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Director's Message By Joy Tesh

When I met many of you at the First Assembly of the Language and Culture Center at the beginning of this term, we were huddled in the Cougar Den in heavy coats, trying to stay warm. Surely you remember that morning. Winter storm warnings were on the radio and television, and we were worried that the university might be closed because of an impending ice storm. On that very cold day in January, I promised you better weather before the end of the term. Well, at last, spring is here. We have all survived, and I am able to keep my promise. Congratulations on making it through the winter. I am

sure that your hard work and careful study have resulted in language skills that are now blossoming like the Texas wildflowers.

Very often I talk with students about their experiences as they study in our program. Most students tell me they love their teachers and their classmates. The concerns of students usually come down to those of time and money. Most students hope to master this language quickly and with as little cost as possible. I certainly understand that, and I want to tell you why I am sure you made a good decision when you chose to study with us in the Language and Culture Center.

Our Intensive English Program is an academic preparation program and not a test preparation program. We have great respect for the TOEFL, but we do not teach to the TOEFL or any other test. Our experienced teachers are in the business of preparing LCC students to succeed in the university. Our brochure states that our curriculum is designed to help students read, understand lectures, take notes, write compositions and



Director's Message (cont.)

papers, make verbal presentations, and acquire the full range of skills necessary for successful study at an American university.

We want you to move as quickly as you can through this process, and we will work with you to make that possible. We have made our case to university committees that a student who completes level six in the Intensive English Program of the Language and Culture Center may be better prepared than a student who has simply submitted a certain score on a certain test. We are taking you through experiences that will prepare you for the whole university experience, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and intercultural communication.

Already students who are academically admissible and who have successfully completed level six in the Language and Culture Center are admitted to undergraduate study in the University of Houston without a TOEFL score. We are now in discussion with international admissions and graduate programs to make this same TOEFL waiver available to students at the graduate level. We are very hopeful that in the near future, admission to graduate study will be possible from level six without the need to present a TOEFL score.

The Language and Culture Center has gained the respect of departments and colleges on campus after more than thirty years of success in preparing students to do good work in academic institutions of higher learning. We congratulate you on your decision to study with us this semester, and we know you will represent us well as you go forth to study in American colleges and universities. Thank you for giving us the privilege of working with you as you begin your important journey. I wish you the best as you complete the spring term of 2007, and I look forward to continuing this journey with many of you as you return in May for summer in the Language and Culture Center.

**Andrés Paez, Chia-Lin Ho, Brenda Beatriz Hernández, and Puthik Tep Receive
LCC Scholarships**
Sandy Hartmann, Associate Director

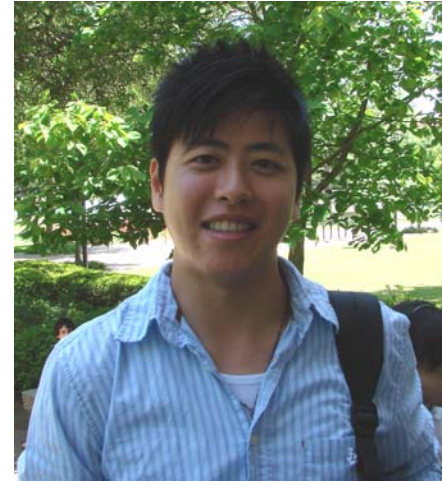
The Language and Culture Center is pleased to announce that it now awards four scholarships each term instead of three per term, as had been done over the past years. The scholarships are awarded to returning students who best combine academic excellence and leadership with international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Traditionally, a full scholarship honors Joyce Merrill Valdes, the founder and first director of the Language and Culture Center. Now, a second full scholarship honors Joseph O. Davidson, who served as director of the LCC for 22 years before retiring in February of 2006. These two scholarships cover the cost of tuition, fees, and medical insurance for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. In addition to the Valdes and Davidson scholarships, 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 14, 2006, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to **Andrés Paez**, the Davidson scholarship to **Chia-Lin Ho**, and the two merit scholarships to **Brenda Beatriz Hernández**, and **Puthik Tep**.



Andrés Paez was awarded the Valdes scholarship. Andrés, who is studying in level 6, is from Ecuador and his native language is Spanish. He has been a student at the LCC for two terms. After he completes his study of English, he plans to major in mechanical engineering at the University of Houston. Andrés remarked, “Thanks to the scholarship I was able to continue studying at the LCC, as my country was going through a very tense political/economic situation and my parents were not going to be able to send my tuition money until April.” He added, “I learned that studying hard pays off. I feel very proud to have been the recipient and I will always keep up the good work that entitled me to it.”



Chia-Lin Ho was awarded the Davidson scholarship. Chia-Lin, who plans to pursue a major in mechanical engineering, hails from Taiwan and speaks Taiwanese. An LCC student for four terms, he is currently in level six. Upon receiving the scholarship he remarked, “Never give up! When I first started, I was a level one student. My English was really poor and I was older than most of the students. At one point, I really wanted to give up.” Chia-Lin says that receiving the scholarship has proved to him that everyone can achieve their goals if they don’t give up.



Brenda Beatriz Hernández was a recipient of a merit scholarship. Brenda is from Venezuela and her native language is Spanish. She is currently studying in level six and intends to pursue a master’s degree in business at UH. When she was awarded the scholarship, Brenda said, “Receiving this scholarship is an important reward for my continuous effort in the program. It also encouraged me to keep working hard in level six.”



