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The University of Houston Language and Culture Center Spring 2010

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

BY JOY TESH

Happy Anniversary to the Language and Culture Center! Established in the summer of 1975, the LCC will celebrate thirty-five years of teaching English to international students this summer, the summer of 2010. Eighteen students, sponsored by the Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho (GMA) scholarship program of the government of Venezuela, made up the first student body. The Institute of International Education referred that first group of students to the University of Houston, and Dr. Joyce Valdes became the founder and first director of that small but promising Intensive English Program (IEP).

Since that memorable beginning, the LCC has had an interesting enrollment history. IEP enrollment is always affected by the global economy and by world events. Enrollment in IEPs across the United States became very low following the events of September 11, 2001. The LCC also experienced low enrollment during that time. Now, however, we are experiencing record-breaking application counts and healthy student registration every term. The program has averaged more than 300 hundred students per term during the past two years.

We have every reason to believe that 2010 will be a year of great celebration for the LCC, its students, and its teachers. During

2009, teachers and administrators in the LCC completed a self-study for the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) and sent it in to the CEA office in Alexandria, Virginia. In November of 2009, a CEA Review Team visited our program and observed classes; interviewed students, teachers, and administrators; and spent time verifying claims in our report and making recommendations concerning ten years of re-accreditation for the LCC. We hope to learn the decision of the commission before the summer term begins.

Another reason to celebrate in 2010 is that the Graduate and Professional Studies Committee of the University of Houston has granted approval for a TOEFL waiver for LCC students who successfully complete level six in the Intensive English Program. This new approval becomes effective in fall 2010, and is very important to students who are seeking graduate admission to the University of Houston. We have had this approval

for students seeking undergraduate admission since 1995, and we have been working hard to achieve the same opportunity for graduate students. This is another major milestone in the history of the LCC. We appreciate this vote of confidence from the university and this confirmation of the outstanding academic preparation provided to students in the LCC.

This spring, we have been delighted to have 351 students from 36 countries in our vibrant and growing program. We are working hard to make sure we give you the best program possible. The LCC teachers, counselors, administrators, and I hope you have had great experiences in our classes and on the University of Houston campus. I wish you the best as you complete the spring term of 2010, and I look forward to seeing many of you again as you return in May for the summer term of 2010 in the Language and Culture Center.



Thuy Thi Diem Vuong, Ricardo de Castro Garcia França, Guillermo José Coche, and Pedro Vicente Nastasi Receive LCC Scholarships

by Sandy Hartmann, Associate Director

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 Language and Culture Center. 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 fall graduation ceremony, on Thursday, December 9, 2009, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to **Thuy Thi Diem Vuong**, the Davidson scholarship to **Ricardo de Castro Garcia França**, and the two merit scholarships to **Guillermo José Coche**, and **Pedro Vicente Nastasi**.

Thuy Thi Diem Vuong

was awarded the Valdes scholarship. **Ms. Vuong**, who is from Vietnam, is currently studying in level six. This is her second term at the LCC. She began studying in level four and was able to skip a level through diligent work. After she completes her study of English, she plans to pursue a master's degree in business administration. **Ms. Vuong** said of receiving the scholarship, "It's a great honor, encouraging me to continue the



good work I did last semester in this semester. Leaving Vietnam to come to America to study placed me in a difficult match, in which I was expected to win. The LCC scholarship is considered my first real goal for the match of my life."

Ricardo de Castro Garcia França

was awarded the Davidson scholarship. **Mr. França** is from Brazil and speaks Portuguese. After beginning in level four, his academic achievement allowed him to skip to level six, where he is now studying. He plans to take one more semester of English at the college level, and after taking the TOEFL, he will return home. **Mr. França** remarked, "I think I just have to thank all the people who helped me to achieve this prize: my mother, my English teachers, and a couple of friends, who encouraged me to move forward when I was weak."



Guillermo José Coche

was a recipient of a merit scholarship. **Mr. Coche** is from Venezuela and speaks Spanish. He began in level five and is studying in level six this term. After he completes his study of English, he plans to pursue a master's degree at UH in mechanical engineering. Upon receiving the scholarship, **Mr. Coche** commented, "I was taken aback when I received the scholarship; it was wonderful. I am



improving my English very quickly and learning about new cultures. Thanks to the LCC and my teachers for giving me this opportunity to achieve my goals and dreams."

Pedro Vicente Nastasi

was also a recipient of a merit scholarship. **Mr. Nastasi**, who is also from Venezuela, has been at the LCC for two terms. He began studying in level two and by virtue of his diligence and hard work, skipped to level four where he is studying now. He would like to earn a degree in geological engineering in the future. Regarding the scholarship, **Mr. Nastasi** commented, "First, I'm very grateful to God because He allowed me to win this scholarship. Secondly, thanks to my parents and my brother, who trusted in me. Finally, thanks to the excellent teaching I received from my teachers. Because of this, I'm so grateful and happy."



We congratulate **Thuy Thi Diem Vuong, Ricardo de Castro Garcia França, Guillermo José Coche, and Pedro Vicente Nastasi** 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 spring graduation ceremony.

FROM HOME TO HOUSTON

My Last Day in My Country

Abdullah Al Hawkash, 2B

My last day in my country was September 14, 2009, during the month of Ramadan. My mother and my sisters were crying. I was really sad because it was the first time for me to travel alone without my family. My mother prepared three suitcases for travel. One of them was full of only kitchen things. My mother said, "You are a man and you should live your life." My father and my brother took me to the airport. I kissed my father's hand as I said goodbye. That day was difficult for me.

My Travel to the U.S.

Stephanie Diallo, 2F

I will never forget the first time I went to the U.S. The day before my travel, I organized a party to say goodbye to my friends. During the party, my mother was very quiet. She wasn't happy. That night I slept with my parents like a baby. The next morning, my mother packed my bags. At 9 p.m., I went to the airport with my best friend and my family. I sat with my mother, and she gave me advice. When the hostess said it was time to go, my mother began to cry. Me too. It was my first time to see my mother cry. I miss my mother now because she was like my friend, and I was always with her. Finally, I had a good trip, and I am happy to be here.

The Visa

Mahamane Coulibaly, 2B

The day I got my entry visa for the United States was September 30, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. It's not easy to obtain an entry visa to the United States; you need to go through several stages. I had an appointment with the U.S. Embassy in Mali for Tuesday, September 29, 2009, at 8:30 a.m. The night before, I was so frightened that I could not close my eyes during the night. Early the next morning, around 6:30 a.m., when I was about to leave the house, my mother came to me to give me her blessings. At the Embassy, I was the first person there. Many others came after me. We were told to form a line. Then we were called, one by one. Although I was the first person to arrive at the Embassy, I was the last person to be called by the consul. It was now about 12 p.m.

I was tired and scared, but I kept myself calm when I greeted the consul and answered his questions. He asked how I would finance my education, what school I would attend, if I knew someone in The States, and why I chose the United States. His questions took 30 minutes and then he asked me to return to the Embassy the next day at 4:00 p.m. The next day, it was a great moment in my life when I received my visa because I had acquired an opportunity that many do not have.

On the eve of my departure, I organized a big celebration for friends, relatives, and classmates. My flight was from Bamako to Morocco to New York and later to Houston. I spent two months in New York with relatives and then took another flight to Houston on December 16, 2009, my birthday. My brother welcomed me to Houston with a cake. I began my life in Houston.

My American Dream

Ismael Guindo, 2F

Since I was a small boy, my goal was to come to the U.S.A. to realize my dreams. I went to school to get my high school diploma. After that, I continued my study for two years, and I got my associate degree. Then I filed my application for my visa with the United States Embassy in Burkina Faso. There are several conditions if you want to get your visa in my country. In my case, I attached my high school diploma, my associate degree, my I-20, my letter of admission, and my statement of financial aid. In the end, I proved to the consul why I wanted to continue my study in the U.S.A. The consul asked me many questions about my age, my relationship with my parents, and also how long I wanted to stay in the U.S.A. It was a difficult experience for me, but it changed my life for the better.



My Last Day in My Country

Helder Gama, 2A

My last day in my country was very bad because I was leaving my friends and my family. My girlfriend and I cried together and talked about the future, but she understood my wish to go to school in the U.S.A. That night, I just stayed in my room and thought about my new life in another country. I left all my friends and family for my future chances. I try not to remember that day because I felt so bad. I try to forget my last day in my country.

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The First Time I Came to the U.S.

Badriah Al Shehri, 2F

I will never forget the first time I left my family to come to the United States. I spent the day before my flight with my parents at their house. That day, my parents gave me a goodbye party, and they invited all my friends and relatives. My mother made me a beautiful cake and wrote on it, "We will miss you, Badriah." In the evening, my sister and mother helped me pack my suitcases. My mother cried. She was afraid and worried about me. I said to her, "Don't worry, Mother. I will be OK." On the day of the flight, my parents and I woke up very early because my flight was at 8:00 a.m. We drove to my house to pick up my husband, and then we went to the airport. After that, my parents kissed my family and me, and they said goodbye. That is what happened the first time I left my parents. I miss them very much.



LIFE EXPERIENCES

The Worst Trip in My Life

Abdullah AlShaya, 4E

When you arrive in Cairo for your vacation and you suddenly discover that you have left your wallet at home, what should you do?

This was what happened to me last year on my vacation. In August 2009, Raed and I planned to visit Cairo for a couple of days. We went to a travel agent to book a round trip to Cairo. In fact, we found a special offer that matched our budget and we booked it immediately. The day before the trip, I went to bed too late and I got up late. My friend Raed knocked thousands of times on my door, but I didn't hear it. Finally, I woke up. The departure was only two hours away and I had just woken up!

I took a shower, which took me only four minutes and which was perhaps the fastest shower I had ever had in my whole life. Raed took our bags and put them in the car. I went out of the bathroom and hurriedly put on my clothes because we were late and didn't want to miss the flight. The car trip to Dammam airport took us only 40 minutes. Thank God! We still had time to eat before the departure time. After that, we got our boarding pass, finished the immigration routine, and went to Gate 9A. The plane took off and, as usual, Raed and I were talking to each other. As we were going to rent a car there, Raed asked me if I had brought with me my driver's license. I immediately looked for it, but I didn't find it. I must have left it at home in my hurry!

I'll never forget this bad trip in my whole life!

The Sailor

Yang Xia (Kevin), 2B

Two years ago, I was a sailor in the Chinese Navy. I was in the Chinese Navy for five years. I regret that I never saw the sea; all my work was on land. It was a precious experience for me. Every day, I did a great deal of exercise with other people. We ate and lived together. Sometimes I felt so hungry that I saved two eggs from breakfast to eat at midnight. I ate them then on my bed and no one knew about it. The rules didn't allow us to do this, but to me it was so funny. I have to admit that navy life was a rough life for me. However, I became a real man because of my navy life.

