – Burkina Faso

The University of Houston has many interesting places. My favorite place is the area around the fountains. Many reasons explain this. First, the fountains are a beautiful place, and the best place to relax. After classes, I can go to the fountains and just admire the beautiful place. I can easily forget that I am tired, and I get energy to do something else. Also, the fountains are a good place to study. With the relaxing water sound, I can do my homework easily and efficiently. I can read and listen better. All the places at this university are beautiful, but my favorite fountains are the best.

The University Center

Fahad Alhajri

3C – Saudi Arabia

My favorite place on campus is the University Center. Students can do a lot of things there. I can study, play games and watch a movie. When I go to the UC to study, I feel better, and I can take a group of friends to study with me over there. We do a lot of exercises, homework, and practice together. This place has a lot of games to play and is fun. If I meet with my friends to play pool, we can play on the first floor next to Starbucks Coffee. The UC also has a nice cinema, and it shows some movies on the weekends. I spend my free time watching movies that are free. Students can go there with their cougar card. It is on the second floor at the corner. If I want to have a nice time, I will go there to watch a movie, play a game, or study at the University Center.



The M.D. Anderson Library and the Fountain

America and the World

My Experience

Nam Nguyen

3A – Vietnam

I am an international student from Vietnam, and I came to the U.S. to study English. I have been here about seven months. I expected to learn about the culture, but I was surprised when I read and learned about the history of slavery in the U.S. I was also surprised to learn about the Saudi Arabian culture. First, I was shocked when I read the history of slavery in the U.S. I could not believe what the traders did to black people in Africa. For instance, the traders caught black people and sold them to the U.S. The reason was that the traders wanted to have money, weapons, cloth, and tobacco. Moreover, the slaves were separated and beaten. The slaves had to work hard, but they did not have enough food to eat, and some even chose to commit suicide. Their name was given by their master. Their original family name disappeared. Secondly, I have learned about cultures from different countries of the world, especially the culture in Saudi Arabia. My classmate told me the women in Saudi Arabia must wear scarves and veils, and they cannot drive a car in their country. In Saudi Arabia, they have separate schools for men and women. The most interesting thing is the women cannot marry with foreign men because of their religion. Moreover, the men can have more than one wife. A man can have four wives and the men have to take care of their wives equally. In short, now I can understand more easily the culture and history of other countries, so I can make new friends and work better with them in the future.

My Experience in LCC

Maria Pilar Valverde

3A – Peru

I am an international student from Peru studying English. I have been here about one month. I expected to learn about American culture, but I was surprised to learn about slavery and Ramadan. At first, when the U.S. had only 13 colonies, there were slaves from Africa. They were treated like things. For example, the traders sold them like property. The traders separated the families and the slaves could do nothing about the separation. In addition, I learned about Ramadan which is a religious tradition in Saudi Arabia. The people wear nice dresses for this festivity. The calendar is different because there are 9 months, not 12, and a year begins with Ramadan. After Ramadan, there is a holiday and the people can go on a trip. I really learned so much, and it has helped me to understand people and make friends from different cultures.



New Experiences About U.S. History and Other Cultures Around the World

Juan Carlos Balza

3A – Venezuela

I'm an international student from Venezuela studying English. I have been here about three weeks and I expected to learn about American language and culture, but I was surprised when I attended my class because there were students from other countries and I learned about several cultures. At the same time, I learned about history of slavery in the United States which was a terrible past for the Americans. I was surprised because I had never heard about this terrible moment of American life. The slavery was a kind of dictatorial system that the plantation owners (called masters) had against their workers. They created laws to treat the black people as property and not as humans. The need for workers on the plantations in U.S. was the main factor of the origin of slavery. The slave must do all the things the owner wants and if not, he could be killed by the master. They usually lost their family and friends because they were sold by traders to separate owners. It was a very horrible part of history.

At the same time, I was surprised when I attended the class at LCC because I met students from other countries and cultures such as Asia, Arabia, South America and North America, who have the same expectation and interest about the English language. The most amazing experience was learning about several cultures that I have never known. The Arabians celebrate a religious event called Ramadan when they can't eat a meal during daylight for a month. In addition, I also learned that the Asians celebrate the New Year on a different date from the rest of the world. Furthermore, the South American people have the same language as me but there are some words that have different meanings. In conclusion, it is very interesting to know the cultures and history of people around the world. I think that it is necessary to understand it because we are living in a modern age when we need to work and have interactions with people from other languages and cultures.

My Experience in LCC

Yue Chang

3A – China

I am an international student from China, and I am studying English here. I have been here about 6 months. I expected to learn about American culture, but I was surprised when I got some information about the history of slavery in United States. First of all, I was horrified to learn that the traders treated the slaves mercilessly. Slaves were forced into very small spaces on ships, and kept chained up until they arrived to the new world. Traders took slaves to the auctions or slave markets. If the owners wanted to buy a slave, the slave was examined like an animal. These facts shocked me and made me angry. There was another thing about slavery that made me angry and surprised. The law didn't allow slaves to study, and they didn't have freedom at that time. They had to do what their owners wanted. Their work time was from sun up until sundown, and they may have a rest only on Sunday. In a word, slavery is wrong. It took away the black people's right which is freedom, education and right of equality. No matter what color of skin people are, everyone should be treated equally.

My Experience

Anh Nguyen

3B – Vietnam

I am an international student from Vietnam studying English. I have been here about one month. I expected to learn about different cultures, but I was surprised when I learned that in the past slaves were the legal property of their owners, and Texas was originally a part of Mexico. Firstly, I was so amazed to know that slaves were the legal property of their white plantation owners for life. In my opinion, humans have no moral right to own others or force others to work in their farms. Moreover, to obtain slaves, traders kidnapped Africans and exchanged them for guns, tobacco, or food. Additionally, black families were separated, and on ships they were forced into very small spaces and chained together. To be honest, I think slaves are humans, not things which others can sell. Traders and white plantation owners were really the worst criminals! Secondly, I was also surprised to learn that Texas was originally a part of Mexico. When Texas was a district of Mexico, Texas leaders wanted to own slaves who could help them make profits from their hard work on plantations. However, Mexican laws did not allow them to have slaves. Because of this, Texans fought with Mexican army and separated from Mexico and became one of largest states in America. In conclusion, I believe that learning about American historical events makes me have an overall knowledge about the country where I have immigrated and helps me respect its history.

My New Understanding

Robert Tenias Moya

3B – Venezuela

I am a new international student from Venezuela studying English. I came two months ago, and I hope to do my best and learn about English and other cultures, but I was surprised when I read and learned about slavery, and also other religions. I was shocked when I read how the slaves were transported below the decks of trader ships. In addition, they were chained and they couldn't move. They were in small places with little air. Therefore, many slaves became sick and died, so their journey was really hard. Now, I understand how difficult their lives were. I was also surprised when I heard about other religions. Before I came to the U.S., I didn't understand how people could follow some religions, because I thought that people were insincere and they believed in God to feel good about everything bad that they did. However, I have a different understanding now because I have met new people from different cultures such as Arabics. They believe in their God and they respect their religion. Therefore, they don't mind what people think about them and their religion. They are excellent people and wherever they are, they keep preserving their culture and their religion. For example, they are in another country now and they celebrate Ramadan the same as in their country. In conclusion, I have learned many interesting things about other cultures and slavery that makes me think differently. Now I know that respecting different beliefs is one of the most important things to live together and keep good relationships. We are equal and everyone must be treated with respect.



America and the World *(continued)*

My Experience

Hiep Nguyen

3A – Vietnam

I'm an international student from Vietnam studying English. I've been here about six months. I expected to learn the cultures of other countries, but I was surprised when I learned about slavery in the U.S. and also the Saudi Arabian culture. I was surprised when I read "History of Slavery in the United States." Lives of slaves were very difficult. They were sold by traders. The owners didn't count slaves as people. In addition, they killed slaves if slaves fought them. The slaves worked about eighteen hours. They had only six hours to eat and to sleep. Moreover, slaves weren't allowed to study. They couldn't read or spell their names, and they couldn't fight their owners. Worst of all, families of slaves were separated by traders. I was also interested when I learned about the Saudi Arabian culture. Before I came here, I didn't know about Saudi Arabia. I now have many friends from Saudi Arabia. One of my friends told me that women from Saudi Arabia who got married must wear scarves and veils when they go outside. People can't see their hair and their neck. People see only their eyes. Also, they don't wear short jeans or short pants when they go outside. However, when they stay at their home they can wear short jeans or short pants, and they don't wear scarves and veils. In short, I have learned new information from many countries in the world since I have lived here. In the future, I want to learn about cultures from many countries. Also, I want to understand more about the history and culture of the U.S.