Puthik Tep was also a recipient of a merit scholarship. Puthik, a student in level 6, is from Cambodia and her native language is Khmer. Her field of study is civil engineering and she plans to begin a master’s degree in Project and Construction Management in the fall of 2007. Puthik commented that receiving the scholarship was a memorable event in her life. She added, “It reminds me that tenacity always gets good feedback. Just try your best.”



Memories of Home

The Desert

Rokiatou Diallo, 2C

I love the desert because it makes me feel spiritual. I especially like the sunrise and the sunset in the desert. In my country, Mali, I go to the desert on the weekends to relax. I leave my city, Bamako, with my friend and drive to the desert. When we arrive in the desert in the evening, we walk about. We listen to the birds in the bushes and small trees. We look at the tall sand dunes and we look far away to the hills. In the desert, there is so much space. We can see for 40 kilometers. We look at everything around us, especially the orange and red sunset. When the night comes, we feel relaxed. Then we look at the sky and the stars in the sky. We can't forget the beautiful sky. Finally, we feel happy, and we feel alone with God in that beautiful "picture." We lay our blankets on the sand, build a fire, and eat some dinner. We make Malian coffee. Then we go to bed because we are waiting for another beautiful "picture" in the morning.

Typical Evening with My Family

Bassam Ababten, 2B

When I finished my school day at 12:30 pm, I went home. I was alone there because both of my parents were at work. I did my homework until 2:30 pm, when my parents came home. We had lunch, which was rice, chicken, and something sweet. I played soccer with friends between 4 and 5 pm. After I finished playing soccer, I drank Arabic coffee with my parents. Next, I studied, and after that, my mother reviewed what I had studied. Finally, I had dinner with my parents and went to bed at 8:30 pm. When I remember those typical evenings with my family, I hope those times will return.



A Typical Family Evening

Yoo Seung Jung, 2B

My family is composed of five people: my parents, my twin brothers, and me. I am the eldest son. Mostly, I spent my evenings with my family. Those times were very comfortable and fun; we enjoyed them. When Father came home from work at about 7pm, we ate our dinner. If it was a special day, we went out to have dinner with our uncle's family. After dinner, we often had discussions about our problems, studies, health, Father's work, and relatives. After our discussions, we watched TV news, documentaries, or variety shows. When I think about those family evenings, I want to have those times again. When I go back to Korea, I will do it.

My Grandmother

Shao-Chih Lin, 2B

My grandmother is my mother's mother. She was born in Taipei and lived in the nightmarket there for many years. She is probably 72 years old now. When I was a baby, she took care of me every day, and when I was a young boy, she always made fried rice for me. Her cooking is really delicious; I like it very much. Sometimes, she took me to work with her. One day, I got hurt when I fell from a second floor. Grandmother came running to me and asked, "Are you hurt, my dear?" After that, I began to think that I have to protect her when I grow up.



NATIONAL PRIDE

Why you should visit my country...

Meifang Chen, 4D

Do you know which country is the third largest area in the world, has about 5,000 years of history, and is very famous? Yes, it's China, which is developing fast now. I'm proud to be Chinese. China has delicious food and many famous places. It has had a very important role in the world. In addition, Chinese people are all around the world. So you have no reason not to visit my country. I'll persuade you through three ways: Chinese history and culture, Chinese food, and famous places.

A long history gave China a very unique culture. Chinese words aren't made up of letters like English; instead they consist of strokes. Thus, many foreigners think Chinese words are difficult to learn. In addition, when Chinese people meet, they prefer to shake hands rather than hug. Moreover, Chinese people celebrate the Lunar New Year, but western countries don't. China has 56 different kinds of nations. Each of the nations has its own traditional culture and clothing. So, it is interesting to learn about the varied Chinese culture.

Let's talk about Chinese food. It's well known to everyone that most Chinese food is delicious. So, there are many Chinese restaurants in the world. Chinese food is made of both fancy food worthy of a king and home-style dishes. Because each province has its own habits and taste, each province has very different dishes. For example, in Sichuan province, people like spicy food, but in Shanghai they don't. Probably, the most famous dishes are Lu, Su, Chuan, and Yue dishes.

Finally, we can't miss Chinese fa-

mous places. The Great Wall, I think, is almost a household word. It can be seen on the surface of the earth from outer space. Also, you must go to Guilin, which has very beautiful mountains and water. You will feel like you are in a picture there. Furthermore, Jiuzhaigou, Tai Mountain, and Huang Mountain also attract many visitors every year.

So, how can you miss such a good place? Chinese people are so friendly that they are happy to tell you about their culture, cook delicious foods for you, and they can be your good guide. Don't think about it any more; just plan your next vacation in China.



Dibury Bationo, 4D

Around the world, there are many places to see and many countries to visit. Each country has something special, like China with its Great Wall or the U.S. with its Niagara Falls. However, if you are a tourist looking for exotic adventures, let me invite you to Burkina Faso, where people never get bored.

Burkina Faso must be one of the most traditional countries in Africa. Throughout the whole year, we have many cultural events you would like to attend. For example, we have the Panafrican Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, which is the largest African film festival and is dedicated to promote African movies. Burkina Faso also has a national cultural event called Semaine National de la Culture to celebrate what makes Burkina Faso unique. We also organize the International Art and Craft Fair of Ouagadougou, which

is the most well-known event in Burkina. All the professional artists gather for a week to show their works. I especially recommend that you attend the Atypical Nights of Koudougou. It is a music performance that usually lasts a week. You will be able to listen to live traditional music.

For those who would like more action, a side trip is worth the price. First, I recommend visiting the National Museum and the Museum of Manega. And if you have sculpture skills, don't forget to pack your tools because you have the opportunity to practice in the site of Loango. Be sure to see the Kassena Traditional Houses. For sensational activities, you may climb the Mount Sanguie and/or Tenakourou, which offer gorgeous panoramas. People who like hunting can go to the Park of Arly.