The Photographer

Nasser Alawami, 2A

Two years ago, I was working in Saudi Arabia for *SUN* magazine as a photographer for the magazine. I was only 18 and the youngest one there, but I have a talent with photography. Many people there were amazed by my skills at a young age. When I went on assignments with the reporters, they always encouraged me.

I saw many of the princes of my country and one crime scene. The crime scene made my mother worry about my work, but I had a lot of fun when I was photographing the princes or ceremonies. I saw King Abdullah Al Saud. He was very handsome and all Saudi people love him. I left this job when I came here to study English.

I Love My Elementary School

Muayd Almarshoud, 4E

I have been in five different schools in Saudi Arabia, but I am only

sentimentally attached to one of them, which is my elementary school. The first reason that made me attached to it is that it was my first school. There, I learned how to read and write for the first time. Also, I learned how to count numbers, add them, and subtract them. The second reason that made me attached to that school is that I had good friends there. Actually, in that school, I met my best friends in my life, Ali and Zaki. We met when we were in first grade, and we have been friends until now. Another reason that made me attached to my elementary school is that I had good teachers there. They were kind and tried to make sure that all the students understood the lessons. I remember most my math teacher, Ahmed, because he would give us difficult math problems and when seeing that we could not solve them, he would try his best to explain until everyone understood them.

A Bad Day

Cheick T. Dera, 2E

One day when I was a child, I had a bad experience with a crazy person. My friends and I were very active. We liked dangerous games. There was an uninhabited house near mine. It was our favorite place to play. This house was dangerous, but we loved it. One day, there was a crazy person in there, and he stopped us from playing. We got upset and decided to beat up the crazy person. He got angry and decided to beat us up, too. He followed us. Unfortunately, I was not fast, so he caught me and beat me with a bat. I was badly injured. This was so terrible for me that I never went to the uninhabited house again.

A Frightening Experience

Mohamadou Thera, 4A

I remember when I was a little boy, one event surprised me a lot, and I will never forget it. The event happened in my country on March 26, 1991, and it was a military coup. That day, earlier in the morning, all the streets of the capital, Bamako, were blocked by soldiers with guns, and they were shooting people who were marching against the dictatorship.

In the beginning, it was only students who were protesting against the bad conditions on campus. When they started marching, the government sent soldiers to break up the demonstration, but all of a sudden, the soldiers started shooting students, and then all the population went out to support the students.

Unfortunately, the soldiers continued shooting. There was blood and death in almost every area of the capital. I thought that I would die that day. All the members of my family went to hide in our house. I was under my bed, and my dad and mom were under the big table in our living room.

By the end of that day, around 5 p.m., the soldiers stopped shooting, and soon after, we heard that they had arrested the president and all the members of his government. At the announcement of this news, some people started crying out of happiness, and some were dancing in the street.

I will never forget this day because it was my first time to hear the sound of guns, and I hope to never see this kind of event the rest of my life.

Independence Day from Mother

Yu Jin Lim, 2E

When I was a little girl, I was a very curious child. I liked to go to the market near my house with my mother.

A lot of interesting things were there! One day I decided to go to the market alone. I didn't tell my parents. Although I was only six years old, I thought I was an adult. I went to the market on foot. I looked around the market. Time passed quickly. It got dark outside, so I hurried to go home. My mom looked like a lion. She was very angry, and she was crying. My mother scolded me. She had worried about me. I went to bed feeling proud of myself. I thought I would be able to go to the market alone, but I realized later that when I wanted to go anywhere, I had to discuss it with my parents first.

The First Day of School

Doussouba Camara, 2C

My first day of school was my first experience to be with many other children that I didn't know. I was six years old. Before the first day of school, my parents bought the three different uniforms for school. They were pink, green, and blue for girls. The first day of school was on Monday. First, my mother woke me up early and gave me a shower. Next, I put on my green dress and ate breakfast. After that, my father took my mother and me to school. My mother taught there. The class time was from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We arrived at 7:40 a.m. The school building was painted yellow; there were lots of flowers outside. My mother left me in my classroom. I finished class at 12 p.m. In the afternoon, I had no class. My first day of school is one of my greatest memories.

My First Day of School

Khalid Alajmi, 2D

My first day of school was like a scary movie. First, my mother woke me up early, and I was angry because I didn't

like waking up early. After that, I had breakfast and my mother dressed me and gave me a backpack. Then, I asked my mother, "Whose bag is this?" My mother said, "It is for you. You are going to school today!" Now after that, the scary movie started. I cried and I went to hide under my bed. Then my father came and said, "We're not going to school; we are going to the park." I believed my father and I went with him. My father took me to the park. However, I didn't know that the building next to the park was the school. After that, we went inside the building. When I saw the children in the building, I knew this building was the school. Then I started to cry. The teachers greeted me, and they gave me toys, food, and a notebook, but I continued to cry. My father told me he needed to go to the restroom, but he didn't go there. He went home instead. In the end, I continued to cry all that day and for three days after that. It was the worst day in my life.

A Powerful Memory

Nguyen Trang Thi Hien, 2F

I will never forget how I felt when I passed an important examination. In my country, at the end of high school, if you want to continue to study in college or university, you must pass an important examination that includes three subjects: math, physics, and chemistry or another subject. There aren't a lot of public colleges and universities in my country, so there are a lot of students who take part in each examination. Only some of the students can pass an examination because it is very difficult. I thought I was a lucky girl when I passed that examination. At the time, I thought it was really unbelievable, but it was true. It was incredible. A few weeks later, I was still in shock about the results of the test although I was happy. This is a very strong memory for me.

My First Day of School

Meshal Alenazy, 2D

My first day of school was difficult for me because I was only six years old. But I remember everything that happened that day. First of all, on November 3, 1986, I woke up early. Then my mother gave me a shower. After that, she dressed me in jeans and a t-shirt. Then my father took me to school. The school was near our house. The school building was huge. In fact, it looked like a monster to me because I was very nervous. I saw many things that scared me, like children who were crying and unhappy. That made me feel like crying too. To make me stop crying, my father bought me some sweets. When I stopped crying, I noticed the weather was wonderful, and I remember the teacher helped the new students. That is a day I will never forget because it changed my life. My student life had begun.

A Big Surprise

Abdulrhman Alied, 4A

Last year, I graduated from high school, and I got “excellent” on my results. I was so surprised and happy because my parents were surprised about my results. They thought I was not going to get “excellent” because I had not been studying during the term. However, three weeks before taking the test, I studied a lot. Moreover, I stopped doing all my favorite things, such as playing soccer, watching TV, and surfing on the Internet, even on the weekends. I still remember when I went to my school to get my results, my parents were calling me on my phone, and I did not answer my phone. When I arrived at our home

and entered the living room, they were waiting for me. They asked me why I did not answer my phone and what happened about my results. I did not answer anything. I just gave them the results. After that, they started crying and hugging me. They really were surprised at that moment. After one week, my father came to our home and gave me a small box, and I asked him what it was. He said, “I do not know. Just open it.” I opened it, and there was a key, and he told me go out and see what was there. There was a red car. Really, I was surprised, because the red car was mine. My father had bought it for me. In summary, we can say that each person has surprising moments in his or her life. However, the best moment is when you make a surprise for your parents.

The Day I Fell in a Lake

Traore Mohamed Hadji, 2E

I never thought that one day I would fall in a lake. When I was a child, I used to go fishing with my friends on the weekends. One day I went with my friend Moussa to fish. After we arrived, we cast the net in the lake and waited. After an hour, we caught a lot of fish. At that moment, my friend told me to be careful because where I was sitting, the boat was moving. I told him, “Don’t worry. I know where I am.” Five minutes later, I rolled into the lake. My shoes were slipping in the mud. I was scared because I didn’t know how to swim. I cried out, “Help me!” Someone near us plunged in and got me out. I had hurt my foot in a hole in the mud. I went to the hospital. The doctor gave me some medicine, and I went home. My friend came to

chat with me at home. He told me that he had warned me before. He made fun of me. I was never as terrified as I was on that day.

The First and Last Time I Went Fishing

Abdoul Zongo, 2E

One day I was playing soccer with my friends and we got tired of playing, so we decided to go angling at the dam. When we arrived and started fishing, 30 minutes passed and nobody caught a fish. I decided to go to another place. When I tried to sit down, I slipped into the water. The problem was that I didn’t know how to swim. I was crying and yelling, “Somebody, help me, please. I need help!” I was afraid, but then a strange man heard my shouting and came to help me. He pulled me out of the water. I explained what happened to my friends, and we went home. After this day, I never returned to fish.

One Day at Chuck E. Cheese

George Gharibe, 2E

One time my cousins and I went by boat to Chuck E. Cheese to have fun. When we were going to leave Chuck E. Cheese, my cousin said, “Stop, let’s go play this tricky machine!” We played and we lost. I had one more coin. I put the machine in perfect position. Then suddenly, it moved by itself. I was angry. Then I hit the machine and I broke it. My cousin screamed, “Run, everybody!” We ran to the boat. When we arrived, the rope was tied too hard to leave, so I cut the rope. Luckily, we escaped.



A Trip

Li Qun Guo, 2F

One Sunday, my friends and I decided to take a trip to the countryside. Late in the afternoon, we put up our tent in the middle of a field. As soon as this was done, we cooked a meal over an open fire. We were all hungry and the food smelled good. After a wonderful meal, we told stories and sang songs by the campfire, but some time later, it began to rain. We felt tired, so we put out the fire and crept into our own tents. The sleeping bags were warm and comfortable, so we all slept soundly. In the middle of the night, my friend woke up and began shouting. The tent was full of water! We all jumped out of our sleeping bags and hurried to run outside. It was raining heavily, and we found that a stream had formed in the field. The stream had wound its way across the field until it was right under our tent! We took our baggage to our car because our clothes got so wet that we couldn't sleep. We sat on the cold car seats until daylight.

Memories of a Class

Cherng-Hann Lee (Ben), 3D

Everyone has their own room which is full of memories. Of course, I do too! But my memory is of my senior high classroom. This was a room full of artists, but you also could say they were freaks. Even my second most important teacher was a freak. For example, which teacher would play the guitar in class, suddenly? Which student would use soy sauce to draw a Chinese painting? They would. Although they were crazy people, they still worked very hard on their majors. I also learned a lot from them. This situation not only gave me important art information, it also taught me a lot of different life experience. For instance, my first love was my classmate. Actually, she didn't like me, but I still felt that "love" feeling and "broken heart" feeling. It wasn't a good feeling, but we had to accept it. Three years later, our graduation allowed us to enjoy an interesting and special emotion because we were the "Final Art Class" in this school. Maybe some people would say, "Oh! That's too bad," but we didn't think so, for it also meant that we were unique.