Slavery in the U.S.

Mohammed Almogrin

3B – Saudi Arabia

This semester I learned about slavery in the U.S. Most people in the world know that slavery is wrong. I agree that it is wrong for several reasons. First of all, black people worked for the white people. For example, a black person had to do anything that the master said. Also, they worked without money. Secondly, slaves could not study anything because of the master, so they could not write or read. They just worked. Another reason is that the black people could not see their family. For example, if they had a wife and children, they may be sold to another owner. In addition, the master changed their names, so African Americans did not know what their name was because they got the master's name. Finally, slavery is wrong because it is not fair between humans. There is no difference between white and black people. In short, this situation made me feel so upset and bad. In my opinion, I cannot see any difference between human beings.

New Discoveries

Nesrein Albaeer

3B – Syria

I'm an international student from Syria studying English. I've been here for about six months, and I expected to learn about culture, but I was surprised when I learned about the journey of slaves to the U.S. and the life of slaves. I was surprised to learn that the journey of slaves to the new world was so difficult. The captains of the ships crowded the slaves below the decks of ships and shackled their necks and legs. They got bad meals, so many Africans died of malnutrition. Some slaves were sick, and many slaves were crippled. Some slaves chose to take their own lives. I was also surprised to learn that a slave's life was so hard. Slaves were treated like property. They worked hard all day without rest, and they didn't get money. They only got food and one dirty room to sleep in. In addition, slaves were not given education, so they could not read and write because their owner wanted them to be ignorant and not rebel. Furthermore, the master had the choice of selling his slaves, so he could separate a wife or the children from the family when he sold them to another owner. In conclusion, I've learned so much more than I thought I would when I first came here. This new knowledge will help me to clarify and teach history in the future.

The Homeless in U.S.

Faten Rudhaian

3A – Saudi Arabia

I am an international student from Saudi Arabia studying English. I have been here about eight months, and when I came to U.S., I was shocked about the homeless. When I came to the U.S., I guessed the people in the U.S. were richer than any country because I heard that Americans had a lot of oil. I was shocked when I saw a lot of homeless people in the street. They were begging for money. I felt scared because they looked very bad and some of them were weak. I wanted to help them, but many people warned me about them because they sometimes made problems in America. I hope the American government helps them because they look bad in a great country.



New Discoveries

Juan Cuadros

3B – Peru

I'm an international student from Peru studying English. I've been here about one month and I expected to learn about American life, but I was surprised when I heard and learned about slavery and also the cowboys' life in the U.S. When I read about the history of slavery in America, I was surprised to learn that the first black Africans who arrived in the U.S. got their freedom with hard work. At this time they could buy properties, vote and serve on juries. However, when the plantations needed more workers, the owners didn't want to hire white workers. They changed the rules for the Africans. The blacks became slaves for life and could no longer own property or be free. Furthermore, I also learned in class that the American cowboys' life was dangerous and short. I learned that they lived in a place called a ranch and they worked with cattle. The cattle were driven from place to place by the cowboys who rode horses to follow the cattle. In conclusion, I've learned so much more than I thought I would when I first came here. This new knowledge will help me be more respectful, friendly, honest and polite with people, their customs and different cultures. I think that it is interesting and touching for me and my life.

Vietnamese Culture

Mohammad Al Ibrahim

3A – Saudi Arabia

I am an international student from Saudi Arabia. I am studying English. I've been here about ten months, and I expected to learn about American culture, but I was surprised when I heard about slavery, and also learned about Vietnamese culture. I was surprised to know that white people controlled black people. I was really shocked when I read about slavery. Actually I couldn't imagine how white people purchased or traded black people. Also, I learned about Vietnamese culture. My Vietnamese classmates are respectful and help each other. Actually, when I ask any one of them for help, I get what I want. Even though these students are always busy, they cooperate with other students. I am proud of those students. Also, they always smile and socialize. Finally, I will never forget these classmates because they have made a positive impression on me.

What I Learned about American History

Sarah Traore

3B – Ivory Coast

I am an international student from Ivory Coast studying English. I have been here about six months, and I expected to learn more about different cultures. However, I was surprised to learn some information about America's history such as how indentured servants were a kind of slavery and how segregation started in the U.S. Indentured servants were some people who chose to work for a certain period to pay their debts. Thus, the first blacks who arrived were treated like white people. However, during the 17th century, things changed for black Americans because new laws completely deprived them of their freedom. That was the beginning of slaves. In addition, I learned the background about the segregation that had existed in the U.S. since the 19th century. African Americans thought that after abolishing slavery, white and black people would be the same. Unfortunately, it was not the case because it was the beginning of the separation between white and black people in everyday life. The segregation resulted in two separate groups according to the color of skin. For example, on the bus, black people were forbidden to sit in the front, but they could sit in the back if the bus was not crowded. This situation was very common, but it caused African Americans to revolt against this practice. In conclusion, I have learned so much more than I thought I would when I first came here. This knowledge will help me to be more aware of world issues in the future because every act we make may have a big impact in history.

Student Writing

My Apartment

Fehaid Alhajri

1B – Saudi Arabia

My friends call me Fahad. I'm from Saudi Arabia. My apartment is small. My apartment is in the city, and it is very expensive. My apartment has 2 rooms and 1 bathroom. My apartment has three windows, two in the room, and one in the bathroom. My apartment is on the university campus. It is a very beautiful place. I feel happy there.

Abdulrahman Alkhalidi

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Abdulrahman. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 29 years old. I live in an apartment at UH. My apartment has a bedroom and one bathroom. It has a kitchen and a living room. The kitchen has an oven, a fridge, and a microwave. When I moved there, I only bought dishes and appliances. In the living room, there is a couch, a dining table and two chairs. The bedroom is furnished with a bed and a study table. I just bought the pillows and the covers. Every morning, I like to sit next to the three large windows in the living room, drink my coffee and watch students walking on the street. When I feel sleepy, I go to my bed and watch youtube till I fall asleep. This is my apartment, and I like it.

Mushari Alhewaiti

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Mushari Alhewaiti. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 21 years old. I have an apartment on campus. My apartment has a bedroom, a living room, a bathroom with a shower, a dining room, and a kitchen. It is air conditioned and well furnished. My room is decorated beautifully. At night, the colorful neon lights make my room beautiful. I like my apartment.

Shafi Mohammad S Aldossary

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Shafi Aldoosary. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 20 years old. I live in an apartment with my cousin, Khalid. There are two bedrooms and a bathroom. Our apartment is cold. Our bedroom is small. I have a big bed. It is good. There is a table and a chair. There is a computer on the table. I have a closet for my clothes. It is a good room.

My Country

Raed Alqusi

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Raed. I am from Saudi Arabia. I come from Riyadh. My language is Arabic. We have a big street in Riyadh. Its name is King Fahad. We also have a long bridge. The weather is hot in the summer, and it is cold in the winter. My favorite food in my country is Kabsa. I love my country very much.

Abdulrahman Alqusi

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Abdulrahman Alqusi. I'm from Saudi Arabia. My country is beautiful. There are 13 states in Saudi Arabia. Riyadh is the capital city. There are 2 beaches: one in the north, and the other one in the south. The weather is very hot in the summer, but it is too cold in the winter. There are nice people in Saudi Arabia, and they are friendly. My country is an interesting place.

Hassan Altajer

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Hassan Atajer. I am from Saudi Arabia. It is a big country. People in my country are very friendly. They work a lot. We like the color green. Everyone in my country likes to play soccer. We like to eat Kabsa. I like my country very much.

Nawaf Alsefri

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Nawaf. I am from Saudi Arabia. My country is so big and beautiful. We have clean streets in my country. My favorite sport in my country is soccer. My country has a beautiful sea. It is the Red Sea. My country has a lot of buildings. My city has one season: summer. Our language is Arabic. We can understand English very well.

Razan Aloufi

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Razan. I come from Saudi Arabia. My country is very big and beautiful. The people in my country are very nice. Our favorite food is Kabsa. My country is very hot. We don't have rain. We have a beautiful summer, and we have delicious food and fruits. I love my country, and I miss my family.

Yupeng Zhang

1B – China

My name is Zhang Yupeng. I come from China. I live in Beijing. I speak Chinese. My family lives in China. My country has a lot of people, and every day more people come to my country because China is very beautiful. Tian An Men Square, Bei Hai Park and The Great Wall of China have a long history. My country's favorite food is rice, dumplings, Gong Bao Chicken, and Beijing Duck. Summer is very hot in China. It is cool in the north, so in the summer more people choose to travel there. Chinese people work very hard every day. They work 8 hours because everyone wants to buy a house. I love my country.