Finally, the most special aspect of this country is the people. Burkinabe are the symbols of African reputed hospitality. You will always feel welcome in their houses; your pain will be their pain and your joy, their joy. Visiting my country can give another lifestyle experience like living without some facilities or sharing a common meal. And you will learn a different way of thinking.

To summarize, cultural exchange, social openness and natural world experiences are some valuable reasons for you to visit Burkina Faso. Don't miss any opportunity to go there.



The 2002 World Cup in South Korea

Su Hyun (Sylvia) Cho, 3D

2002 was the time of the soccer World Cup in South Korea. The government prepared for the World Cup for a long time with Japan. Korea and Japan discussed a lot of progress for the World Cup. South Korea built several soccer stadiums in Seoul and Jeju Island. When they finished preparing for the World Cup, they invited the whole world's people. Many people visited Seoul and they encouraged their own country's soccer team. The opening was in June 2002. It was very exciting. Most Koreans wore red shirts. Red is a symbol of the Korean soccer team. That has a big meaning and is changing to mean South Korean. The meaning of red was really bad before the World Cup because of North Korea. South Koreans thought red meant communism. The year 1945 in the Korean war made red fearful to South Koreans. However, young people in South Korea do not care about that meaning, and they do not remember the terrible war.

They tried to make new evolution, so they broke with the past bad symbolism of red. As a result, almost all South Koreans were wearing red shirts during the World Cup. When the South Korean team played the soccer game, everywhere in Korea turned red. The people of Korea felt unity. Even though it was not short term, four months, people continued to encourage the soccer players. Many people met and saw games together. Then they were singing and yelling to cheer on their soccer team. Finally, our country got a great finish, 4th, and people called it the "Myth in South Korea's Soccer." It was the first time that the Korean soccer team had a good finish in the World Cup. The World Cup ended in October 2002. Despite the passage of five years, people in



An Important Monument in My Country

Kadi Koita, 3D

One important monument in my country is the statue of Kuame Kuruma. Kuame Kuruma was an important personality in Guinea, our neighboring country. In the past, my country had a great relationship with him. After his death, my country's president decided to erect a statue of him. The statue is made of wood and is situated on the main corner of one area in the center of Bamako, our capital city. He is sitting and looking in the west direction. He is fat and is wearing a long dress for men called "forokia." He has a large forehead and a receding hairline. He has small eyes, a straight nose, and large lips. He has a long neck. His arms are covered by his dress, and his hands sit on his knee. There are sandals on his feet. He looks sad. Around the statue there are flowers which make it very beautiful. This statue attracts the regard of everyone who passes it.



The Life of Sejong the Great

Min Su Kim, 3D

There are many important people in Korean history. However, if I were to choose one, I would choose Sejong the Great. He invented the Korean alphabet. He was born in 1397 and was the third prince of Taejong, who was the fourth king of Josun. He was different from other people when he was a child. Many children liked to play games, but Sejong liked to read books and study new knowledge. According to the stories, he was weak because he was always reading, so one day his father banned reading books. However, Sejong found one book and read it again and again. He finally memorized the book.

In 1418 Sejong was made the crown prince instead of Yangneng, who was the first son of Taejong. In Josun's law, the crown prince can only be the first son. But Yangneng knew that Sejong was better than him, so he gave Sejong the crown prince title. And then eventually Sejong became the fifth king of Josun when he was 22.

After that, he invented a lot of things for people. In 1423 he made a rain gauge, 200 years before it was discovered in Italy. He always thought about his people. Most of all he thought about words. At that time, Josun's people used the Chinese alphabet. It was very difficult for people, so he decided to make a new alphabet. But he was weak when he was young and, to make matters more miserable, he fell ill after he decided to make a Korean alphabet. However, he didn't give up. Finally he made a Korean alphabet in 1446. It expressed sound perfectly so that you can compare Korean to any language. But Sejong relapsed into silence. In the end, he died in 1450. Even if his life was short, we always remember that he is the most important person in our history and we are educated about him.

The Oriental Pearl TV Tower in Shanghai

Li Ye, 3D

If you are planning to visit Shanghai, there are three reasons that you should go to the Oriental Pearl TV Tower. First, the OTV tower is 1,536 feet high. That number is amazing in Asia. Certainly it's the third-tallest TV tower in the world. The OTV tower was built from 1991 until 1995, when it was completely done. Second, you should visit the tower to see the restaurant, which is what attracted me. When I went there, I had to take the elevator to the second ball. The elevator was so fast—its rate is seven meters-per-second—it probably took only a couple of seconds to get there. I thought the restaurant was so huge and light. If you're standing close to a window, you can see all of the beautiful scenery in Shanghai. As I sat at my table, enjoying my lunch, I felt something different. The waiter told me that restaurant revolves, but I didn't feel it. It was amazing to me. Third, if you want take a picture, you should go to the third ball because you can see the best scenery from there. Also, you can use a telescope to see another country. Finally, going to the OTV Tower is the best way to visit Shanghai.