MY HOME

Songkran Festival **Wathunya Boonpairote, 4A**

The Songkran Festival is the Thai New Year. It has a lot of fun activities. The period April 14 through 16 is recognized as a family holiday in Thailand. On the first day, everybody comes back to his or her hometown. Even people who work far away from their homes will come back to celebrate the New Year with their family. The next day is a day that everybody really enjoys, especially kids. People go out with a bucket of water or a water gun and throw or squirt water on other people. The last day is elders' day. Children and teenagers put water on older people. They do that to show respect to their elders, and the elders give a good blessing to the young people. In short, there are many fun activities for families to do together during the Songkran holiday.

A Person Who Made a Difference: **Cheick Modibo Diarra** **Kassoum Traore, 3A**

Cheick Modibo Diarra is a Malian astrophysicist who is highly regarded in the scientific community. He was born in 1952. After he graduated from high school in Mali, Cheick Modibo Diarra studied mathematics, physics and analytical mechanics in Paris at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie, and aerospace engineering in the United States at Howard University (Washington, D.C.). He was the first

African recruited by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of NASA, where he participated in various programs.

In 1999, he began to work half time at NASA, which allowed him time to contribute to the educational development in Africa through the creation of a foundation (Pathfinder Foundation for Education and Development). In November 2001, Cheick Modibo Diarra became a volunteer ambassador for UNESCO. In 2002, he developed in Mali a research laboratory for solar energy. Cheick Modibo Diarra was the first president of the African Virtual University based in Kenya. On February 20, 2006, Microsoft announced the nomination of Cheick Modibo Diarra as Chairman of Microsoft Africa. He is my idol, and every Malian loves and wants to be like him.

Qin Shi Huang and the Great Wall of China **Yu Zhang (Roy), 3A**

Qing Shi Huang was the first emperor in China in the warring states period. There were seven independent states in China. The stronger states always invaded others to become bigger ones. So there were many wars in that period, and people were in distress. Qin Shi Huang was a victor in a great war. He conquered

other states one by one. For the first time, all of China was unified under one of the powerful rulers. Wars stopped, and people finally settled down. At the same time, Qin Shi Huang called himself "first emperor".

After he unified China, Qui Shi Huang started to make some changes in the new government, and one of his new plans was to build the Great Wall. The Great Wall could protect the northern borders of the Chinese Empire. After 1000 years, the Great Wall we see today has been rebuilt and it is still very beautiful.

Korea's Traditional Holiday **Tae-mi Kim, 2D**

February 14, 2010 was a very special day. Usually February 14 is Valentine's Day. However, this year was different. February 14 was also the lunar calendar's New Year's Day. This is unusual. In the west, February 14 is just Valentine's Day. However, this year it was the real New Year for the Asian people. On the lunar calendar's January 1, all family members go to their native homes. They meet other family members, and they cook traditional foods like Korean pancakes and rice cake soup. Then they have to offer sacrifices. Most people spend some time with their families and wish good luck to each other.



The Changing Role of Women in Burkina Faso

Wenzoodo Brice Ilboudo, 4E

My country is Burkina Faso. It's in the middle of West Africa between Mali, Niger, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin, and Togo. In my country, things have changed since 1980. In the past, there was no freedom for women, but now there is more freedom for them and they have different and more important roles in the society. How have things changed? What are the two most important changes in the role of women in the past as compared to now?

First, in the past, my country did not recognize women to be humans. It means that they did not have any rights and could not make any decisions concerning themselves. For example, in the past, families could decide to give their daughters who were only 12 or 15 years old as spouses to other families to create strong relationships. The girls were not informed about the decision. When the wedding date arrived, the groom, who was usually an old man and who had already had two or three wives, came to take his new wife. Now it is different. Women have the right to choose their husbands even if their families do not agree. What is more, the current law forbids underage marriage. Also, in the past, when a girl got married, her job was just to give birth to children and to take care of them. She had to make sure that the children got food and were healthy. The wife was considered an object and the man could treat her any way he wanted. Now all of these things have changed.

Second, in the past, some jobs were just for men because women were believed to be unable to do them. The jobs that women were not allowed to do included those of

soldiers, police officers, presidents, and other government jobs. Now this way of thinking has changed and more and more women are found in the army. Even some of them are occupying important positions in the government. The state has a new policy to promote women to higher positions.

To sum up, it can be said that in my sweet country, it was not easy to be a woman in the past because of those bad things mentioned above. Now women are protected by the law and the government.

Native Clothes

Eid Alotaibi, 1B

Saudi Arabia has beautiful native clothes. Every man in my country wears a white robe. Its name in Arabic is *thob*. We also wear a red scarf. Its name in Arabic is *shomag*. The people wear the *thob* and *shomag* when they go to work, to school, and to pray. The women wear a black dress. Its name is *abaiab*. The women in my country wear the *abaiab* because this is our tradition in Saudi Arabia. From time to time, I miss my native clothes.

The Role of Women in Saudi Arabia Is Changing

Abdulaziz Saud, 4D

A long time ago, women in Saudi Arabia could not do anything. They just stayed at home doing the housework and taking care of the kids. Now everything is extremely different. There are many differences between Saudi women in the past and in the present. This essay explores three important changes that are taking place in the role of women, especially in their education and their looks.

First, let's talk about education. Long ago, education in my country was only for men, and women were excluded from the benefit of education. The most important reason for this situation is that men at that time thought that the

women were diamonds and so they had to be protected by being kept in the house. Now, the way men think about women has changed. More and more, the whole society has realized the importance of education, and as a result, women are allowed to attend schools. However, one thing remains unchanged, and that is men's wish to protect the women. This explains why now if you come to Saudi Arabia, you can see men driving their wives or daughters to schools and universities.

Second, a long time ago, women had to be fully covered because men thought that they were diamonds and it was the Saudi law too. Thus, whenever they wanted to go out, they had to be fully covered. We should, however, open a parenthesis here to say that most of the women at that time really believed that this practice was correct. This practice is changing now and some of them today are not fully covered. This is particularly true with those women who are working in hospitals or modern companies or who have spent some time in Western countries.

Narratives of the Ivory Coast

Helena Yoffou, 6A

The Ivory Coast is located on the west side of the African continent and shares a coast with the Gulf of Guinea. The country borders Mali and Burkina Faso on the north side, Guinea and Liberia on the west side, and Ghana on the east side.

The Ivory Coast is composed of sixty sub-ethnic groups classified into four main groups that came from neighboring countries for different reasons. The Mandes established themselves on the northwest side of the country because of Saharan commerce opportunities. The other three groups came to the Ivory Coast in order to escape the war in their country. The Krous, who came from Liberia, are located on the southwest

side (my sub-ethnic group, the Bétés, comes from this group); the Gour, who came from Mali and Burkina Faso, are concentrated on the northeast side; and finally, the Akan, from Ghana, are found on the southeast side of the country. As a result, the Ivory Coast is considered the most welcoming country. Indeed, a third of its population is composed of foreigners from everywhere in the world. Also, the second sentence of our national anthem says, “*Pays de l’hospitalité*,” meaning “country of hospitality.”

By the fifteenth century, the Portuguese were the first European explorers who arrived and started slavery as well as ivory trade. They called the country “*Costa de Marfil*” (Ivory Coast) and named many cities and rivers, which have maintained their original names till this day.

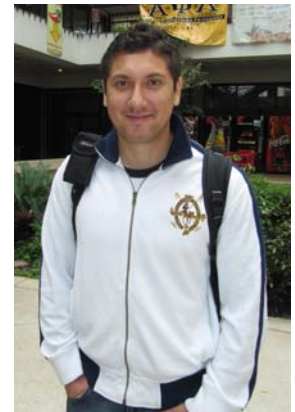
During the nineteenth century,

French colonists arrived and took possession of the whole territory until the 1960s. During colonial times, local people were coerced to work for the French as slaves in cocoa and coffee plantations. The harvests were directly exported to Europe to fund the French economy. It was the same for mining and wood exportation. The slave workers also built a railroad to connect Abidjan, Ivory Coast and Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The colonization would last until the independence in 1960. Nowadays, the fact that we speak French in the Ivory Coast is a strong reminder of this period.

Felix Houphouët-Boigny was the first president of the Republic of Ivory Coast and stayed in power for three decades. It was a prosperous era for the Ivory Coast, which developed itself thanks to the revenues mainly from cocoa and

coffee exportation. Because of a growing economy, the Ivory Coast established itself as the most influential country in West Africa. During this time, the country enjoyed political, economical, and social stability. After the death of president Houphouët-Boigny, the political class struggled to succeed him peacefully. The Ivory Coast suffered a coup d’état in 1999 that brought General Robert Guei to power. In 2002, the General was assassinated in an attempted military coup that left the country divided in two. The south side is controlled by the government troops and the north side by the rebels. Laurent Gbagbo is the current president of Ivory Coast.

Even though the Ivory Coast is an independent country today, it still has a strong political and economical French influence.



AMAZING PLACES

Angkor Wat

Anh Ngo, 3B

Angkor Wat, one of the fundamental heritage places of the world, is a place with a lot of mysteries and wonderful architecture. Last year, I traveled to Cambodia to visit this interesting country, and it surprised me because of many incredible aspects.

First of all, many mysteries of Angkor have never been explained. Archeologists have done a lot of research trying to find out how people were able to move many huge stones a long distance from place to place. There were a lot of mysterious miracles about the statues on the walls, which are still today a secret of Cambodian ancestors. Moreover, Angkor Wat gave many messages from ancestors to descendants, and they are still useful in modern life today.

Secondly, Angkor Wat has wonderful architecture. It was built seven floors high, and it was designed with four entrances from north, south, east, and west. It has an enormous manmade lake around the building, and this lake was the main water supply for Cambodia at that time.

In conclusion, Angkor Wat is a place that people should visit before they die. They will personally discover another world with a lot of interesting and mysterious history.

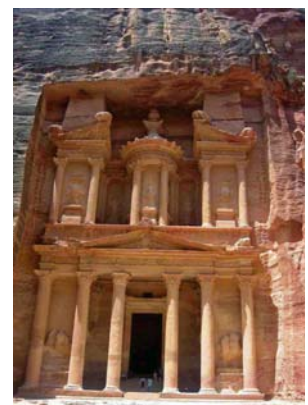
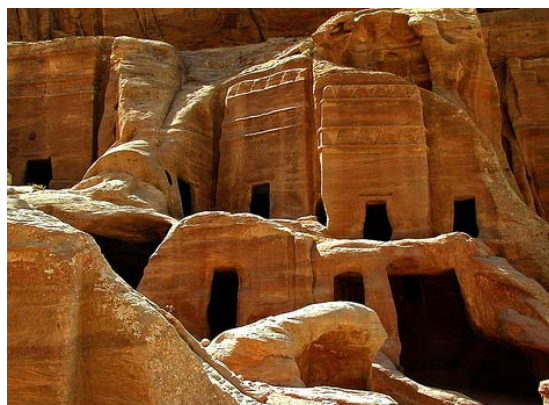


What Do You Know about the Rose Red City?