My Best Friend

Julio Daruiz

1A – Venezuela

My name is Julio Daruiz. I am from Venezuela. My best friend is Felipe. He is happy and nice. We go to the mall. He is 24 years old. We played baseball together. He is quiet and helpful. He speaks Spanish and English. Our favorite food is meat, rice and salad. Our favorite fruits are oranges, apples, strawberries, and bananas. I like being with my best friend. I call him every day.

Abdullah Albalawi

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Abdullah Albalawi. I'm 24 years old. I am from Saudi Arabia. My best friend is Saud. He is from Saudi Arabia. He is 24 years old. He works at a bank. He speaks Arabic. He is a nice, happy and helpful man. He is not talkative, but he likes sports. We like to play soccer together. I miss him now. I like him very much.

Ali Makki

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Ali Makki. I'm 19 years old. I'm from Saudi Arabia. My best friend is Khalid. He is 19 years old. He studies at school. He is very happy. He is clean. He is smart. He likes pizza. He speaks English. He is shy. We play soccer. I like my friend.

My Family

Haider Aldubais

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Haider Aldubais. I'm from Saudi Arabia. My grandfather's name is Hussain Aldubais. He is 80 years old. He is from Saudi Arabia. He is a nice man. His favorite food is fish and rice. I like my grandfather very much. My grandfather is always happy, and he has a lot of friends. All of his friends like him. My grandfather is helpful. He has fun with children. He always gives my cousins and me good advice. He is outgoing with people. Every family member likes him very much.

Aoon Abdullah Z Alabdely

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Aoon Alabdely. I am 18 years old. I study English. I live with my father, mother, one brother and two sisters. My father works at a bank. My brother likes animals. His name Zied. He is 16 years old. My sister's names are Noor and Nijod. My sisters study at UH. I have a good family. I love my family.

Jeancy Diyambuka

1A – Congo (Kinshasa)

My name is Jeancy Diyambuka. I am from Congo in Africa. Congo is big. My family lives in Congo. I have two brothers. I also have six sisters. Our language is French, but I like to speak English. I like my family very much.

Abdullah Alshaya

1B – Saudi Arabia

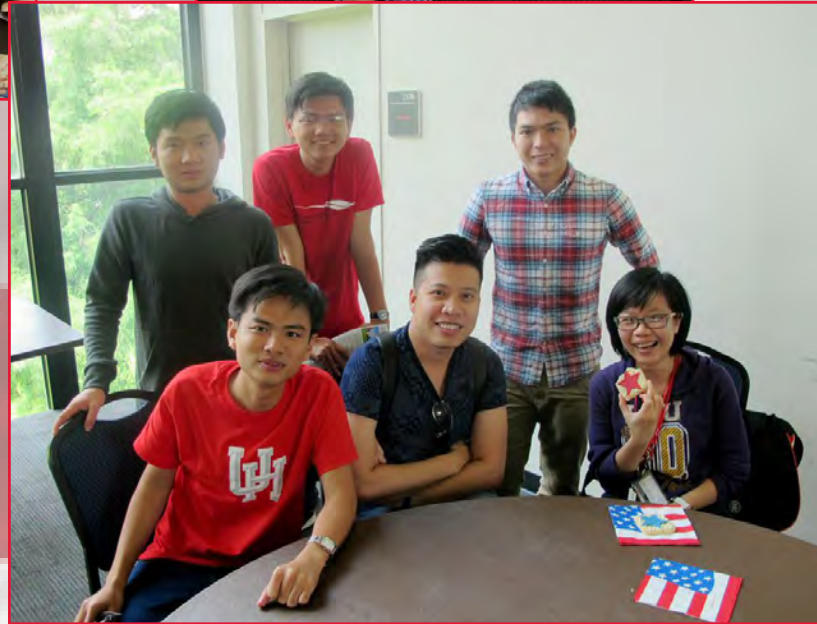
My name is Abdullah Alshaya. I am from Saudi Arabia. My grandfather's name is Abdulaziz Alshaya. My grandfather is a handsome man. He has a social life. He has many friends. My grandfather is very funny. My grandfather is a doctor, but now he is retired. He is 95 years old. His favorite food is kabsa and pizza. He likes to swim and likes to play football very much. My grandfather is a nice man.

Abdullah Alqwefl

1B – Saudi Arabia

I'm Abdullah Alqwefl. I'm from Saudi Arabia. I'm 25 years old. My mother's name is Nourh. She is 40 years old. She is so kind. She is very beautiful, and she also cooks very well. She has 3 boys and 4 girls. She lives in Saudi Arabia. My favorite food is kabsa. My mother knows how to cook kabsa. She doesn't work. She stays at home. Sometimes she goes shopping to buy things. I love my mother and I miss her.

4th of July



Happiness

Happiness and Your Challenges

Ana Flavia de Souza

5F – Brazil

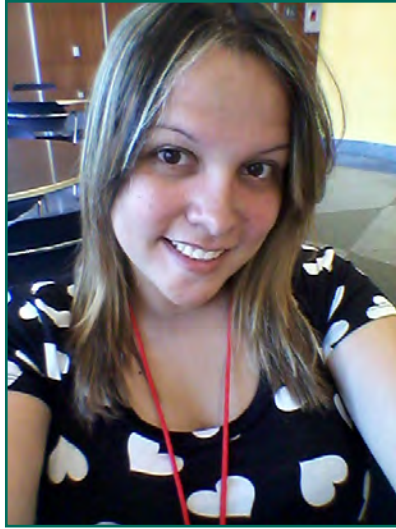
In this essay, we will discuss two relevant issues about happiness. Our first challenge will be to try to answer the question about whether anyone can achieve happiness. I do not think that everyone can achieve happiness because it depends on several factors. According to the Oxford dictionary, happiness means: “The state of being happy;” as we can see happiness has a subjective significance which depends on those things that each one of us considers necessary to make us happy at any given time. So we cannot define objectively what happiness is.

Thinking about happiness made me remember the lyrics of a recent song called “Happy” launched by the singer Pharrell Williams that says, “Because I’m happy clap along if you know what happiness is to you.” As suggested in that song, I think that in order to achieve happiness, it is necessary to know what really makes us happy. Although I think that we can be naturally happy without knowing exactly why or what happiness is, I believe that to achieve it, we have to know its significance to us. It is impossible to reach something if you do not know the meaning of that you plan to achieve.

However, more than being aware of what happiness means to us, it is also necessary to have a desire to be happy. According to psychologists, we can only have a wish when we do not have the object of our desire. In other words, desire is born out of the lack of something. So certainly, our desires are powerful tools through which we can change a situation that we do not want anymore. For instance, we can leave a job or end a relationship and that makes us unhappy.

The second question is: is it better to pursue or to achieve happiness? As I have already mentioned, to achieve happiness we must want to be happy because when we want something we have to pursue it. Sometimes our pursuit results in success while sometimes it does not. Even when we fail, we can learn through the process and that, in my opinion, is always valuable for our experiences in life. Therefore, I think the pursuit of happiness is better than the achievement.

In short, I believe that only those people that can, at least, know what happiness is and want to be happy, have a chance of really finding happiness in their lives. Moreover, when we are pursuing happiness, we can learn through the process and sometimes find it.



Surrender Is Not An Option

Marta Alises De La Pena

5A – Spain

“If you fall seven times, get up eight”, says a Chinese proverb. There are life-changing events that teach you a valuable lesson. In my case, I will never surrender when I face a new challenge. I learned this lesson during two years when I decided (with my parents) to change high schools.

The showdown in my life was when I was 16 years old, and I had to change schools. I spent my adolescence and my best years with friends who I met in my first high school. However, I changed because my previous school didn’t have the last two courses I needed to go to college. I didn’t have any choice. I had to do that. It was a hard transition. New school, new people, new teachers... Also, that school was more conservative and religious – Catholic - than the other one. I always went to Catholic schools, even though I’m not a believer, and I knew how I had to behave. Moreover, the principal’s office had severe rules about how you had to dress and how you had to behave according to its Catholic statement. However, I went to this school because it was at the top of school rankings in my city, Madrid. Prestigious, renowned professors... All of that seemed idyllic. Nevertheless, I shouldn’t have believed everything I read.