A Terrible Time in Vietnam's History

Mai Huyen Thi (Thin) Vu, 3D

In 1968, Vietnam had to take part in the war against the U.S. The military of the U.S. stayed mostly in the South of Vietnam. And also in that year, Vietnam had a famine. There were the thousands of people who didn't have a house, food, medicine, or even clean water. They had to live on the streets, and they also died there. You could see many feeble people, or you could see a corpse on the street if you went outside. With that circumstance, the Vietnamese had problems and difficulties in their economy, politics, and so on. My country was very poor at that time. The life of the Vietnamese was one of terrible poverty. We tried so much to overcome all of these difficulties, and we were able to. After the Paris convention was signed, the U.S. military had to leave. The Vietnamese endured serious outcomes such as the chemical poison that directly influenced people through many generations, the damage to the economy, and so on. After more than 30 years of being dominated, Vietnam gained independence in 1975. At this time, the government and people rebuilt the country along with the assistance of Russia and other countries with similar social systems. Vietnam gradually recovered its economy and politics. Although Vietnam is at peace, the war caused a painful wound for every Vietnamese.



A Brief History of Colombia

Nestor Sánchez, 3D

The history of Colombia could be described by several significant events that have happened since earlier times to this day. The first important event was when the Spanish took over of a lot of territory in South America. The Spanish established a colony on the north coast of South America in 1500. Then in 1549, Santa Fe de Bogotá was named the capital city of "New Granada." New Granada was a big country formed by today's Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. For a long time, the Spanish had the power and formed the government in this territory. In 1810, a representative group of citizens was created in Bogotá in order to defy Spanish authority. For around ten years, Colombia was in the war of independence until 1819, when Colombia, with the Battle of Boyaca, gained its freedom. In 1863, this new republic was named the "United States of Colombia," and finally in 1886, the country adopted the name of "Republic of Colombia." Also in 1886, Colombia had its first constitution. Since then, Colombia has been a free country with many treasures, beautiful places, and very nice people, but with a lot of social problems due to wrong, bad, and ineffective politics of state. All those social problems have resulted in many internal conflicts that have injured Colombia's economy. In short, Colombia's history is very long, interesting, and with many things to know.



A Special Gift

Karelys Valerio, 3C

I have a special gift that I received the day of my graduation. This is a beautiful necklace. The necklace is gold. My family gives gold only on very special occasions. Also, in my country it is expensive. The reason for giving gold on a very special occasion is I can have my necklace for all my life. I can remember this moment when I look at my present. It is in my home in my country because I can use this present only for a special party or celebration. Also, I don't want to lose it.

My parents gave me the necklace after I received my degree in Chemical Engineering two years ago. It is funny to remember this moment because I already knew about my parents' present. I was so happy and excited when I received my present because the beautiful necklace is a symbol of my parents' love for me. I can not describe this moment. It is difficult for me. I love to remember this moment. I began a new life on that day. My mother bought the necklace with my sister at a famous jewelry store. They hid the present and I didn't see it, but I knew that something was happening. They didn't tell me anything about the present. They found a spectacular necklace for me, and I love it.

In addition to my necklace, I have a beautiful graduation ring. My parents paid for this gift too, but I got to choose the ring that I liked before my graduation day. Both of these presents will always remind me of my parents' amazing love for me.

Silvana White, 3C

My special gift is a diamond ring that I got on my 15th birthday. My parents gave it to me. This day was very special for me. I turned 15 years old, and I had a big party. I went to my first dance with a boy. I was very nervous because of this. My parents gave me the diamond ring in the beginning of the night on July 25, 1992, before my party. I never will forget this because this ring was my grandmother's. I did not know my grandmother, but I saw the picture of her. She was a small woman, the same as me at 15 years old. This ring fit perfectly on my little fingers. This was very emotional for me because my relatives always talked about the resemblance between me and my grandmother. I believed it after this. After that, my little fingers grew and my ring was too little for me. I can't use it anymore. Now it is stored, but I will give it to my first daughter when she turns 15 years old.



My Dream

Mohanna Alotaibi, 4D



Do you think my dream is getting an expensive car or something like this? **NO**. My dream is completing my studies in the U.S. and getting the certificate from my university in order to work in a big petroleum company in my country.

Around the world, there is a lack of people who can speak English fluently and who have a high level of education to fill the gaps in the international companies. So, I can see my dream coming to me because I promised myself to study hard.

Who can believe that the U.S. has a lack of people to fill the high-tech jobs, and who can believe that there are thousands of jobs available in the U.S. ?However, very few people can apply for these jobs because they depend on knowledge of both physics and mathematics.

My dream won't stop at one major. After getting a job, I will complete my education in another field like mathematics because I want the chance of getting an even better job. When I finish my education and get a good job, I will get married, have a big family, and spend my whole life with them.

Before I came to the U.S., I was afraid of being homesick, but I have learned a new motto: "No gain without pain."

Cultural Insights

A Comparison of the Wedding Celebration in Saudi Arabia and Korea

Yeon Suk Choi, 4 D

Which ceremony excites you the most? Sometimes we have to attend a ceremony to celebrate events such as weddings, birthdays, promotions, and funerals. However, wedding ceremonies make us the most excited. Married couples and guests come together and they express their heartfelt pleasure enthusiastically. Comparing the Saudi Arabian and Korean wedding customs, I discovered that the two countries have many differences in formality, procedure, and customs for the wedding.

In Saudi Arabia, the wedding ceremony progresses very carefully and slowly. It takes almost all day to get married. Guests who attend the wedding have to sit on different

chairs, one side for the groom's family and one side for the bride's family. There are many delicious foods for the guests and also many parties to enjoy. The most religious person officiates the wedding. After the wedding, the newly married couple goes to the bride's house, and there they pray to God about their future. After that, the couples go on their honeymoon.

In contrast, Korean weddings are changing rapidly due to the growing society. Weddings are becoming much simpler than before. The wedding ceremony takes only about thirty minutes, and then the guests enjoy and celebrate the wedding. In Korea, the person who is respected the most by the couple officiates the wedding. Sometimes, they omit the party after the wedding. In the latter case, they go on their honeymoon directly after the wedding.