Rana Oweinat, 3C

The Rose Red City has always intrigued me, so finally, I made up my mind, and here I am standing in front of the mysterious statue of the magnificent Rose Red City. Starting with the name of this city, I didn't know why they called it this name until I saw the color of the pink stones that built up the city. I can't describe my feeling (was it shock or confusion?), but it is really an amazing place. I do believe it is a sensational place for scientists. It is like a puzzle they had to speculate about and figure out how they did that. Was it a cooperative work?

Petra, which is the other name for this city located in Jordan, became one of the Seven Wonders of the World in 2007, and that has fascinated tourists from all over the world to visit it. People who live in that area make their living by selling souvenirs for tourists or by renting horses to the tourists to arrive to the fantastic Petra. In brief, no one who visits this area can stop dreaming about the beauty and the greatness of this place.



U.S. EXPERIENCES

The Internet in the U.S.

Eid Alkhalidi, 4A

There are many things that have surprised me in my life; however, the one that I was most surprised by was the Internet in the U.S. Actually, I was surprised by it for two reasons, which are the Internet speed and the ways that people use it.

When I came to the U.S., I couldn't believe the incredible speed of the Internet here because it is different from in Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia, if I want to watch a video on *YouTube*, even if it's two minutes, it takes at least fifteen minutes. On the other hand, here I can download a lot of videos at the same time in a few minutes, and I can surf the Internet faster than in Saudi Arabia.

The other thing that surprised me is the ways that people use the Internet in the U.S. because in Saudi Arabia it isn't as good as in the U.S. In the U.S., I can pay my phone bill on the Internet, and I can also buy some clothes from store websites, such as Armani Exchange, and even if I want to order some food, I can. However, in Saudi Arabia, I can't do any of the things that I can do in the U.S. People in my country use the Internet just to have fun.

To sum up, I have faced a lot of things that have surprised me in my life; however, the one that really surprised me was the Internet in the U.S. because it has unbelievable speed and people can use it in many ways.

Being an LCC Student

Trang Tran, 2A

When I came to the LCC, it was like Heaven. I have American teachers who are so nice to me. I really worried the first day when I didn't understand everything they said. The

next day, they spoke slowly and explained in a friendly way when I didn't understand.

I have many new friends from other countries. I like them. In my country, some people don't like people from Africa. They think Africans are dangerous and not good. But when I met my African classmates, I liked them. In the LCC, I have many friends from Africa. They are so nice and they help me very much.

On my first day in the LCC, my first friend was Pinky from Thailand. We became friends sharing everything and understanding together, just using English. Many of our classmates think we are from the same country, that I understand Thai and she understands Vietnamese. Maybe it's because both of us are Asian. Our classmates are surprised to know that we are from different countries.

English is wonderful. It helps connect people from different countries. We come to America, make new friends, and share emotions together.

Change of Opinion

Euridice Cortez, 5B

Before I came to the U.S., I had different opinions from those that I have now. I thought that all Americans were materialistic and didn't really care about others' opinions. I also believed that all American teenagers were rude because I saw in many T.V. programs that they didn't respect their parents and they used a lot of bad language. I also saw that they talked about a lot of violence and crime on the news.

I remember that I told myself once that I would never live in a country like this, where people don't respect each other and where the government allows people to have guns. But then, my father got a grant for me and told

me that I could go study in the U.S. At first I was really scared because of what I had heard. After a while, I realized that it would be a great opportunity to really know American people.

When I arrived at the U.S., in August 2009, I called my friends and told them that it was like a challenge against all my preconceived notions about the U.S. I have been here for almost six months and now I'm ashamed of all the bad things I used to think because Americans are so friendly and patient, and even though I'm a foreigner, they have treated me well. It has really surprised me because in my country people aren't friendly, and when they notice that you're a foreigner, they make fun of you.

Living in the U.S. has taught me a lot of things that I wasn't aware of. I have learned that we can't judge without knowing or being totally sure.

My Son Speaks English Better Than I Do

Arnold Ouedraogo, 2A

It's amazing to see this child, born and growing up here in the USA! It's especially surprising to see him learning the languages he hears around him. My son, Ganny, is not quite two years old, but he speaks English better than his father. I often take pleasure in just hearing him speak. I have learned new words with him and will never stop this learning. Recently, I gave him some drawing exercises to do. When he finished, he politely said, "Daddy, I finished my drawings and now I want to do something else if you want." Almost two years old and politely asking his father for permission! Amazing!

Life Here

Serge Sampreb, 2B

I live near Richmond and Dunvale with my cousin and his friend. We are three in the same apartment. Every week, each of us must cook two times, and every Sunday, we go shopping at Fiesta or at Wal-Mart behind our complex. During the week, we sometimes eat Chinese or Mexican food, which is very interesting for our experience. I find that American life is very interesting because we must cook our food, clean our apartment, and wash our clothes ourselves, but to be honest, this life is very hard.

The Rodeo

Khalid Alhumaidi, 1B

The rodeo was on the fifth of March. We met at the University Center. Almost all of the LCC students were there. Then we rode the bus to the rodeo. We got there at 2:00 in the afternoon. First, I played with my friends, and we enjoyed the shows. After that, we went to a restaurant and ate a delicious pizza. At 7:00 at night, they started the fireworks, and

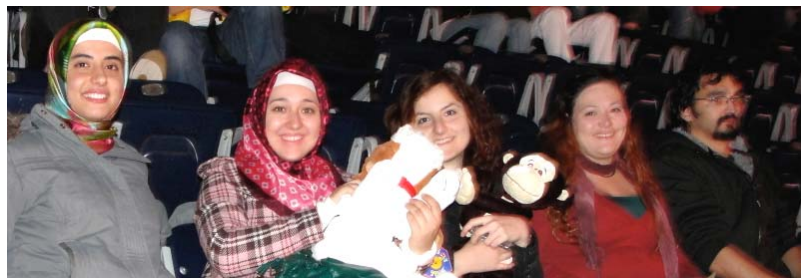
it was very exciting. All of the spectators started to raise their hands and scream. The cowboys played around until 9:30. After that, we saw Mary J. Blige. She is a very good singer, and some of the spectators danced to some of her songs. At 11:00, I went home. I was still excited. It was an amazing trip. I want to go on the rodeo trip next year.

The Houston Zoo

Fengling Wang, 4A

I recently went with my family to the Houston Zoo. It was interesting and a lot of fun. We saw many species of animals, such as mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, and we learned about their habits and distribution throughout the world by reading labels. Watching wildlife rambling from here to there was also something for our family to enjoy. At the zoo, we could observe animals face to face instead of seeing them just on TV. We spent time outside in the fresh air and got to

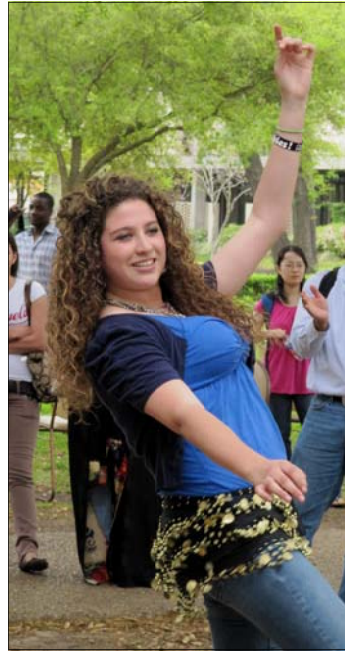
see some animals that were so cute. Our trip to the zoo was enjoyable because my family spent fun time together and found many interesting things to share.



LCC STUDENTS ENJOYING THE HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO



LCC CULTURE FESTIVAL







Several LCC students spent Spring Break doing volunteer work at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico.



SPRING BREAK

Ghost Ranch

Ha Chu (Ruby), 3B

Ghost Ranch is a good place to go for relaxing and leaving your busy life behind. I went there during Spring Break for a community service project. From Houston to New Mexico took us one day, and everybody was tired, but when we reached Ghost Ranch, we were excited because of the wonderful weather and beautiful landscape. The area around Ghost Ranch is protected by a lot of huge and magnificent mountains, which made me feel quite tiny in front of such imposing and abundant natural sculpture.

I was surprised and asked myself how people could live there without anything. They didn't have a supermarket or a clinic, and the school was so far away from their houses. It was not convenient, but I figured out that people live there because of the weather and the beautiful view. In addition, they have fresh air every morning when they wake up, and they think that they live longer in this location.

I just wanted to see everything that I had heard about from others. At night it was a quiet area, but during the daytime, when I woke up, I felt the fresh air that Houston will never have; furthermore, in the evening, snow was falling, and that was so marvelous. After a few hours, the snow stopped, and everything was white. I looked up at all the mountains around Ghost Ranch, and from the top to the bottom of the mountains there was

snow. It looked so fantastic.

The next day, the sun was shining, and it was the most perfect weather I had ever seen. Now, I thought, that's why everybody wants to stay here. So, if I have another chance, I will surely return to Ghost Ranch to relax.

My Spring Break

Sami Bamatraf, 3B

Last week was our Spring Break, and I went on a trip to New Mexico with the greatest group I have ever met. The purpose of the trip was to do some community service work in different places, but it was also a wonderful learning experience.

The first day, we were divided into small working groups. Some of the volunteers went to paint some walls; the girls went to the office to organize files; and the leaders took my group to do the real work, which was digging through the snow to find the concrete, and that was really hard work. For example, we had to remove the snow first from the top and then start to dig the muddy places in the ground until we could see the concrete. One of us even got injured; he slipped and fell, but he got fixed up quickly and came back to work.

The second day, I worked with another group. We went to a farm to build a chicken coop. We worked as a team and we did an excellent job and turned out a first-class chicken coop.

Next, we met a Native American man named Gilbert. He talked with us about

his kinfolk and how they had suffered in the past to be like we know them now, and about his life among all his people. He told us how earlier in his life he had done awful things such as alcohol and drugs. However, he quit these things after he got shot and lost a lot of family members. He realized that life is beyond a price. Now he is the youngest leader of his people in his lifetime. Moreover, he told us he prays every morning for everyone he knows and shares his breath with their spirits.

The Native Americans also taught us their own traditional dance. That was the most fantastic and wonderful thing I have ever done.

Finally, I learned something really important, and that is how you can live with no communication with others, except your small group, for one week. At the beginning, that was the worst thing I could think of, but I got used to it little by little until finally I didn't even worry about it.

In conclusion, although we drove almost seventeen hours away, which made us tired for sure, I learned many things from this trip. It was only a week, but it seemed like a year of work and also fun with awesome friends. This was my Spring Break for this year, and I really enjoyed it.