From the first day, I knew that it was going to be hard. Moreover, the majority of the people were upper class, so they usually discriminated against middle-class people like me. Indeed, I was not the only person in this same situation. Others, like me, were a little “freak” group because we were totally different and tried to rebel against the principal. I was in trouble sometimes, but it was not anything serious.

On the other hand, I had good moments. For example, I was able to meet one of my favorite teachers ever. He taught mathematics, and thanks to him I began to understand it and like it. Also, I had the good luck of meeting amazing people there. For instance, I met my actual best friend there. He had been studying all his life at that school, and he helped me to spend the best two years that I will never forget. Consequently, I had good experiences in that conservative school.

To sum up, your decisions affect your entire life. I learned that you should never surrender. Everything has a positive side, and you have to look for it. I had my best and worst experiences at that school, and if I had to do it again, I would.

Coping with Culture Shock



Haotian Zhang

4A – China

Culture shock can be difficult and frustrating for someone in a new culture. I know because I have had this painful experience. However, luckily for me, I overcame the challenges, so I think I can give you some advice. You might be depressed or angry, but try to have a healthy and positive mentality because that can help you talk with other people. If you have questions about the new culture, just ask someone. It is especially helpful to have an American roommate. You can often have conversations when you eat lunch or dinner with him to learn more about the United States.

Marc Ouedraogo

4A – Burkina Faso

Living in a new country can be hard sometimes, but there are ways to deal with culture shock. For example, you need friends to avoid solitude. Leaving your room to exercise or play a sport can relax the body and the mind. Try to have some fun, even if it's different from your country. New experiences can be amazing most of the time.

Abdulrahman Alshehri

4A – Saudi Arabia

When you are in the difficult stages of culture shock, it is possible to persevere until you reach one of the more positive stages. First, make new friends because they will be like your family here; your classmates are also missing their relatives, their home, their friends, and their food. Sometimes you may feel alone and want to stay at home thinking about your family and home country. However, it's better to spend time with friends who will help you and support you here.

Chengcheng Long

4A – China

If you're not prepared, culture shock can drive you crazy. To overcome it, try to use the language in the new culture as much as possible; you may make your problems worse by speaking in your foreign language too much. Making more friends can also help you get through culture shock. Last, being confident can help you overcome culture shock. Be brave and try something new, even when you feel uncomfortable.

Sawsan Khalaf

4A – Palestine

When I came to Houston, I had expected an easy life where I would be happy all the time. I had thought that even studying and taking exams would be enjoyable. However, the fact is that living here has been a challenge because of culture shock. It didn't take me long to realize that everything here is different—not only the language, but also the culture, food, weather, and behavior. I always think about my family, friends, and my job; I cry when I think about every detail about my life in my country. However, now I think I can escape this feeling while I'm here because I can focus more on my dreams. I won't think about my country as much as I did before, and I will try to find more ways to make myself happy here.

Zakaria Coulibaly

4A – Ivory Coast

My first advice for someone who is struggling with culture shock is to get out to see how people behave in the new country. Don't stay home like my friend who spent almost one week watching movies and listening to music in his native language; that made him miserable. Second, try to eat the food, even if it is different from the food in your home country. When you first try something, it may taste strange, but eventually it will taste good. For instance, when I came in United States, the first time I had pizza, I didn't like it, but two weeks later, it had become my favorite food. Finally, try to relax and have fun. For entertainment and relaxation, go to the gym, the zoo, or the theater.

Rejection Phase

Khuyen Pham Thanh Vu

4B – Vietnam

Before I came to Houston, I had to make up my mind for a new life. However, just like everyone else who is influenced by the rejection phases, I felt bored every day because I didn't have a car to explore Houston. I had never loved my motorbike like this before I came here. Everything about Vietnam appeared in my mind, such as family, friends, food, fruit, and so on. I missed them all. So, how can you get over that? I have many foreign friends who I can share the same feelings with when we are here.

You should hang out or talk with your friends about what you are feeling and listen to their feelings as well. You can explore some places in Houston with your friends. It not only helps you improve your English but also makes a stronger connection between you and your friends.

Phuong Nguyen

4A – Vietnam

When you are in the dark stages of culture shock, remember that nothing in this world is perfect. You have to think positive, and try not to be too judgmental. Try to walk in the other person's shoes to understand how they might feel. If you can make it through this difficult phase, you can later enjoy the positive stages of culture shock.

Nuray Aydin

4A – Turkey

People who go to another country often experience culture shock like I did. Fortunately, I have passed through the difficult phases. My advice is to think about your new country's advantages. Remember that many other people have been through the same experience as you, and they have adapted. Also, try to find friends who are from this country because they can help you practice your English and answer questions about the culture.

Advice to People in the Rejection Phase of the Culture Adjustment Cycle

Valeria Gonzalez

4B – Venezuela

I have some advice for people in the Rejection Phase. First of all, take time to relax in a quiet place if you feel overwhelmed. Then, think about how many positive things you have done during all this time in the country, and how wonderful it is that you can appreciate little moments far from your hometown. That will cheer you up because you have the power to change your mind to create magnificent moments. Finally, try to have fun with your friends who are from different countries, and prove your capacity to lighten up your thoughts. Remember: never give up while the storm is over you because you can persist in the hardest times.



Houston

So... Why are we here?

Hortensia Barrios

5E – Venezuela

Why did you choose Houston? Did you have the opportunity to pick between Houston and another city in the States? Was it your choice or someone else's? For my husband and I, Houston is just part of a journey that destiny had already set for us. We came to the United States escaping from a reality that hurt, from a life we no longer wanted or could stand. After being surprised by losing our greatest love, we found ourselves trying to put together a broken life that could not be fixed. We realized that if we wanted to learn to live and be happy again, we were going to have to "hit the road" and be willing to find ourselves because we were lost. That's how our journey began, and here we are, two renegades making their way through life, learning from scratch how to live and be happy again.

Probably, you are envisioning us traveling across the country on a Harley Davidson motorcycle, but it is not like that at all. Instead, you have to think of us as those that in the hardest times are courageous, fearless and determined enough to keep going and to commit to the hard tasks of "finding themselves" and "being happy." That is what makes us renegades. For us, Houston is just the beginning of a journey that might be forever. We don't know where it will end, but we do know it comes with the responsibility of not missing the opportunities given to us and with the duty of making the most of them.

As for you, why are you here? Think about your reasons for coming or living in this city and whether or not you are getting the most from the opportunities life is giving you in this moment. More importantly, ask yourself if you are a renegade or not and whether it is time for you to hit the road to find yourself and that place where you'll feel happy. Remember to think of life as an instant which might end in any second, and be ready to face life with bravery and determination.

This Wonderful State: Texas!

Emmanuela Niamkey

6B – Ivory Coast

Vive le Texas! (French for "Long Live Texas!")

Before coming here, I had some assumptions and even if I may have been a little bit off, what I have discovered about Texas and Texans is that they are great. I love their customs, this traditional thing that all real Texans have. I have been at the rodeo and I was very impressed by what I saw. Texans were dressed very traditionally with the hats and the boots (exactly like we can see Texans in movies). I really loved it.

I also love the food; it is not very different from other American states but I find it special because of the way they share it. The barbecue is a kind of symbol of Texans. I love the barbecue; first because of the taste (of course) but also because it gathers people. Furthermore, Houston's weather permits us to really enjoy the city.

We can take advantage of the swimming pool or just go out and have fun with friends and families.

Another particular thing I love about Texans is their pride. They know what they have and they do not underestimate themselves. It is very important. My teacher in level 5 talked to us about a song called "Deep in the Heart of Texas." I really loved this song because the lyrics are a small summary of all the good things we have here.

There are a lot of things that I love about this place, but what I love the most are the customs, food, weather and pride. Oh - and its wonderful citizens!





The Most Incredible Place in Houston

Soro Coulibaly

6B – Ivory Coast

If somebody asks me what could be the best place to enjoy in Houston during the summer, I will definitely say The Water Wall Park located near the Galleria. When my cousin kindly proposed to give me a ride to the Galleria, I found myself there on a beautiful hot afternoon. I was constantly complaining about the weather, even though I come from a tropical country. Houston's heat is harsh to stand. After finishing my errands, with no explanation my cousin covered my face with a scarf and told me he had a surprise for me. A couple of minutes passed and then he stopped his car, opened the door, took my hand and guided me to a place that I had no idea where I was. Afterwards, he removed the scarf.... surprise! The vision of this place was so wonderful, so amazingly surprising that I didn't even realize that my mouth was still open. I was at the Water Wall Park made by Gerald D. Hines. In my whole life I have never seen a wall with huge lines of water falling incessantly. I noticed that there were many people who were also as amazed as I was. I kept feeling internal peace and freshness on my body. I vividly recommend that place for its beauty and freshness.