In conclusion, although there are

some similarities in the way weddings are celebrated in these two countries, there seem to be differences in the formality and procedure of the ceremony. The Saudi Arabian wedding is more serious than the Korean wedding. In other words, Saudi Arabia's ceremony is conducted with the utmost solemnity.



Commonality

Daniel Ortega, 2A

The people in all civilizations have in common the use of technology and different forms of education. Through the long time of human beings on the planet, they have made many tools to survive, and until this time scientists investigate more ways to prolong life. For this they need education to obtain experience and technology in order to develop their purpose. Education is important because they can learn about others' prior experiences and follow procedures to gain new dis-

coveries. There are some universities in the U.S. where students can study for a scientific career, with the advantage of continuing their research in an important institute. Chile also has some universities where the students can obtain education for a scientific career, but not a lot of research institutes because the economic resources are lower than in the U.S. Finally, the human species has a long trail of knowledge. Many cultures all over the world are similar in the use of technology and different kinds of education.



A Special Talent

What is a talent that you have?

Ronnie Wu, 3C

If someone asks me what kind of talent do I have, I will tell them that I can do most kinds of sports well, especially swimming. Why am I so confident in swimming? I started to swim when I was five years old; it was about twenty years ago.

Here is the story about how I started to swim that early. Let me tell you the reason. When I was five years old, my mother traveled to Bali Island. Her friends took a banana-boat. When the driver let the boat flip, a little child fell into the sea. My mother was very nervous and screamed, "Help that child. He will die!" But the child's mother stopped everyone and said he could swim very well and he could swim back by himself. After that trip, my mother decided my brother and I needed to learn swimming when we were young.

So I swim every day and my swimming experience is very nice. In my senior high school, I was on the school swimming team. Nowadays, if I have a chance, I also like to swim. However, in Taiwan, a swimming pool is not easy to find.

This is my talent. I am happy to have it.

Ly Nguyen, 3C

When I was young, I was able to cook very well. I learnt how to cook by seeing my mother cook. First, I helped my mother cook a meal, such as preparing the food. For example, I washed vegetables and meat for cooking. I also cooked rice first because I find it easy to cook rice. It is very popular in my country. Then I could cook some regular foods. Finally, I was able to prepare a dinner completely. However, I also learnt about making cakes and drinks. To this day, I usually cook for my family's parties. I really can make delicious food. Moreover, I have to pay attention to safety, and I know which foods are good, healthful ones. I want to know more cultural foods from other countries. I will try to practice my skill in cooking forever. I feel happy when I cook. I feel happier if my food can bring health to everyone.

Sunghwa (Joey) Kang, 3C

A few years ago, I thought about my talent. I thought that I didn't have a special talent. It brought unhappiness to my life. Some people play the piano well, and other people have other special abilities. However, it is not that I can't do anything, but I have to be a specialist in something. One day, my friend, who is the president of a college, told me, "You make people laugh and feel happy." He suggested that I be the emcee for a festival, the biggest festival, which opens once a year. I was very worried and scared. But I was able to do it successfully. So then I realized what my talent was.

I like to talk with people. I will be a person who makes people happy. Going into detail, I have to be able to make tourists and visitors comfortable and pleased. I can do it speaking in Korean, but I can't do it in English yet. I want to use my talent to share my opinions and speak in English. Maybe four years from now, I will be able to be a specialist at a hotel or tourist agency. Then I can use my talent in my job.



Artwork by Henry Kim, 4D

Hae Rim Cho, 3C

I think my talent is playing the violin. When I play the violin, I am very happy. But practicing the violin is very difficult. When I practice the violin a long time, my arms ache. However, I am very happy. I like to play in an orchestra. When I was in music high school, my school had an orchestra. We practiced twice a week. The orchestra atmosphere was very fun. Sometimes I miss my high school orchestra. When I performed alone, I was very anxious. And I got stressed. So I like orchestras because an orchestra performance is with many people. Finally, after I finish university, I want to play with the Korean symphony or Houston symphony. I also want to teach young children. I really like playing the violin.



The Tournament

Oleg Tyan, 2B



My story is about my friend, Eric, who is an LCC student and an athlete. Every day, he practices wrestling in the gym; his training is very hard. He started his training seven years ago. Two weeks ago, we went to San Antonio for a Texas State Wrestling Tournament. When we arrived, no one noticed us, but when Eric started his warm-up exercises, people watched him carefully. At 10 am, he started wrestling and when he won, all the other athletes and other people were in shock. This was culture shock for the Americans because they didn't know Eric. They asked, "Who is he? Where is he from?" "Kazakhstan? Where is Kazakhstan?" Also, they said this was the first time the winner was not a resident of the USA. They said, "Good work, Eric!" Both of us were very happy because this was Eric's first win in America. He returned to Houston with two gold medals.



Issues Today

Level 6 students read several articles on the environment and global warming, and they viewed the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. They were asked what individuals, groups, and governments should be doing right now to address global warming.

Steps to Address Global Warming

Mun Seog Kim, 6C

Most people agree to the existence and significant results of global warming. Nonetheless, they have not made efforts proactively because huge capital is needed to deal with global warming, and they might have to give up their current convenient life. What we need to solve this issue is not radical but realistic and optimized ways that will be accepted by general citizens. It is better and faster to start with easy and cost-efficient actions. Firstly, we, on an individual basis, have to reduce consumption of energy, such as by using energy-efficient vehicles & electronic devices, and to recycle as much as possible. Secondly, we can participate in group activities to reduce greenhouse gases and to make our living practices more environmentally friendly, and in cooperative efforts to enlarge greenspace, for example, through tree-planting campaigns. Finally, government has to develop preventive and adaptive programs to address global warming with other countries. Because global warming is a global issue, if we do not enforce global cooperation, efforts of some developing nations would not be effective. Just do it now with possible, easy, and actionable solutions.