Spring Break in New Mexico

Linh Mai (Lucky), 3B

Last week we went with other University of Houston students to New Mexico to do humanitarian service during Spring Break. On Saturday we met each other on campus, and everybody was smiling as one by one we introduced ourselves to each other. About 9:30 a.m. we left Houston, and at 1:30 p.m. we stopped for lunch in



Dallas at a huge mall. We were quite lively because we were excited about going to New Mexico, where we would see snow and mountains and feel the fresh air. We ate lunch in the huge mall. After one hour, we continued our trip. On the way, we saw a lot of farms with cows, horses and sheep...they were smelly. At 6:30 p.m. we stopped in Amarillo, a city in the Texas panhandle, and we ate delicious Mexican food. It was extraordinary. After dinner, we played games together until 12:30 a.m.

The next morning, we went to New Mexico non stop because we wanted to reach there as soon as possible. We arrived there at 3:30 in the afternoon. It was very cold, and it was snowing, but it was great. That was the first time I had ever seen snow, and I could touch it. Everything looked like a dream. Everybody made snowmen, and we had a great time.

The next day, we couldn't work or do anything because the snow was so dense, so the leader took us to visit some places. We met lots of people, and we could even understand the Native American people. They were very kind because they always said "hi" even though they didn't know us. We worked there for two days, and we did anything they needed to have done.

It was an interesting Spring Break, and it helped me to learn something about New Mexico.

Spring Break

Mohammed Baagi, 3A

Spring Break is a wonderful opportunity if you have good friends and you are

looking to have fun during your holiday!

Before Spring Break, my friends and I decided to go to another city. One of them suggested Miami and others said somewhere in Florida, but we faced some obstacles. My cousin recommended traveling to South Padre Island, which is the place we chose. The town is located on South Padre Island, a barrier island along the Texas Gulf Coast which is accessible via a causeway from the town of Port Isabel.

Our trip took six hours by car. When we arrived, the weather was fantastic. First of all, we had to rent a room in a hotel near the beach. Then we changed our clothes and hurried to enjoy the beach. People there were very friendly and kind. We met a group of them to play games and have fun. There was a special beach called *Coca Cola Beach*, where they have activities from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. every day during this vacation week. Among these activities, were tug of war and endurance competitions, in addition to singing and dancing. Other people preferred sunbathing, swimming and surfing by jet ski.

Every night there were other special activities. There were a lot of topnotch restaurants, and they had delicious food and affordable prices. After that, we walked in the noisy street and there were many different people from different cities. There were many nightclubs, and some of them faced the sea. People were dancing together with loud music under huge speakers. Finally, we went back to the hotel after a long day. In conclusion, I spent the most fun and exciting three days ever on South Padre Island at Spring Break.

My Spring Break

Americo Geovanni Dos Santos, 3A

My Spring Break was peaceful and reflective. I mean it was a good time to think about myself. The first days were a little weird because the university was almost empty, and everything around me seemed so un lively. Yet, I wasn't bothered by it; in fact, I actually considered it an opportunity to have some rest, so I availed myself of it, as I had been thinking deeply about what I wanted for myself in the future. Am I doing right? Am I on a good way? These kinds of questions had been troubling me. Actually, I think I have been trying to find myself because I've been feeling a little lost since I came to U.S.A. I had never thought about how hard it could be to take care of myself and be far away from my family. Moreover, I think I have discovered how important my parents are.

Although I didn't do very many interesting things, like go to the cinema, malls, or museums, and I didn't hang out with friends, the break wasn't bad at all. Sometimes it can be very interesting and enlightening for us to take a look at ourselves and review our concerns. It's incredible how self-conversation can help us.

It is true that interacting with myself wasn't an exciting way to spend my Spring Break, but it was very informative and positive as I discovered that my subconscious, if it is well explored, can give me interesting feedback. Although I haven't yet found myself, I feel I am on the way.



VALUES AND BELIEFS

Cause and Effect

Belal Abuayyash, 5B

When I was in elementary school, I was the first in the class in all subjects. I used to focus on every single word that the teachers were saying in the class. I never read anything at home, even when preparing for final exams, and I always got the highest grade in the class. I was labeled a genius by all the people around me. And, of course, I kept dealing with school as I was used to doing.

When I went to high school, the situation was the same but worse: staying awake all night, hanging out and playing cards, going to school with nothing except my pen, sleeping in classes, and not even buying the books (100% careless). I started having trouble with math and physics, and I felt that I would never pass the final tests (the ministry tests). One day, when I was hanging out with my friends, I jokingly told them that I would get "B" in those tests. As it was 3:00 a.m. and the first final test would be five hours later, they said that it was impossible. One of them, who was my cousin, said, "I dare you even to pass." We were just joking, but in fact I took it seriously.

When I went back home, I could not stop thinking about those words. The first thing I did was I took all the furniture out and burnt it outside, and I kept only a chair, a desk, and my 3000 Watt alarm – which used to wake up all the neighbors before me (I lived alone at that time). Then I called all my friends and told them that I was going to start preparing for the tests and that I wanted no one to visit or even call me until the last day of the tests. I made a plan, bought the books, and started studying 18 hours a day. Finally, the result: 93.1%. I won't make a conclusion about that. I'll leave it to you.

Mind over Medicine

Jung-im Park, 5A

In Korea, there is a traditional medical book, *Donghuibogam*, written by Joon Huh, an herb doctor. It says, "Because all human diseases are caused by the habit of

eating and sexual life, if you want to be cured, cultivate your mind first, and then take medicine." Most Korean ancestors believe that the power of the mind outweighs the effect of medicine. There are still many herb doctors in Korea. Also, common people regard shamans as therapists. They also think that exorcism can treat diseases unable to be seen. A piece of research written in 1920 shows that at that time, about four fifths of all diseases in Korea were being treated by shamans, grandmothers, or mothers. I was very surprised after reading this article. Today, many studies support the fact that the mind is more powerful than medicine, so many doctors including herb doctors are using mind relaxation as a part of treatment.

What I Learned from My Parents

Pedro Nastasi, 4A

While growing up, my parents taught me some essential things which have helped me be a good, independent, and aware person in many aspects of life, and which now help me to continue my life without them. Good manners, independence, and responsibility are the most important things which my parents taught me.

A person without proper manners isn't able to develop good relationships with other people. My parents taught me some important tips, such as not speaking with food in my mouth, not saying bad words, not answering them in a bad way, respecting them and people older than me, etc. Those tips about how I had to behave helped me to be a cultivated person.

While growing up, a person needs to learn so many things in order not to rely on his or her parents into adulthood; therefore, my parents taught me how to do many things by myself. For example, my mother taught me how to cook, how to dust my house, and how to be organized. So many people don't know how to do these

simple things, so when they are alone, they suffer a lot trying to do some things that their parents should have taught them. I'm happy to know these things, which help me a lot because they are important every day.

Responsibility is the other important thing that my parents taught me. Without it, a person could have many problems. I have needed it everywhere. For example, I needed it for my homework when I was in high school, and it helped me to be a good student. Responsibility is a value which all of us should have because it helps us to be successful people.

To sum up, all of these things that my parents taught me have helped me to be a nice, responsible, and independent person. I'm grateful to my parents since they made my life easier.

Respect

Jeremie Oubda, 3C

Respect refers to a good feeling toward someone you respect. It's a will to satisfy this person by trying to accept him just the way he is. A respectful person doesn't want to deceive anyone and just desires to live with good relationships with others. Nowadays, however, *respect* can have others meanings. First, it can refer to fearing someone. For example, the powerful countries are in first place and the least powerful have to follow their decisions. Second, respect may depend on self-interest; that means that respect doesn't exist in its real meaning. In this case, the rich get the most respect. They don't value the human being; they just value their own interests. As a result, the world is divided. On the one hand we have rich people, and on the other hand we have the poor people who undergo the caprices of rich people. As a solution, we have to reconsider the word *respect* in its true meaning for the best world possible.

Guatemalan Proverbs

Daniel Bonifaz, 6B

Proverbs are used all over the world. Most of the time, proverbs are used in an indirect way, so it doesn't matter how long or how short the proverb is; what matters is that you understand it. In Guatemala, from the time we are born, we try to pervasively encourage kids to know how important the core values are. These values include courage, wisdom, and respect, among others.

Courage is an important value in my country because you need to have passion and desire for what you want. There is a proverb in Guatemala that says: "*Vale más morir intentándolo que vivir toda la vida lamentándolo.*" The translation is: "It's better if you try to do something and die, than to die without even trying and then regret it for the rest of your life." This proverb has a lot of sentimental meaning because it points out the difference between whether you have cheated yourself by not following your happiness or whether you are willing to do what it takes to find it.

My dad always said to me that the biggest success will be disguised as bigger problems. Therefore, I decided to include this proverb: "*Caer es permitido, levantarse es obligatorio.*" The translation would be: "Falling is permitted, but getting up is a must." This is one of my favorite proverbs because it explains that no one is perfect and that making mistakes is conceivably possible, yet you should try not to do them again.

Wisdom is a strong word, and from my point of view, it is gained from personal experiences or basically from the simple act of living; in my country, wisdom is everywhere because there are a lot of elderly people. My grandfather always told me: "*Dime con quién andas y te diré quién eres,*" or translated to English, "Tell me who you are with, and I will tell you who you really are." I never understood

this proverb until I was about twelve years old. By then, I understood that people will judge you as a good or bad person depending on who your friends are.

"*Más ayuda él que no estorba.*" This is another famous proverb in my country. It means, "The one that doesn't get in the way will be more helpful than the one that is a nuisance." Sometimes it is better not to help if you are not going to take things seriously because if anything goes wrong, you are going to be the scapegoat.

Guatemala is not that recognized in the world, yet those who do know something about it can say that we Guatemalans are very respectful and attentive with other people. "*De poquito en poquito se llena el jarrito.*" This proverb explains patience, which is one aspect of respect. The literal translation would be: "Drop by drop, the jar gets filled," meaning that everyone has a limit, so you should be careful because sooner or later, someone will explode.

My very favorite proverb says: "*Todos quieren meter su cuchara en la sopa.*" This means that sometimes people do not care about other people's problems, but they still give their opinion. Literally translated, it means: "Everyone wants to put their spoon in the soup." Some people like privacy, which is why you shouldn't do what you wouldn't like other people to do to you.

I would like to conclude by saying that every culture has proverbs. Proverbs teach us the lessons learned and perfected by our own ancestors with the purpose of making us realize humility, love, and respect.

The Meaning of Things

Bourdes Anyimbi, 4D

For a lot of people, new things are the most beautiful. Two days ago, I went to Wal-Mart with my niece, who is 23 years old. When we approached the jewelry area, she started to tell me about the old jewels that she wants to change and

suggested that I change my old ring, too. But I refused. For me, new jewels are not beautiful because it's more the meaning of the thing that makes it beautiful, and not whether it is new or old.