What a Wonderful Experience

Ana Maria Galimah

6A – Equatorial Guinea

Like every other academic environment, the University of Houston is characterized by a large and well laid out landscape. On my orientation day, my little son was concerned about the possibility of me losing my way to my classroom because the campus is so big. It's bigger than his school - and already he is looking forward to being admitted as a student in the future. On my first day in class, I parked my car at the Welcome Center garage, walked around for thirty minutes before I could locate my classroom, and my new classmates (Bassam and Braulio) were very helpful. I don't know if I would ever have found my class without them! I am having a lot of fun with my wonderful teachers who have been very supportive, learning new academic writing skills which will help me achieve my set goals.

Houston in My Eyes

Loan Pham

6A – Vietnam

My name is Loan Pham, and I'm from Vietnam. As I am writing this essay, it is approximately half a year that I have been in the U.S. There are many things that have happened to me during that time. The first surprising thing I saw is that there are many Vietnamese here, and many of them are very nice; they always help me when I have a need. Another thing is the bus system is not as good as I imagined. I have to wait for a long time, and there are two different routes for one bus. Instead of checking Google Maps before riding the bus, I got lost three times, and yesterday was the fourth one. However, studying here brings me many benefits, especially a chance that I can practice English with my foreigner friends. Moreover, living here teaches me some good habits, like saying thanks when receiving some help from others. Last but not least, the U.S., Houston especially, is a worthwhile place to live because they have the best medical system in the world, which has a good cancer treatment method. From the bottom of my heart, I think I am falling in love with my nice Houston.

Houston is Not Only a Business City

Jesus Barrios

6A – Venezuela

I could never imagine how big Houston was until I arrived here. Houston really impressed me. When I was deciding what city I should emigrate to, I considered Houston as my first option because of the job opportunities that exist here. But now after living here six months, I can say that I made a good choice. Houston is not only a business city, it is beautiful and has so much to offer. Houston is a mix between tradition, green and beauty, and business. Downtown you can see the fast life, the business people walking really fast at noon to have lunch because they only have half an hour to eat. But if you go only a few miles out of downtown, you will find beautiful big parks like Hermann Park, where you can walk and have a nice time. Also on weekends you can go and enjoy a nice concert and have a picnic in the middle of the park. The months I have lived here convince me that this is the right city for me. Houston is the third biggest city in the U.S.A., with a multicultural society that is increasing every day. This particular aspect for me makes the city even more interesting. Houston is growing really fast; it has potential to be one of the most important cities in the world. It has the good resources, as everybody knows, including oil. This resource makes Houston have a really strong economy. A strong economy will only bring good things to this city. I really think that the best part is yet to come. Only a few more years and this city will be a whole different - better city, and of course I want to be here to live this new phase.

Houston *(continued)*

Ways to Find Happiness in Houston

Julio Cesar Ramirez

3E – Venezuela

Can you find happiness in Houston? The answer is yes! And I will give you some ways to find it. Houston is a big city and it has many things to do. One way to find happiness here is that you need to find a place to live with beautiful green areas, places to exercise and where you can socialize with your neighborhoods. For example, near the Medical Center is a good place to live because it is a beautiful area. In addition, if you came to Houston to work, you must find a place where you feel comfortable, but if you came here to study English like me, I can recommend that you study in LCC at the University of Houston. I guarantee that you will have a wonderful experience because the LCC program has many excellent teachers and many things to do. For example, you can be part of the singing club or conversation club. If you like to play sports and do exercises you can go to the huge gym. Houston has many places to visit where you can socialize a lot with American people or people from different countries. You can visit the museums or parks like Hermann Park. If you want to go shopping, you must go to the Galleria Mall, Houston Premium Outlet or to Memorial City Mall. Houston is a great city, so it's easy to find happiness. You need to follow the ways that I gave you, and you will be happy.

Ways to Find Happiness in Houston

Dieu Nguyen

3F – Vietnam

I have been living in Houston for two months because I came here to study English at the LCC. I learned that there are many ways to find happiness, and I think studying and socializing are two good ways to be happy in this beautiful modern city. First, I always focus on the lesson from my teacher and try to speak English with my foreign friends in class anytime I can. In addition, I try to read English news and listen to English music every day to improve my listening skill. I realize that my English is getting better, so now I can talk in English with American people easily. As soon as I speak and understand English well, I will understand American culture and customs, and that will help me adapt to my new life in Houston more quickly. Another way for me to find happiness in Houston is with social activities. I often join in social activities at my school and places close to my home. There are many events in my school such as conversation club, singing club, movies and gym. When I joined in these activities, I met many foreign people from many different countries. I made friends and talked with them. This way, I can explore many cultures and learn from others. Although there are many difficulties in beginning to live in a new city and country, I think if I can speak English well and join in social activities, I can find happiness easily.

What I Love About Houston

Jaqueline Sardi

6B – Venezuela

I think everyone can relate with the satisfaction of achieving a goal. Whether it is big or small, once you have reached it, you feel motivated and encouraged to continue the path you have dreamt. Houston brought this to me, this feeling that the sky is the limit. Since I began as an LCC student at the University of Houston, I was determined to pursue my Master on this campus. Furthermore, I set up my mind towards getting a job on campus and experiencing what it was like to be in a land of opportunities. Within a month, I got my childhood dream job and I can now say I am proud to be a part of the M.D. Anderson Library at the University of Houston. My second medium term goal was getting admitted to a Master's program. It required lots of studying and time, and after long months of preparation, I took the test that led to a successful acceptance. I am grateful to God for this experience, I am thankful for this amazing country and this amazing city, for the people I have met, for the people I am going to meet and for the opportunities that will be there for me.

A Great Experience

Bamadou Ouattara

6B – Ivory Coast

Carine Vi

6B – Ivory Coast

When we first came to the United States, we were very surprised because peoples' assumptions about this country are different from reality. Indeed, in contrast to what people claim about the fact that people in the U.S. are only concerned about their jobs and money, we noticed that they can provide people much more than that. In fact, the U.S., especially Houston, hosts people from all over the world. This diversity in cultural values has helped us learn about new cultures. For instance, two weeks ago, two Saudis that we had never met before invited us to have dinner at their place. We were very surprised but at the same time happy because people from our country, the Ivory Coast, are used to acting the same way. Also, we took part in the most interesting party ever, called the Cultural Festival at the Language and Culture Center. At this festival, students from all over the world, mostly from Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, China and the Ivory Coast, came together and had fun. We shared food, drink and learned to dance different dances from different cultures. We will never forget those moments spent with these people from different cultures. It was a great human experience because in spite of our differences we were able to get along and have fun.



What to Do on a Weekend Without Homework?

Mariana Hernaiz Jimenez

5F – Venezuela

If you're studying in the LCC English Program at the University of Houston and are lucky enough to have a weekend without homework, do not stay at home.

Only 3 hours away from Houston, near the beautiful city of San Antonio, you can enjoy nature by tubing on the Guadalupe River. It's both a relaxing and exciting trip. You can enjoy it alone, with friends, or with your family just floating on your tube and letting yourself go with the flow.

The water is clear and has an ideal temperature. The views are amazing and the rapids are not dangerous. They will bring extra excitement to the trip. You can even rent an extra tube, attach it to your tube, and bring your own food and drinks on it.

You can also camp at The Guadalupe River State Park. You just need your sunscreen and be eager for fun. So, go and enjoy the beautiful scenery offered by the State of Texas.

Restaurant Reviews

My Favorite Restaurant

Taghreed Abdulmahsan I. Alrshoadi

4F – Saudi Arabia

I like to eat at Mazaj restaurant. It's located on Richmond Street. It's an Arabic restaurant, which is my favorite food. The restaurant is delightful and the decoration has an Arabic style. I like to eat there, and I enjoy myself when I am there. My favorite part of the restaurant, besides the food, is the decoration; it's very fancy, and of course, I like their electronic menus. However, they're kind of hard to use sometimes. The waiters are very nice and friendly. My friends and I usually go there on the weekends. Overall the restaurant has an excellent service and I highly recommend it.

The House of Mandi

Shuai Shao

4E – China

Today I will introduce you to a restaurant where I ate several days ago with my friends. The restaurant's name is "The House of Mandi." When I entered the restaurant, I felt good, although the decoration is not luxurious, I felt very comfortable to eat there. The tables and floor are very clean, and few people were eating there. I felt relaxed. We watched TV while waiting for the meal. The waiters are very friendly and enthusiastic. They also asked where we came from, and if we liked the food there. It was a very nice place.