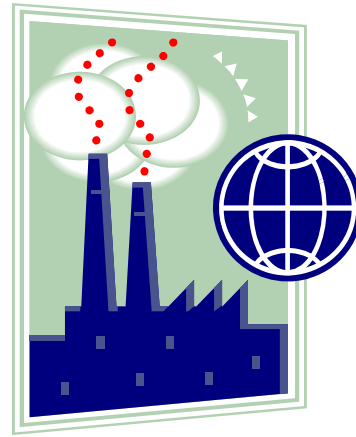
Countering Global Warming

Wai Heung (Seran) So, 6C

In order to reduce greenhouse gas emission, governments and individuals should take action now to address global warming:

Governments should:

- 1) impose regulations on industries such as airlines and car manufacturers to provide more fuel-efficient vehicles that can reduce greenhouse gas emission;
- 2) give incentives, e.g. tax incentive to corporations such as power companies to start using reusable energy instead of coal, which emits significant



greenhouse gas. Oil companies can inject carbon dioxide directly into underground geological formations. (Declining oil fields have been suggested as storage sites for carbon dioxide in order to reduce its emission.)

- 3) enhance infrastructure for public transportation.

Individuals should:

- 1) try to buy low greenhouse-emission gas vehicles
- 2) carpool or use public transportation if possible;
- 3) buy power from energy companies that generate their energy from reusable energy sources such as wind power and hydro power.



Super Size Me

Hector G. Romero, 6A

Super Size Me is a documentary film in which filmmaker Morgan Spurlock shows the harmful effects of eating fast food during a thirty-day period without exercising regularly. He chose McDonald's due to its popularity and commercial success. During this time period, Spurlock followed these rules: to have his breakfast, lunch, and dinner at McDonald's restaurants, eat every item on the menu at least once, and order the Super Size meal only when the option was offered to him.

Spurlock was thirty-three years old when he made this documentary. He had outstanding health, considered so by a cardiologist, a gastroenterologist, and a general practitioner who checked out Spurlock's physical condition before he started his experiment.

After thirty days of eating only McDonald's food and consuming an average of 5,000 calories per day, Spurlock's physical condition and even his psychological wellbeing, were severely damaged. He gained 24.5 lb (a 13% body mass increase), and he started to present liver problems and abnormal heart palpitations. He also developed a depressive tendency in addition to lethargy, constant headaches, and loss of sexual energy. He said that only eating more fast food could bring him a feeling of happiness, which was diagnosed by one of his doctors as an addiction to fast food. At the end of the film, it states that it took Spurlock almost a year and a

half of carrying out a strict diet to return to his normal (original) weight.

Fast food companies are responsible for the obesity rate in the U.S.

Morgan Spurlock in his film claims that fast food companies are responsible for the high obesity rate in the U.S. First of all, he exposes the fact that there are already too many franchises, which can be found everywhere—in airports, schools, malls, hotels, streets, and even hospitals. This creates a high probability for people to get their products. Secondly, there are also many highly processed food manufacturing companies that sell their high-calorie products to many U.S. schools; in this way, children and teenagers cannot receive quality nutrition. In addition, Spurlock brings up the marketing concept of McDonald's with its play parks, clowns, and cartoons, which clearly target children.

The nonexistent social awareness and moral values of the fast food industry

Spurlock claims that for those huge fast food companies, the only really important thing is money. They don't care about their customers' health at all. A proof of that is the lack of nutritional information that they offer to the customers about their products. Also, McDonald's spends an enormous amount of money on advertising, such as the \$1.4 billion that they invest in order to keep attracting clients while offering them low quality and highly processed meals.

Some critics of this film could argue that the deterioration of Spurlock's health was because he did it on purpose, consuming too many calories daily (5,000) without exercising at all, and those results were to be expected. But the reality showed effectively that McDonald's food is indeed harmful.



What to think

Morgan Spurlock as a director did a great job; the film is well done, was based on an original idea, and had an interesting topic. It's clear that he put a lot of care in the experiment control variables, but I disagree with his main claim. I cannot blame successful fast food companies for people's obesity. First of all, because their success is due to the market's demand, it indicates the preferences and even the needs of the population. So if the population is demanding fast, cheap, and unhealthy food, why should these companies deny it to them? Fast food franchises aren't at fault. The only responsible party for high obesity rates is the population itself, for not caring about what they eat. In fact, there are many healthy alternatives, such as trying to cook food with fresh vegetables at home, going to places like Subway or vegetarian restaurants, and getting more exercise. These options are available to all, yet people still choose McDonald's.

One final argument for not blaming fast food companies is that nobody (without a research purpose like Spurlock's) is going to eat only fast food three times per day and consume 5,000 calories daily without exercising. However, if it does happen, it is the choice of the person. Something similar happens with liquor stores; despite the fact that they sell alcohol, they are not responsible for the alcoholism of people. So we cannot blame the fast food industry for the high obesity rate.



In the fall semester of 2006, Ricardo Andrés (Andy) Castelo was the first recipient of the LCC's Joseph O. Davidson scholarship. At the end of the term, Andy was also selected to give the graduation speech. The LCC teachers and staff felt that Andy's thoughts reflected the spirit of the LCC.