I like to see people wearing old jewels, even if they are not shining anymore or they are not really beautiful to look at anymore. When they wear old jewels, it means that they really love their jewels, and if you ask them about these jewels, they could tell you a lot about them. I have an old ring on my right hand that I have never taken off and that I have loved very much. First, I love it because it is a gift from a person that is very special to me. Whenever I look at it, I always remember that day when she gave it to me, telling me if something happened and we had to be separated by distance, I should remember that even if she was not physically close to me, she would keep me on her mind and that one day we would meet again. Secondly, I love that ring because many times when we had some troubles, that ring helped us to resolve the troubles.

That person is my girlfriend and that ring embodies the attachment between us.

It happens often that when things become old, we don't like them anymore. However, when those things have a particular meaning after several years, it's still as beautiful as on the first day we saw it.

Values and Assumptions of My Culture

Mingyue Tan, 6A

Because of the different locations, histories, theories and backgrounds, there are many cultural nuances between countries. One of the biggest differences between Chinese and American culture is that you should be modest in China. It is a virtue in my country. For example, if I told you

that you are so beautiful, instead of saying “thank you,” you should say, “Come on! You are so much better than I am.” No one will say that he or she is the best.

Another important value is to show respect to others. In my culture, children cannot call adults by their name. They need to show deep respect for teachers, parents and elderly people. If someone comes in while you are sitting, you should stand up and give the seat to them. When we make conversation with teachers or parents, we usually don’t look at them directly. We also have different words for different people based on age, gender, and relationship, in order to make conversation gentler.

Last but not least, privacy is very important. Actually, we don’t tell others what bad things happen in our family because we have an old fashioned proverb that says, “Don’t wash your dirty linens in public.” This means family troubles are not a thing to be talked about in public. We also don’t ask others their secrets unless they tell us without prodding. If someone told you their secret and without permission you told it to another person, it would really be rough. After that, you might no longer have any friends.

One more thing is different. In school, teachers usually put a list of students’ scores for everyone to see. They do this in order to encourage students to study hard to make a better impression on others. Chinese people care about their image, and no one wants to lose face.

All of the above are some important points for understanding my culture. I hope you won’t get culture shock!

The Importance of Academic Honesty

Jin Zhang, 4A

This article, by teacher Kathy Najafi, talks about academic integrity, which is imperative for students in colleges and universities all around the world. As a student, from a six-year-old until now, I

have been able to recognize the importance of academic honesty. Every year our teachers tell us to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism can be a very serious mistake. First, if a person copies another’s homework or test answers, he is acting like a thief. Maybe he uses the other’s achievement to gain a lot of respect, flowers, or honors, but he is still a thief. Second, the plagiarist will always stop at his current level. Because he plagiarizes, I would say, he stops gaining new knowledge. He just enjoys the achievement of others. In the end, he’ll find he understands nothing. In sum, plagiarism is a serious problem that all of us must avoid. Let’s not be lazy in our studies. We must follow our plan to study step by step, enjoying our own achievement.

Power of the Mind

Cristina Trujillo, 5A

A lot of research around the world focuses on the effects of the mind over the body. Researchers are demonstrating the power and importance of a healthy mind. For some reason, your body can show what your mind is thinking. Sometimes we can’t avoid it, but we know that something is happening inside and we feel different. This is what the power of the mind means. In Venezuelan culture, practices of relaxation are more and more common in hospitals, especially for people suffering critical illness. Many doctors think the mind can deter the medicines’ effects or produce depression, which is the worst enemy of the body when it’s facing an illness. Also, the power of what a patient is thinking about his/her future could help him/her to fight against the illness and support the immune system to be better. Doctors always try to motivate the patient to think positively. Also, they strive to treat the patients in an encouraging

way. For example, they try to use words that make them feel more relaxed.

Values of our Lives

Thuy Vuong, 6A

Vietnamese culture stands on the base of Asian culture. We appreciate respect, morality, and family values.

First of all, respect and morality are the most important factors to judge a person. We are taught that we need to be respectful and grateful to others, especially the elders. People will look at how we treat others in order to evaluate us. In addition, Vietnamese appreciate morality. Vietnamese culture is affected by conscious thoughts and moral standards. We are supposed to respect the elders and receive respect from the younger people. This is also the rule in our family.

Second, the Vietnamese appreciate the values of family. Family, deep in our thoughts, is the most important element of our lives. We were born and have been taught and taken care of by the family, so we are supposed to live for it. In addition, people may evaluate one’s morality based on his or her family. For example, if people know that your father is in jail, most will look at you with a suspicious attitude and treat you in the same way. In fact, these thoughts have been in our culture for such a long time that we can hardly change them.

In conclusion, Vietnamese culture, as with most Asian countries, appreciates respect, morality, and the values of family.

Values of Proverbs

Justine Lee, 6B

Proverbs are concise expressions of the wisdom of life experiences. From childhood, we learn verbally or literally from our family, school, and society. Over the years, with lots of trial and error, we learn firsthand the meanings of proverbs. Moreover, proverbs exist across the barriers of language, religion, and culture.

Confucius, who was a Chinese thinker and social philosopher, has significantly influenced Oriental society. I would like to introduce to you three of the most important values that he has taught us, which are consideration, reflection, and peacefulness.

己所不欲，勿施於人

“Never impose on others what you would not choose for yourself.” This tells us that if you do not wish something for yourself, do not do it to others. The core value is consideration. While people focus on individualism nowadays, we should not forget that we are members of a larger group in the world. Being considerate of people is important for living in a group. For example, a non-polluted planet is critical for human beings. In order to save the vulnerable earth, industries should consider reducing pollution rather than strictly making profits. Being considerate of your group and not being selfish is appreciated.

Reflection is a process whereby people notice and improve the mistakes they have made. Confucius said, “To know your faults and be able to change is the greatest virtue.”

知錯能改，善莫大焉

No one is perfect, but we can face errors and learn lessons from them. In contrast, if we don't face faults, the problems will be exacerbated. One of my friends had smoked for twenty years since his adolescence because he thought smoking made him more accepted by his peers.

After he got married and had a baby, to have a better environment for his family, he was determined to quit smoking. As a result of this, he found out his weakness and changed it, which was the smarter way.

The most significant core value that Confucius delivered to us is peacefulness.

君子動口，不動手

The English translation is: “People win games with dignity, not with violence.” It presents an ideal of peacefulness among human beings. Confucius bestowed his life with peacefulness. What we need is a harmonious society. Violence should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. One's dignity always depends upon his manner. The fourteenth Dalai Lama, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, didn't inspire Tibetans to fight opponents through war. He advocated peace for his people and received respect worldwide. Peacefulness is the only way to utopia.

In conclusion, consideration, reflection, and peacefulness are well rooted in our life and have influenced our attitude towards people, society, and family. They guide us in daily life. Therefore, the proverbs you learn teach the values you can acquire. Indeed, we are fortunate to have our ancestors' intellectual treasures, which tend to bring us a better life.

AN IMPORTANT PERSON

My Best Friend

Nassaran Diakite, 1C

My best friend's name is Kadidiatou. She is twenty-two years old. She is single, but she lives in Mali with her sister and her two big dogs. She has two brothers and three sisters. She lost her parents when she was very young. She goes to the School of Economics in Mali, and she is in her fourth year. She likes movies and swimming. My best friend, Kadidiatou, is very funny, interesting, and tolerant. I love my friend, and I miss her a lot.

My Best Friend

Aminata Bah, 1B

My best friend's name is Diarra. She is twenty-seven years old. My best friend is very kind. She is married. She has one son. My best friend lives in Mali with her husband. She has short, wavy, black hair. She is tall. Her eyes are brown. My best friend is a teacher. She likes children. My best friend likes to cook rice with fish. She is beautiful. I love my best friend because she is a great person.

My Best Friend

Abdoul Kadre Sawadogo, 1D

I want to describe my best friend. His name is Mohamed Ouedraogo. Like me, he is from Burkina Faso. He is 21 years old, and he is the first son of his family. He has five sisters and brothers. He is first in his class, so I know he is intelligent. He talks a lot too, and he makes everybody smile. Some say he is very friendly. Others say he is a comedian. I say he likes to party every Saturday night, and he invites me to go with him. I like Mohamed. He is my best friend, and I am his too.

My Mother

Seydou Keita, 1B

I have a beautiful and very excellent mother. Her name is Aminata. She is an old person. She has long, light black hair. She lives in Bamako, Mali. She is married. Her husband's name is Falaye Keita. He is my father. He is a very excellent person, too. They have five children, but they don't have pets. My mother works at a school. Her job is very hard. She wakes up early every day to go to school at 6:10 a.m. She likes her job because she is an educator. My mother is very intelligent and hardworking. I love her very much, and I miss her all of the time.

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

Memory of A Shirt

Yanasate Aattawachara, 4E

Most students have memories about friendship in high school. In Thailand, it is a tradition that when students graduate from high school, they exchange something with each other such as a book, diary, etc. The only one thing that I still keep is my high school shirt.

The high school shirt that I have been keeping for a long time still reminds me of my high school life. We had a lot of things to do together and there was so much fun. This shirt, which was a uniform for students in my school, is white and has an ID number and the logo of school, and everyone has to wear it every day. On the last day of high school, we had a graduation ceremony. I brought it with me and passed it to my friends so that they could sign their names and write something about me on it. They could write anything anywhere on the shirt except the front pocket because that was the space reserved for the most important teacher. Because the shirt is full of messages from my teacher and friends, I still keep it and never wash it for fear that what is written on it will be washed away. Some people think that it is too old and dirty to keep. But I don't care. It is valuable to me.

Many people keep something to remind them of their beautiful past life. For me that shirt is important and I cannot throw it away. It always reminds me of my wonderful high school life.

A Rare Photo

Sabrina Xiao Sun, 4E

In my life, I have taken lots of photos in different places. However, among these is an old photo which is my

favorite and which is very rare because it always brings me memories of the time when I was a child.

Although traveling is now more and more common, it is still hard for me because my parents do not have time to accompany me on trips. However, an opportunity presented itself when I was ten years old. That summer, we went to DaLian, which is not too far away from my home. There, we went to the parks, the beach, and an entertainment place called "Kingdom of Discovery." We spent a whole day at the place playing interesting games and enjoying the beautiful landscape. Fascinated by the place, my family and I took a lot of photos of ourselves in different postures. Of course, we made sure that all three of us were in these photos.

Of all the photos we took at DaLian, I like best the one of my family playing games in the facilities. I like this photo because all of us looked very happy. There were even smiles on my parents' faces, which was rare because their life was so hard that they had never been seen with smiles before. After this trip, I also made some other trips, but I was always accompanied by my aunt and never by my parents, as they were so busy with work.

As compared with the other photos, this photo is old and not beautiful. However, in my eyes, it is the perfect photo and I never want to throw it away because it always reminds me of the happiest moments I had with my parents.