Chili's

Waleed Alrumayh

4F – Saudi Arabia

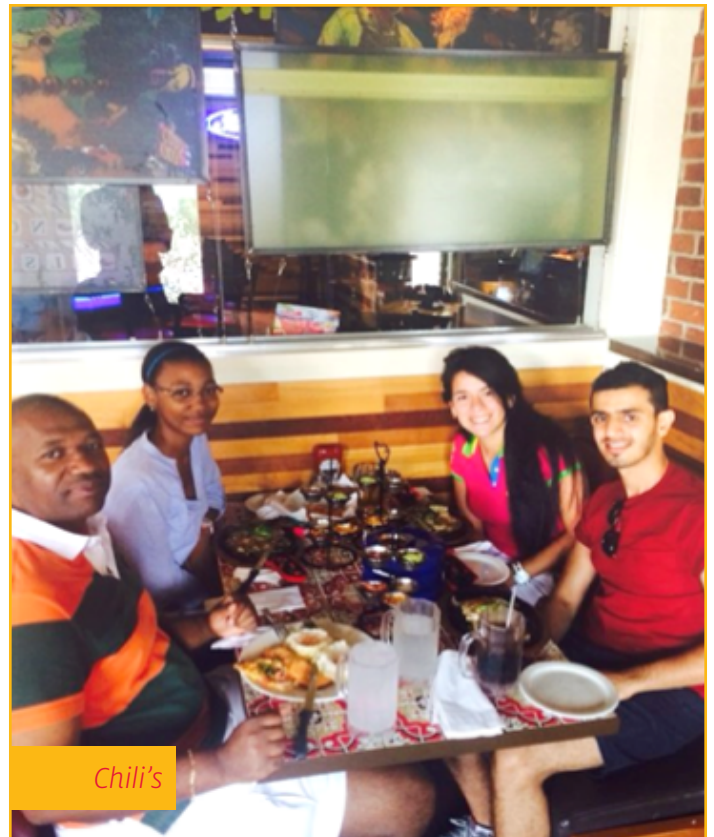
I went to one of the most popular restaurants which is Chili's and I like its food. The atmosphere, cleanness and price are decent. The atmosphere is incredible. Even though it's crowded, it's pleasant. Another reason to make me like this restaurant is the cleanness of the tables and the restrooms. Moreover, the price is affordable comparing the value of the meals. I recommend Chili's restaurant to anyone who wants to have a great time, and especially for families who have kids because they have baby chairs.

Cheesecake Factory

Yessica Gamez

4F – Venezuela

Do you want to have a great time and eat delicious and cheap food? Well I recommend the Cheesecake Factory. First of all, the food tastes delicious. It will delight your palate, and you will notice the fresh ingredients and the high level of cuisine. Moreover, the installation and great service will make you feel comfortable. The installations of this restaurant are good for any type of festivity, such as a romantic dinner, a business lunch, hanging out with your friend, and also to celebrate birthdays because it specializes and is famous for their delightful cheesecake. In addition to these magnificent characteristics, the prices are low, so I hope you will try it and enjoy.





Eric's Restaurant

Sang A. Choi

4F – Korea

I went to Eric's restaurant with my classmates Aria, Taghreed and Fatimah. There, we ordered three dishes: one salad, two cream pastas and some sodas. The salad is called Caesar Salad with grilled chicken. You can change chicken for shrimp if you want. The salad included romaine lettuce, garlic bread with housemade dressing. It was white and tasted like cheese. The lettuce was fresh and tasted good. In addition, we ordered two cream pastas which were pesto cream pasta. One had chicken and the other had shrimp. These were long and flat noodles and had some tomatoes, mushrooms and broccoli. The amount seemed about right because even though we were four people, three dishes were enough. However, the taste was not special compared to other restaurants. Especially the raspberry juice was very sour, so I don't recommend that juice. All in all, we had a nice time.

My Fabulous Experience at Eric's Restaurant

Charlotte Lewhe

4E – Ivory Coast

Initially, for the midterm speaking exam, this adventure became an incredible experience for Manal and me. Together, we selected the Hilton Restaurant because it is located on our university, so we didn't need to pay for transportation. Therefore, we went to the Hilton's restaurant named Eric's. We thought we couldn't afford it, but when they presented the menu, we smiled, analyzed what we wanted, and ordered quickly. My order was called Capeli d'Angello. This food was delicious, stunningly gorgeous and steamy. The servers were polite and wanted to satisfy us, so I was fulfilled. In addition, the prices were between \$5 and \$30 dollars. My dish cost \$9. For this reason, students, teachers, visitors and newcomers in Houston can eat at Eric's restaurant. I recommend you to try this amazing restaurant for its wide variety of food.

Eric's Restaurant

Rong Zhao

4F – China

We went to a restaurant called "Eric's." This restaurant has a nice decoration. It has a classical and graceful interior, new and simple exterior, and soft lighting that makes the restaurant cozier. The restaurant is very quiet, but we think that if there were some music, it would make guests feel better. It is also the place where Hilton College at UH trains students. It offers a great environment for education. However, we think that the space of the restaurant is small, and people always feel a little crowded, especially at lunchtime. We ordered 3 dishes, and spent about \$48 total. It is about \$12 per person. We think that the price of this restaurant is reasonable.

Eric's at the Hilton

Manal Alshaya

4E – Saudi Arabia

The restaurant that I visited was attractive and impressive. We had excellent food there. The food was stunning and gorgeous. They have a varied menu to satisfy all tastes. Even vegetarian people will find many options for them. I tried the salmon at Eric's restaurant. It was really amazing. I enjoyed every bite of it. In addition, the freshness in Eric's restaurant was luscious and there was nothing frozen, everything was fresh. The service there was friendly and they seemed pleased to see us at their restaurant. Our order took no longer than 30 minutes. The servers there are devoted to their customers and they served the order immediately when it was ready. The location is on campus, five minutes from our class. The restaurant's decoration is very elegant. The lighting there is very simple because they use natural light and many bulbs. If you consider all these qualities, certainly you will expect a high price, but it is very reasonable and affordable for students. I was happy with what I paid. I recommend this restaurant because it fits clients' needs.

Restaurant Reviews *(continued)*

Sayad Mediterranean Grill

Mustafa Cilkiz

4F – Turkey

How should we evaluate such a nice restaurant? Before I decide to go to any restaurant, I continuously prefer to read certain reviews where professional tasters comment about the restaurant. Therefore, when I went there, I tried to read at least two comments. Moreover, my friend who is from Saudi Arabia recommended this restaurant which is called Al- Sayad. I am going to talk about some of this restaurant's features, such as: the food, the hygiene, and staff's attention. First, Sayad Mediterranean Grill has a great variety of meat, salads, beverage, and cold appetizers. I truly liked all the food that I ate. Furthermore, it is an extremely clean restaurant, and the waiters are interested and gracious. If you have not gone there, I strongly recommended that you taste their incomparable food, drink its unique refreshments, and spend an enjoyable time while you eat your dinner or lunch because it is one of the best places I have visited here in Houston.

Sayad Mediterranean Grill

Huy Quang Tran

4F – Vietnam

Two weeks ago, while preparing for the speaking midterm test, I went to an Arabic restaurant called Sayad – Mediterranean Grill with my friends Mustafa and Mojtaba. This restaurant is located at 12225 Westheimer Road, Houston. The restaurant has a convenient location with a large parking lot. Inside the restaurant, the atmosphere and the ambiance are wonderful. The restaurant, which is decorated with a lot of lights, pictures of Saudi Arabia, and also many tables, is very cultural. We also had a delicious meal. My friends and I chose "Mix Grill," which is a very large tasty meal. We were served very well by a nice Arabic man. He was a very interesting and friendly guy. Although we had a wonderful dinner, the meal was not expensive. In my opinion, this restaurant is an excellent place. I recommend that you should go to this restaurant with your friends and have a great time.



Sayad Mediterranean Grill



Hibachi Grill and Buffet

Bo Wang

4F - China

Hibachi Grill and Buffet is a great restaurant that I want to introduce to you. First of all, the food in this restaurant will give you a fresh and new feeling. This restaurant is kind of an Asian Seafood restaurant, and their food is really great. It has more than 60 kinds of meals you can choose from and enjoy. By the way, the chocolate ice cream of this restaurant is so wonderful. In addition, its location is very convenient. The location is at 12183 Katy FWY, just beside the Katy Freeway. After an only 20 minute drive, you can arrive there if you set out from UH. The last thing I'd like to tell you about is the price. Including taxes and tip, I paid \$75 for 5 people's dinner on a Saturday night. It's very cheap as a buffet, and there are so many delicious food you can try and enjoy. I trust that good things need to be shared, so I recommend you to try it.