Ms. Tesh, teachers, students of the Language and Culture Center, and honored guests:

It is really a pleasure for me to represent all my classmates from level six at this wonderful moment. Additionally, it is an honor being the first Joseph O. Davidson scholarship recipient.

We came from Argentina, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Lebanon, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Venezuela, and Vietnam to achieve different goals. We all brought the aspiration of improving our English and having a better education. Nevertheless, making this decision was hard. We left our homes, our families, and our friends. We needed to adapt ourselves into a new and different culture. We experienced happiness and sadness, cultural shocks and mental isolation. But fortunately, we were in a place where we could not only learn English, but also could reach personal growth and receive unconditional support: the LCC.

At this institution we had excellent and kind teachers like Carole and Jerry. They taught us how to speak more fluently during oral presentations, how to deal with grammar

when we are writing, and how to understand more accurately lectures, tapes, and videos. It was hard, but we wrote a research paper with more than 1500 words in English, something almost unbelievable for us. Moreover, we prepared a challenging oral presentation of 30 minutes long in order to practice speaking skills using very interesting topics.

The LCC was a place to make friends also. We had the fantastic experience of sharing nice moments in our classrooms with people from all over the world. We helped each other when we were sad, when we were missing the food of our mothers, the advice of our fathers, or the support of brothers and sisters. Furthermore, we had a nice Culture Festival where we cooked and tried delicious dishes from different countries.

At the same time, we learned something beautiful and invaluable: the respect of diversity.

Now we know more than ever that each person, each society, and each country has different values, ideas, and traditions. Something that for our culture is correct or normal may be just the opposite for another one. But because we are all human be-

ings, no matter what our race, religion, sex, or nationality, we can express our beliefs and thoughts in very different ways. The respect of these differences is the base of a peaceful coexistence.

I hope one day the entire world can learn more about this cultural integration. Maybe one day all the countries and all the societies will follow and apply this LCC model of cultural respect and friendship. That day

no one will be hungry,

children will not have to work,

there will be no corruption,

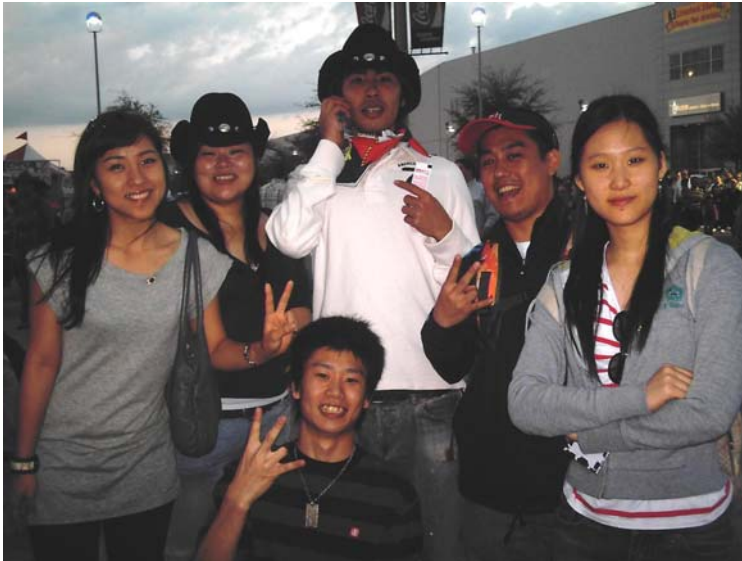
countries will not pollute the environment,

and there will be no more war.

Finally, I would like to dedicate all my achieved goals to my family, my friends, my teachers, my classmates, and to all the people in Latin America who work hard every day in very difficult conditions, but dreaming of a better life.



**LCC STUDENTS AND TEACHERS
WENT TO THE HOUSTON
LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO
ON MARCH 9.**





*Students and teachers
enjoy the spring LCC
Culture Festival.*







The LCC Culture Festival

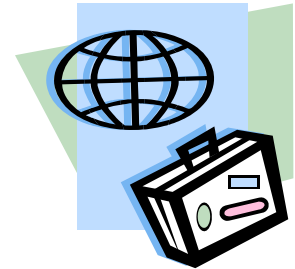
Su Hyun (Sylvia) Cho, 3D

The Culture Festival was one of the fun activities in the LCC. All of international students in the LCC joined together, and we had such a great time. The Culture Festival shows how many cultures exist in this world. That experience helps students who study English and other cultures in the LCC to learn many things. In specific, the students who join the Culture Festival can try other countries' foods and can see other traditional clothes and dance. That is a good special way of education for studying English and culture of the other countries. The students have to have English practice through play. It is not just

for fun; it is a good opportunity for students.

The students had to bring some foods from their own country. I prepared Kim-Chi pancakes and potato pancakes, which are traditional Korean foods. I had to spend about two hours to cook them, but it was fun. Also, some students were wearing their country's traditional clothes during the Culture Festival. Especially Kadi, Thin, and Li, who are my classmates, wore very pretty traditional clothes from their country. I envied them because I don't have my country's traditional clothes in the U.S. Anyway, I could

see many countries' clothes and enjoy foods for others. It was a wonderful, interesting experience for me. I had not eaten African foods or Saudi-Arabian foods before the Culture Festival, but they were delicious! The students introduced their food's description on a paper that was in front of their food. I ate almost all the kinds of foods there. In addition, I took many pictures with my friends in my class and the teachers in 3D. The shiny weather made nice pictures. I enjoyed such a wonderful time at the LCC Culture Festival.