My Cousin's Old Jacket

Saúl Isaac Rico Jiménez, 4D

People always have something old in their closet, in their desk drawers, or maybe under their beds. However, they do not want to throw it away because they are sentimentally attached to it. In my case, I am sentimentally attached to a jacket which belonged to my cousin,

who is now dead. This essay explains two reasons I want to keep this old jacket.

The first reason I want to keep the jacket is because I got it from my cousin on one rainy day when he and I were together in a basketball game. On that day, it rained heavily and the weather was freezing cold. I did not have a jacket and I started to feel bad because it was so cold. When my cousin saw me shivering from the cold, he lent me his jacket and I felt better. He was so nice to me that he was willing to sacrifice his own comfort on my behalf. He even lied to me that he did not feel cold despite the bad weather. I was so moved by his kindness that up to now, I have always wanted to keep the jacket with me.

The second reason I want to keep the jacket like a treasure is that two years after what happened on the basketball court, my cousin died and his jacket is the only personal object from him that I now have. Here I must add that the jacket was my cousin's favorite and so, whenever I see it, I can remember him and remember also the many adventures that we had in our younger days.

I do not use the jacket anymore and it is now packed away in my closet, together with my old clothes. However, I have never once thought about throwing it away because it carries with it a sentimental value for me. As a matter of fact, whenever I open the closet and see the jacket, I always remember my cousin and that rainy day when he showed his care for me.

My Favorite Dollhouse

Ivy Chen, 4E

Children have their own favorite toys which they always take with them

Toys are their good friends. My favorite toy is

an old dollhouse, and there are lots of memories I had with this dollhouse when I was a little girl.

Actually, it was my cousin's dollhouse and I can still remember the first time I saw it in her room. I was so deeply obsessed with this classical, beautiful dollhouse that I could not forget it, nor could I even sleep or eat anything. I visited her many times when I could, and when I couldn't, I would send her letters begging her to lend me the doll house. One day, she wrote back to me, "Sure, I can lend you my doll house, but you have to do my homework for me." I agreed. What I had to do for her was to paint three pictures, to make a dog doll, and to bake a cake for her. After Amy got these things, she gave me her dollhouse. I was a happy bird when I received it.

The dollhouse was put on my desk, which was quite big. There were two floors in the dollhouse. The first floor was the living room, which was decorated in classical British styles. There were some small pieces of furniture such as tables, chairs, and cabinets, which were all made of wood. They were made to look like real furniture, even the function! The

bathroom. It was designed like a princess's room. The bed sheets and pillows were laced with pink. Apple-green floral wallpaper adorned the walls of the bedroom. There was a small tea table where my doll could sit for her tea time. I had a lot of happy moments with my dollhouse, and I even showed it to my friends when they came to visit me.

The dollhouse is very old and shabby now, but I do not want to throw it away. It is my good friend and it has brought many sweet memories to me. Sometimes when I walk through the display windows of toy stores, I think about my doll house, about the smell of the wood, and about the small exquisite pieces of furniture in it. I believe I will keep my dollhouse as long as I can.

Love

Lin Ma, 4D

Old things are not useless. On the contrary, they are sometimes very valuable because they may invoke in us feelings of love. In my case, I always bring with me a red comb and a cartoon badge because they are not just things for me, but they are love itself.

When I was ten years old, I had to study in Shanghai alone because of my parents' divorce. I had to do everything myself. It was really a tough time for me and I almost cried every day. I was not happy until my friends gave me one red comb as my red comb as my thirteenth birthday gift. They were my best friends,

who wanted to help me and to encourage me to face the difficulties in life. They hoped I would comb my difficulties smooth much in the same way I would with my hair. How sincere the friendship was. When I opened the gift box, I couldn't help crying and I thought I had to be braver. Every time I felt sad, I would pick up the red comb and remember them and their love, which gave me the power and the bravery to deal with the troubles in my life.

Another precious old thing for me is a cartoon badge in which was embedded a tiny picture of my mother and me. When I was studying in Shanghai, my mother couldn't see me frequently because my hometown was far away from the city. One day, my mother appeared at my school without notice. I was so surprised at her coming to see me. We went shopping and had dinner together. I felt that all my body and soul were filled with happiness. We took photos, one of which was later embedded in a cartoon badge. Despite the fact that I am now studying in the United States, which is far from home, I am not lonely anymore because I have the picture with me. Some people cannot elaborate on the meaning of love, nor can they feel love. For these people, I advise them to carry with them some old things because these old things can teach them about love.



My Pink Bicycle

Gulsah Metin, 4E

In my life, I have had a lot of things, one of which is my old pink bicycle. I could neither forget nor ever want to throw it away because of some sentimental reasons.

When I was a child, I wanted to have a pink bicycle, but my mother and father didn't want to buy it because I had one already. I used to ride this old bicycle with my brother and it was OK except for the fact that it was not pink. My parents thought that a new bicycle was not necessary. Then I decided to tell my grandfather about my dream. He said that if I passed my tests successfully, he would buy it for me. I was very happy because I thought that passing tests was not a big deal for me. At the end of school, I passed my tests successfully. After that, I went to my grandfather's home and showed him my school report. He praised me and embraced me. Then, he took me to a bicycle shop. I was confused as to which was the best for me. Finally, my grandfather helped me choose one. It was pink, and it had a blue bell and large, white wheels. I did not want to touch it because I was afraid that I would break it. Now this sounds funny, but when I was a child, it was a serious issue for me.

I used to ride a four-wheeled bicycle before, so I didn't know how to use a two-wheeled one. My grandfather taught me how to use it. I fell down several times and had to go to the

hospital many times because of a lot of bruises and scratches on my legs and arms. In the end, I learned to ride the bicycle. Both my grandfather and I were very happy. It was a great achievement on my part. Unluckily, not long after that, my grandfather passed away because of a heart attack. I was really sad when I heard the news from my mother. After his death, I couldn't ride my pink bicycle anymore because whenever I wanted to ride it, I remembered my grandfather and the wonderful moments we had had together and I would start to cry.

In conclusion, my old pink bicycle is a very important thing in my life. When I see it, I can see my grandfather, and I can remember the wonderful time when we were together. I never want to throw it away.



My First Bicycle

Bado Igor Landry, 4D

In my country, children usually get their first bicycles when they are eight or nine years old. Luckier children get their bicycles earlier. I was one of these lucky children because I got my first bike before I was three years old. Ever since, I have always kept the bicycle with me for two main reasons.

The first reason I want to keep my small bicycle is that it had been used by my mother before I got it. According to her, she was seventeen when her father gave it her because she had gotten very good results at school. When she grew up, instead of throwing away her father's gift, she kept it for me. I think I should do the same thing. I will also keep the bicycle for my children.

The second reason I want to keep the bicycle is the memory of my dear grandfather, who died when I was very young. This is because although my mother was the one who gave me the bike, it was my grandfather who taught me how to ride it. I still remember when I first rode the bike. I fell down again and again and was badly injured. Fortunately, my grandfather was always there to take care of me and to give me advice. Because of his help, I was able to ride my bike very well before he died. Ever since, the bicycle has become the only thing to remind me of my dear grandfather.

To sum up, my bicycle is very important to me because it reminds me of the two people dearest to me in my life. I am sure that my future children will be happy to see this old bicycle because it has been used by many generations before them.



NOTES FROM THE STUDENT ADVISOR

BY DAVE BURNS

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

New students along with continuing students went on the first trip of the spring term during registration week. This gave us the opportunity to get to know one another and make new friends as well as to see some interesting things. We went to the Rothko Chapel and then to the nearby Menil Collection, a museum that has art from many countries and cultures. Next, we went to the Galleria, where students and teachers shopped and had lunch. The trip ended with a stop at the Waterwall for some photos, and then we headed back home to UH.

In February, we had the LCC class photo and sports tournament. After the photos, many students went to the UC Game room to participate in billiards, table tennis, and bowling. The winners were as follows:
Bowling: 1st – Erencan Yilmaz, 2nd – Alassane Toure, and 3rd – Drissa Diakite; **Billiards:** 1st – Meshal Alenazy and 2nd – Yen-Chun Lu; **Table Tennis:** 1st – Salloom Alsallom and 2nd – Abdulmajeed (Medo) Aldakhil.



The next event was the LCC Culture Festival. We shared our cultures as we tasted dishes from around the world prepared by both students and staff. We had plenty of good food, and we enjoyed viewing beautiful clothes from the many different cultures. A variety of music was played, and students danced to their own music as well as the music of other cultures. New this term was the addition of games such as chess and backgammon, producing some rather competitive bouts. Thanks to everyone for helping make the Culture Festival a big success.

As this is being written, we are getting ready for our final field trip of the term. We are going to Huntsville State Park! This is a day when we can all relax, have a picnic, hike in the woods, and enjoy being out by the lake. I hope everyone has a good time.

The day after the trip, the semester comes to an end with the graduation ceremony and a reception. We wish good luck to those students who will be leaving us. For those who will be returning, start planning for the summer and prepare to welcome the new students who will be joining us.

SOCCER TEAM

The LCC soccer team, the Falcons, won the UH intramural soccer championship! The UH intramural tournament playoffs were held on Saturday, April 3. After two rough games and a forfeit from one of their opponents, the Falcons prevailed. The LCC Falcons are once again the UH CHAMPIONS!

The day was not without its excitement, however. Soon after the second game began, Servando Hernández Vargas, our captain and coach, suffered a dislocated shoulder and was taken by

ambulance to the hospital. Just as his friend and I arrived to meet him there,

a soccer player from another team was checking in with a bandage around his head and eye. One of the hospital employees commented, "Who says soccer isn't a contact sport?"

I am happy to report that Servando was x-rayed, examined, and released.

It was a great day.

The Falcons represent us well and are a real asset to the LCC. Please join us in congratulating them. Our team included Kassoum Traore, Mohamed Hadji Traore, Fawaz Alsalloum, Abdulmajeed (Medo) Aldakhil, Saleh Aldakhil, Isa Alisa, Mana Al Dighrir, Moussa Diarra, Sigfrido Esperanza, and Pablo Ruggeri.

Go Falcons!!!!!!!

IMMIGRATION

Students in F-1 status need to make sure they maintain their immigration status. If you are planning to take a vacation during the break, see Dave Burns or Sam Long first. If you are travelling outside of the U.S., you need to either have your current

I-20 signed on the back or get a new one.

If you are planning on transferring to a new school for summer or on taking a summer vacation, please see Dave or Sam to make sure you are following the immigration rules. If you have any doubts or questions about immigration, be sure and see us. It is very important that you maintain your F-1 status. It is very difficult to get your student status back if you lose it.