Recipes from Around the World

How to Make Kim-Bob (Korean traditional roll) Eutteum Lee

5A – Korea



Have you ever eaten Korean food? Kim-Bob is my favorite Korean food. Even though it looks like a sushi roll, it's not a sushi roll. Additionally, it's one of the most famous Korean foods. There are three steps to make Kim-Bob.

First of all, get ready to make Kim-Bob. We need some essential ingredients, including six by six inch seaweed, and boiled rice. Moreover, we need four or five more ingredients. I usually put a thick fried egg, pickled radish, fried carrot, sesame leaf, mayo, and a 210 g can of tuna. Likewise, you should have a Kim-Bob roller. If you are ready to make it, put the rice in the rice cooker.

Meanwhile, you can prepare the other ingredients. To make a thick fried egg, scramble six or seven eggs then fry them on low heat. After that, you can cut the thick fried egg into one by ten inch strips. To make fried carrots, cut the carrots into one by ten inch pieces, and then fry them in oil. Next, you should drain the oil from the can of tuna and then mix it with mayo. You can mix one can of tuna with three spoons of mayo. In addition, you can buy pickled radish for Kim-Bob, a Kim-Bob roller, and sesame leaves at the Korean mart. The last step is rolling the Kim-Bob. You should put one layer of seaweed on the roller. Then, you have to spread boiled rice on two-thirds of the seaweed. After that, you can put your other ingredients in a line on the middle of the rice. At this point, the most important thing is you should put sesame leaf and mixed mayo and tuna last. Then, you can lift the end of the seaweed gently and roll it smoothly. Repeat the above steps until you use all of your ingredients. In brief, you have learned how to make Kim-Bob. If you follow these steps, you will be a professional Kim-Bob maker. Furthermore, I swear every person who tries your Kim-Bob is probably going to love it.

How to Make a Delicious Pizza Svetlana Solopova

2A – Russia

Making a delicious pizza is easy if you follow these simple steps. First of all, you have to make some dough. If you make good dough, you have 50% of what is needed for success. So, to make dough, you need to combine several ingredients, such as: water, salt, two tablespoons of olive oil, sugar, yeast, and flour. Mix together with a wooden spoon until you have a soft, fairly wet ball of dough. Cover with a tea towel and set aside. After the dough rises, roll out the dough on a flat surface into a large circle about 25 centimeters across, using a rolling pin. The dough needs to be very thin. Then you need to put the dough on a large baking sheet. Next, cut up some pieces of tomato, chopped onion, olives, and mushrooms. After that, you need to cut up some pieces of sausage or ham. Next, make the sauce. Mix tomato paste, basil, and crushed garlic together. Smooth the sauce over the dough with the back of a spoon. Then scatter the cut-up vegetables and meat, and cover with a handful of grated or shaved Parmesan cheese. Drizzle with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. Finally, put the baking sheet with the pizza in the oven, and bake it at medium temperature for 15-20 minutes until crisp. Even a novice cook can master the art of pizza-making with my simple step-by-step guide. Bellissimo! Bon appetit!



Field Trips



My Memories from LCC

What I'll Tell My Children

Khuyen Pham Thanh Vu

4B – Vietnam

One day, maybe I will tell my child about the time when I lived here in Houston. I will tell them about my feelings the first time I walked into the huge university that I had never seen. They should know about the happy moments when all the members of my class, who had made a long journey to come to the U.S., made friends and shared their culture with each other. Furthermore, the most crucial things are the pros and cons of my new life which gave me a lot of lessons and experiences to grow up.

Sophie Nieves

4A – Venezuela

After the years have passed and I'm older and wiser, I'll tell my children about my experience in the United States. I'll tell them how people of different races, cultures, and countries worked together, followed the rules, and tried to do their best. During my stay here, I have learned that people can be friends, regardless of their race or religion. The people here are kind and interested in newcomers. The United States is definitely a wonderful place to dream and learn from other cultures.

El Hadj Fofana

4B – Ivory Coast

Like my father and grandfather who encouraged me to pursue life in different locations, I will tell my children and grandchildren about my experience in the United States. First, I will tell them about the American lifestyle. People are independent and can do whatever they want, as long as it is not against the law. Moreover, Americans are direct when they speak or want to ask a question. I will also talk to my grandchildren about how I had to adjust to the weather which is unpredictable and has made me sick. I'll tell them how different the ingredients and the taste of food were, and how much I missed the cooking from the Ivory Coast. Last, I'll tell them how it was difficult to find taxis and buses in Houston. Despite all these differences, I became accustomed to life in America. Now I like to eat American food, and the weather does not bother me anymore. The United States is a magnificent country.



Phuong Nguyen

4A – Vietnam

I'll tell my children and grandchildren that living in the United States wasn't relaxing like a camping trip or a vacation. Instead, I had to work hard, be independent, and be responsible. I'll advise them to be self-reliant and manage their time well, so they are not a burden on anyone. They should plan ahead so they can avoid running late and creating disorder at work and in their life. I'll recommend that they work hard and start saving money for the future.

Chengcheng Long

4A – China

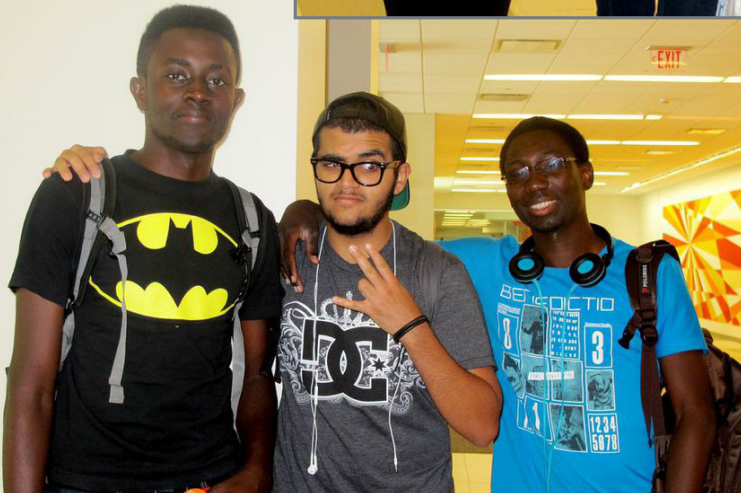
I'll tell my children that I lived in the United States for a short time when I was young. It was a wonderful experience because I made many friends from all over the world. We talked to each other in English, and they were always friendly and smiled at me. While I didn't like the food, I really enjoyed the scenery on campus, where it was pleasant to study. I hope that one day my children and grandchildren will also visit the United States and enjoy the American life.

Mathieu Baptiste

4A – Haiti

I'm going to tell my children how I felt when I first got to the school in the United States, how my class had fun every day, and how I occasionally had some challenges. I will tell them how exciting it was to be with other students from all over the world.

Movie Day



Someone I Admire

A Major Event in My Country

Bach Dao

3F – Vietnam

In East Asia, many countries use the Lunar as the important calendar for people's life. Usually, the day that begins the year is not the same as the day in the modern calendar. In Vietnam, the Lunar New Year is the biggest holiday of the year. It's called Tết. The celebration lasts about four days, and that is the time when everyone in the family can meet and celebrate together. Before the Tết, everyone in my family cleans the house and buys a lot of food because the markets will not be open after the holiday begins. Some people in my family make the traditional bean cake. One thing you cannot miss in the Tết is watermelon, because it is red inside, which is the color of good luck. At the moment when the old year passes, some places in Vietnam organize fireworks. After that, everyone goes to the temple to pray. According to our religion, praying when the year begins gives us much luck. Now I'm living in the U.S., but maybe in one or two years, I will go back to Vietnam, so I will miss Tết very much. But time will pass and I will have a lot of Têts waiting for me!

The Number One in My Life

Koumba Diarrassouba

5E – Ivory Coast



My mother is the most important person in my life. She is the one who has always been with me in times of darkness and happiness. She is the one who knows what to say to me, when and how. She is the one who gave me life and the one who covered me with love. She is the one who has been taking care of me since I was a child, supporting all my endeavors. She is the one who makes me smile all the time. I have been in the United States

for seven months and I really miss her! I have a sense of nostalgia for all the moments we were laughing or playing together. Never forget to tell your mother how huge your love is for her because she is the one who will never abandon you, whatever the situation. We cannot really express the value of a mother. She is worth more than a ruby, more than a diamond, more than all the precious pearls in the world. Best regards to all the mothers around the world. Mother, you are number one for me. I love you!

A Person I Don't Want to Lose

Luimbi Pereira

5D – Angola

I am afraid of losing my mother, the best woman in my life. I cannot think of the possibility of losing her because of the influence she has had on my life since I was a little boy. My mother has always been standing by me since I was a child. She used to take me to school when I was in primary school, even though she had to go to work after she left me. It took her thirty minutes to commute from my school to the place where she worked. When I walked with her, I felt secure because I knew she would protect me from anything bad that might happen to me. I remember one day my mother failed to pick me up from school at the scheduled time and I cried a lot. Suddenly, a man came right to me and offered me a piece of candy. After that he said that he wanted to take me with him. Not wanting to stay at the school when all other students had left, I decided to follow the man. Right at that moment, I heard a voice calling my name loudly. Looking back, I saw my mother. As she approached and held my hand, the man, who turned out to be a kidnapper, immediately ran away! The way my mother has always encouraged me to do what is right is another reason I don't want to lose her. Whenever I didn't want to do something important for my future, my mother always told me that without effort, there could never be any gain. Also, when I was at middle school, sometimes I thought about cutting classes, the reason being that the school was too far from home, and I felt tired of walking. When that kind of laziness got the upper hand of me, my mother always encouraged me by saying sentimental words, and if I didn't listen to her, she would talk to me until I decided to go. Nowadays, whenever I am about to make an important decision, I always remember what she taught me. My mother's cooking is another reason I never want to lose her. The meals she cooked were always delicious. I could describe the flavor, the smell, and the appearance of the foods that she used to cook. As always, my favorite food is Kalulu, which is a traditional food in my hometown. It is made of cornmeal, fish, and some special leaves that make it look yellow, green, and orange. When I ate it, I felt different kinds of flavors because of the mixture of cornmeal, fish, and the leaves. Now that I am in the U.S., she cannot cook for me anymore and I have only my memories to satisfy my taste buds.

Living is losing, and losing a person you love can be really difficult. I am afraid of losing my mother, but if it happens, my memories will always resurrect her.

My Gratitude to My Parents

Randy Nip Xie

5D – Venezuela



I am immensely grateful to my parents because they have done all they could in order to give me a wonderful and pleasant life. I still remember those days walking to kindergarten holding my mom's hand. Everyday, my mother would wake me up and prepare my breakfast. Then, she would take me to school. She had a job, but she always stayed to watch me disappear behind the school gate before hurrying to work. My father owned a little restaurant and he was very busy working from 6 am until 6 pm. So, my mother had to take a break from her work to come

pick me up from school. After seeing that I was safe at home, she would hurry back to work. In the evening, when they came home after a long day of work, they all looked tired. They worked so much just because of me.

When I grew up, I started to help my parents in the family's business. I was a teenager when my father sold the old restaurant and bought a new bigger one. Now, my father had to work harder - about 12 hours a day - because he wanted to succeed in his new business. As I was old enough to help, everyday after school, I walked under the afternoon sun to my father's restaurant to see if I could help with something. Only when I started to help my father in the restaurant did I realize the huge effort my parents were making in order to pay for an excellent education for me and my siblings. After graduating from high school, I chose a private university for my electrical engineering major. In 2008, my mother started her own business which was a mid-size supermarket. Now both my mother and my father were working harder than ever in order to afford my university education. In my third year at the university, I suddenly realized that my parents were getting old and did not have as much energy to work as before. In order to lessen the financial burden on my parents, I planned to quit my studies so that I could have time to run the businesses myself. But my parents, whose desire was to see me graduating from the university, immediately rejected my plan.

Nowadays, my parents are still working hard to afford my English classes and a Master's degree in the U.S. All their life, my parents have been working hard for me and my siblings. My parents are the people I don't want to lose in my life. I wish that they could always live forever with us.

My Family

El Hadj Fofana

4B – Ivory Coast

The most beautiful gift a person can receive from God is to have a family where everything runs perfectly and siblings love each other. I have two younger sisters and one older brother. We all grew up in the same place with our parents. All of us have received a very good education from our parents and we care about each other. My older brother is studying history in a university in Ivory Coast. He is a kind person who always worries about the future of his siblings. Every weekend he calls me, as well as my sisters, to check if we are doing well in class and if we are healthy. My sisters also love me and my brother a lot. When I was coming to the U.S.A., my sisters were crying because they did not want me to be far from them. I should admit that I love my parents as well. I am ready to do everything to keep my family united forever.

The Love of My Life

Irismar Rivas

5C – Venezuela

When you really love someone, you do not want to lose him or her. In my case, the person I love most is Alejandro Guzman, my fiancé and my very first love. Alejandro is the love of my life because he makes me smile. He always knows how to make me happy. Even when I am sad, angry or disappointed, he always manages to find some way to cheer me up. For example, last week when he knew I was very angry, he immediately told me a joke he knew I would love. Then, when we arrived home, he cooked for me my favorite dinner, which included pancakes and white cheese.

Another reason that makes me not want to lose Alejandro is his optimism and his passion for working hard. He is a person who never gives up, regardless of how difficult the problem is. He maintains his focus on his objectives until he achieves them. In fact, when we decided to come to the U.S., he worked extra hours and saved all the money he earned so that we would be able to pay for tuition and accommodations. What he did encouraged me to stay firm in my goals and keep going forward.

Finally, I never want to lose Alejandro because he is the one who always takes care of me. He makes me feel safe, protected and loved. The world could be falling apart, but if we are together, I know that nothing bad is going to happen to us. Once we had to live far from each other for a year and a half. Despite the distance, Alejandro never stopped sending me voice notes and messages of "good morning, I love you" and "take care or good night." Those little details made our relationship strong and made me love him so much. All in all, Alejandro's personality and his way of loving me urge me to love him more every day.

Conversation Club



Ask a Grad



Counseling and Student Services



The LCC went to Houston City Hall and explored the downtown tunnels during Check-In Week to allow new and continuing students to meet and mingle with teachers while touring one of the major business districts in the Houston area. Many students took the opportunity to go to the observation floor of Chase Tower, which provides a scenic view of downtown Houston.

The LCC also used the University of Houston's movie theater to have two screenings of Frozen. We hope you enjoyed it. At the time of this writing, we are preparing for the final field trip of the term to Six Flags Fiesta Texas in San Antonio, where we will watch interesting shows, play games, and ride roller coasters. I believe this will be the most fun activity of the term, and I hope that everyone enjoys it. After the field trip, we will have our graduation ceremony and reception.

LCC Singers

I would also like to recognize the LCC Singers. They have worked very hard this term to learn many different songs. The student and teacher members of the LCC Singers should be proud of their accomplishments.

Students in F-1 status need to make sure they maintain their student status. If you are planning to travel during the break, please see a student counselor so we can update your travel plans in our system. If you are traveling outside the U.S., you must bring your I-20 to a student counselor for travel authorization and permission to return to the U.S.

If you plan to study in the LCC for the fall term (September – December), you must register online. If you do not register on time, you cannot attend class! Go to the LCC website for more information.

The LCC has three terms throughout the year: spring, summer and fall. As an F-1 student, you are required to study in every term unless you are given permission to take a vacation term. If you want to take a vacation in the fall, you must first ask for permission. You can ask for permission by going to the LCC website and logging into the LCC Student System. Click on the vacation button. One week after graduation, the LCC will verify your vacation eligibility and contact you by email.

If you plan to transfer to a new school please see a student counselor in room 118 or 120 for more information. You have 60 days from graduation to complete your transfer to a new school. If you have any doubts or questions, please see a LCC student counselor. It is very important that you maintain your student status. It is not easy to get your student status back if you lose it. Enjoy the break. We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

LCC Calendar

Intensive English Program Program Calendar

Fall Term 2014

September 2 to 9

Online Registration

Tuesday, September 9

Student Check-In

Wednesday, September 10

Testing

Thursday, September 11

Student Activity

Friday, September 12

First Assembly, Orientation

Monday, September 15

Classes Begin, Late Registration.

Saturday, October 25

Renaissance Festival

Friday, November 21

Culture Festival

Wednesday to Friday, November 26 to 28

Thanksgiving Break

Monday - Thursday, December 1 - 4

COMPASS and Finals

Monday, December 8

Testing

Wednesday, December 10

Final Student Activity – Moody Gardens

Thursday, December 11

Student-Teacher Conferences (morning)

Graduation Ceremony (afternoon)



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