POETRY

My Broken Heart

Youma Moulekafou, 4C

My heart, this small box where I keep my feelings, my joy and sadness, is crying. It is crying all day and all night long. It is crying because I have lost the most important thing in my life, My grandmother, who was my world. She did everything for me. She was my mother, my father, my grandmother, and my friend at the same time. We were so close... My dream was to finish my studies, start working, and make a family. I wanted to make her really proud of me. Proud of the little girl that she built, Who became an accomplished wife Unfortunately, it is still a dream. Why is it a dream? Because she died on May 25 of last year, Which was the worst day of my life. My dream has shattered. It is really hard to desire something, And know or believe that you can now never reach your goals. Life has no meaning to me now because I have lost a part of me. That is how I now feel.

(This poem is written to my loving grandmother, who died last year.)

My Love

Ahmad Zareei, 4B

When I saw you on that rainy day,
I told myself that you are my love.
I tried to tell you that I had found my love,
But you left and I felt angry.
I wanted to kill myself without your beautiful face.
Your eyes were more beautiful than the moon.
I stayed where I had first seen you,
But you never came to satisfy me.
I complained to God and asked why I should suffer from such love.
I believed that you would never come to see me again,
But then I saw you yesterday and told myself that I would let you go.
But I didn't do that because I wanted to keep your love in my heart forever.

My Glass Heart

Wael Al Mateeq, 4B

You are the only thing that I have and don't want to lose.
You are my hope, my dream, my life; you are my love.
When you smile, it is just like refreshing my face with cold water.
I remember the times we had.
I remember the things that still make me cry.
I wish that I could go back into time.
I wish to hug you once again.
I know the way to your heart is long and impassable.
But have you ever heard of making the impassable passable?
My heart is a house of glass.
Try not to throw a stone at it because it will easily break.

Shadows of My Heart

Saleh Aldakhil, 4C

Everyone has their own feelings.
They might be good or bad.
No one can control his or her feelings because it happens naturally.
Missing my family or friends makes me upset.
Three months ago, my uncle had a car accident; then two months later, he died.
Nine months ago, my sister, who had been married for ten years and had no children, had a son.
Just as we cannot control death, neither can we control birth.

Dreams of My Heart
Yuxing Zhou, 4B

A sheet of clouds in the sky.
I am standing beside the water pool.
Winds come to my face.
Natural smells of the fresh air.
I have on sunglasses and am staring at the sun.
The light is strong and direct.
The same sun and moon are on the earth.
But it is a different me and a different place at this time.
Families are in my mind, friends are in my heart.
I want to be a bird, to fly away.
I try to shake my head and take a deep breath.
Everything will be fine and my dream will come true.
Open eyes, for I have such a beautiful life in front of me.

My Heart
Abdullah Almosbih, 4C

I'm sitting in front of the pool at the university.
It looks like a lake this time, I don't know why!
A lot of people, friends, and classmates are around.
I can feel the sun's rays caressing my skin.
I'm enjoying Houston's beautiful weather today and so are the others.
I miss home, especially at this moment.
I feel love -- hot, shy, and cold.
I feel everything in front of me and behind me is looking at me!
The view is out of this world, and so is my heart at times.
Sometimes I feel it when I'm alone, when I'm happy and even when I'm sad.
I can't tell myself the truth because it always changes, just as people do.
Every single morning I look at the mirror and speak to myself: "Who am I?"

Holding Whole My Love for You
Xiaoqian Huang (Anita), 4B

Can you see that star hanging on the nook of the sky?
It looks very lonely but is pretty adamant.
You won't break that piece from persisting, will you?
Because that is the mood which means I miss you so much,
When I stand on the other side of the ocean.
Can you discover those flowers beside you?
They are blossoming with beautiful flowers.
You don't want to bother their beauty, do you?
They symbolize every colorful moment which I have experienced with you.
Can you feel those pieces of leaves which are falling from above you?
They are covering around and embracing you softly.
You don't want to clean them away from your clothes, do you?
Because they are telling you how deep is my love.

My Lonely Heart
Meansy Phokapan, 4C

Have you ever felt that there are many people around,
But your heart is still so lonely?
Many may come and pass your way,
But no one special.
Have you ever felt your heart is looking for someone
When you are confused and dispirited?
But there is no one.
Far away from home this loneliness happens,
All day and all night.
Every minute and every breath,
The only thing I can feel is missing.



My Heart
Linh Nguyen, 4C

Who are you?
When my heart feels cold,
You come and warm it up.
You take care of all my feelings.
Let me call you "my mom."
Who are you?
When my heart feels upset,
You come and soothe it.
You console and hold me tight.
Let me call you "my father."
Who are you?
When my heart feels lonely,
You come and tell me that
You're always by my side.
Let me call you "my friend."
Who are you?
When my heart gets hurt,
You come and give me your shoulder.
You listen to me and make me smile.
Let me call you "my love."

FOLKTALES

The Butterfly Lovers

Xuejiao Dong (Jo), 3C

Long, long ago, there was a landlord surnamed Zhu. He had a daughter named Zhu Yingtai who was very beautiful and smart and liked learning very much.

However, girls were not permitted to go to school during that old time. So she had to stay at home and look through the window at the students coming and going on the street every day. She envied them very much and thought, "Why does a girl have to stay at home and do embroidery? Why I can't go to school?"

Suddenly she went to her parents and told them with courage, "Dad, Mum, I want to go to Hangzhou to have classes. I can wear a man's garments and act like a man and I will not be recognized. I promise. Please let me go, please!" The old couple didn't agree at first but had to do so later because Yingtai implored them continually.

The next morning, Yingtai and her maid, both in men's suits, set out happily to Hangzhou after bidding farewell to her parents.

At school she met a classmate named Liang Shanbo who was excellent and knowledgeable. They were like old friends from the moment they first saw each other. The two talked and discussed a lot from then on. Later, they decided to be "sworn brothers" and became more intimate than before.

Spring went and autumn came. Three years had passed. It was time to say goodbye to her teacher and return home. Zhu Yingtai felt she loved Liang Shanbo very much after three years' studying together. Liang also hated to see her go home although he didn't know that she was a girl actually. They missed each other day and night after their parting. Several months later, Liang Shanbo went to visit Zhu Yingtai and, with surprise and rejoicing, he found that Yingtai was a girl.

Later, Liang Shanbo sent a woman matchmaker to Zhu's home to get the permission to marry Yingtai. But the

landlord had already accepted the proposal of a young man surnamed Ma, a son from a rich family. Liang Shanbo felt utterly sad and got severely sick. Soon he died. Two beautiful butterflies flying out of the tomb danced elegantly, freely and happily in the sun.

Yingtai, who opposed her father's decision about marrying her to Master Ma, became strangely silent when she received the message about her brother Liang's passing away. She put the red wedding apparel on and got into the bridal sedan. When the party escorting the bride passed by the tomb of Liang Shanbo, the wind blew hard out of anticipation. The party had to stop for the time being. Yingtai came out from the sedan and took the red wedding attire off and was just in white. She cried loudly and sadly in front of the tomb. A sudden thunderstorm came and the tomb split amazingly with a loud noise. Yingtai, who loved Liang deeply, jumped into the tomb with a smile before others could realize it. Then the tomb closed with a loud noise again. The wind ceased and the clouds scattered. Flowers were dancing in the wind. Two beautiful butterflies flying out of the tomb danced elegantly, freely and happily in the sun.

The Hundred Knots of Bamboo

Nam Hoang Ngo, 3C

A long time ago, a laborer worked for a landowner. The worker and the landowner's daughter were deeply in love. Therefore, in order to motivate this worker, the landowner promised him that he could marry his daughter after three years. Believing the promise, the man worked hard without minding it. When the time arrived, the landowner broke his promise and arranged a marriage for his daughter with another rich man. However, the landowner gave the laborer a final condition, which was to find a stalk of bamboo that had one hundred knots before the rich man could marry his daughter. The laborer

searched everywhere in the forest, but he couldn't find this bamboo. Finally, however, the laborer found it with the help of God. He came back just before the wedding and made the landowner follow through with his promise. As a result, the laborer was able to marry the landowner's daughter and they lived happily together forever.

A Chinese Folk Hero

Guanfei Li (Daniel), 3C

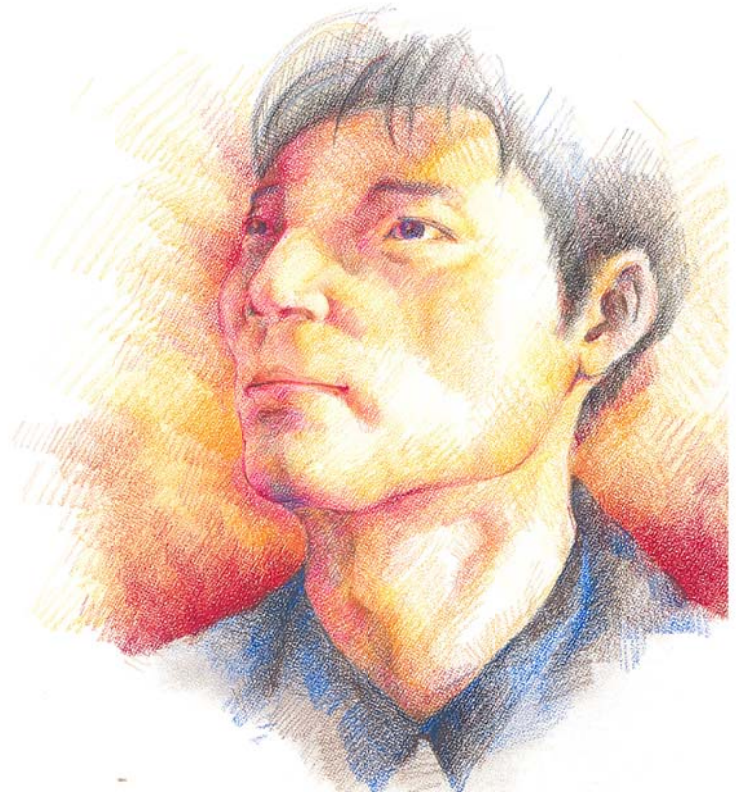
Long long ago, there were ten suns in the sky, so it was extremely hot. Of course, plants couldn't grow well. There was no water to drink, and almost nobody could live. However, there was a man named Yi. He was strong and smart, and he could use a bow and arrows very well. He used the arrows to shoot down nine of the suns. After that, the plants grew beautifully. Because there was just one sun in the sky, it was not so hot or cold. In addition, there was more and more water for people to drink. Yi is a hero in people's hearts.

The King's Shoes

Tasneem Alsibaa, 2A

A long time ago, there was a king who governed a large state. One day he decided to make a long journey into the wilderness. After he came back, he felt tired and his feet were swollen because he had walked for a long time along a bumpy road. He issued a decree that all the streets should be covered with leather. However, one of his counselors advised him to take two small pieces of leather and just cover the bottoms of his feet. This was the beginning of the production of shoes.

If you want to live happily in this world, don't try to change the world. Try to change yourself first, and then try to make the world better.



Original artwork by LCC student
Cherng-Hann Lee (Ben), 3D



Congratulations,
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LCC graduates!



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