An Unplanned Trip

María Palacio, 4D

Have you been dreaming about your perfect trip? I guess you have. It is an inner desire of every human being, and that's what I have been dreaming about too. But what about when it finally comes true and you discover that you don't know how to speak your paradise language! Well, it happened to me.

During my whole life, my dream had been to take a trip to Europe. Last year in July, unexpectedly, my best friend said to me, "Let's do it", and I was really excited about the idea, so my instantaneous answer was "Yes". It wasn't a planned trip. We just wrote down a list of the countries we expected to visit, got some information from the internet, bought the ticket, took our bags, and that was it.

Our first stop was Spain, where we had four great days, without any kind of communication obstacle. Luckily, Spanish is our native language. We found a cheap but good hotel, visited a lot of interesting places, and met amazing people. To make a long story short, the trip was just as I had dreamed.

The next step required taking a train called Eurostar, which would take us to Switzerland. We traveled for hours, and when we finally arrived, our nightmare began. Neither of us spoke German, French, or Italian; however, we took a taxi and with our bad English and body language, we asked the driver to drive us to a hotel. He started driving and drove for 50 minutes, and then he stopped in front of a big house. We paid him, took our bags out, walked towards the door, and knocked. A not-so-good-looking guy let us in, and with his finger pointed to the lobby. He didn't say a word, and obviously, we didn't either. He just gave us a key, and we went to the room. Although it didn't look very clean, we were really anxious to visit all the places; therefore, we just dropped our bags off, and left.

We were out for approximately seven hours, but when we came back, we had a big surprise. Our bags were in the lobby, and the guy looked kind of mad. We were trying to ask him what was the matter, but now our body language wasn't enough. He shouted a name, and miraculously, a woman appeared. She knew how to speak English and explained to us, "This hotel just rents the room for three hours or less." At that very instant, we discovered that we were in the wrong place. After a short talk, the woman called a taxi, and explained to the driver what we needed. Finally at 5 o'clock a.m. we went to bed and rested after a really hard day.

In conclusion, I would recommend that before you take a trip, you make your hotel reservations, or at least buy a good dictionary.

Spring Break

After Spring Break, Ms. Fallin, who is teaching 1A and 2A this semester, asked her students how they had spent their week off. Below are some of the paragraphs that her students wrote.

Ida Sawadogo, 2A

I was in the park on Friday, March 16. The first thing I noticed was the grass. It was green everywhere and it was nice. There were many people on it. I also saw many children running around the playground and someone riding their bicycle. Then I heard people laughing and yelling, and I also heard a baby crying. I walked around the park and I smelled barbecue, hot dogs, and many foods cooking. I drank coke and ate ice cream. They were very cold; I don't like frozen drinks. My two roommates and I sat on the ground and ate hot grilled meat. After that, we went to help the children ride their bicycles, and we played with the ducks in the pond. Although I was homesick and I was thinking about my family, I felt happy to walk around in the park.

Thu Bui, 2A

During Spring Break I was only at home and my friends worked full-time. However, we went to the cinema at 11:00 p.m. on the weekend. We saw a movie, *The Hitcher*, together. There were a lot of lights, curtains, and carpet in the theater. When the movie started, they turned off the lights. It wasn't a large room; it was like my classroom. In the movie, the main character was an actress. I don't remember her name. The movie's content was interesting. The killer was a violent person. He killed many people. The main actress and her boyfriend met many difficulties and dangers when they struggled with him, and her boyfriend died. Everyone watched it quietly, but my friend sat near me and she shouted, so every one turned around and looked at us.

Fatoumata Diallo, 2A

During Spring Break, I went to the movies with my cousin and his friends. We went to the 10:30 p.m. show. I saw a lot of people on this day. Before I entered the cinema, I heard music playing and people

laughing, talking, and shouting happily together. Before the movie began, I went to buy popcorn and drink. I smelled food but there was no food, only popcorn and drink. I also bought water because I was thirsty and it was a little expensive. The water was not cold, not hot. The screen was very big and it was crowded. After we sat down, there were no places. My cousin and his friends and I sat together. The title of the movie was *Dead Silent*. It was an awful movie and I was afraid. I saw a little girl crying. I heard many people screaming in the movie.

Abderamane Moujibourrahmane, 2A

When I went to the rodeo before Spring Break, I saw many people. Some people ate something and some people played. There were many things and activities in the rodeo, but I couldn't do everything. I went to the amusement park, and I tried the free-fall ride. When I went up in the free-fall, I was very afraid



because I looked down. When I was in the free-fall, I screamed loudly and I was very frightened. That was my first time to go up and down at the same time. Since I went to the rodeo, whenever somebody talks to me about the rodeo, I remember the free-fall and how I felt.

Khurelsukh Nyamgarav, 2A

Last week on Spring Break, I went to London and I saw a historical museum called Churchill Museum. Churchill lived in this small underground house in World War II. Now this house is a museum. Almost 100 people and all the U.K. cabinet members lived in this small house. There is a conference room, post room, and radio locator room. Also, there is a command room, document room, kitchen, and hospital room. All the rooms are dark and dusty. I felt interested and surprised because I learned how people lived during the war and how English people worked and lived. I will always remember this day when I was in London.

Hussain Alsugoor, 1A

On Spring Break I went to Galveston Beach. I saw a big beach and many people and cars. I smelled barbecued chicken. I also smelled the salty sea. Some women had strong perfume. I heard music from the cars and stereos. I also heard the birds calling and the dogs barking. I tasted sweet cake and the salty sea. The earth was smooth under my feet. My friends and I enjoyed our trip, and we were happy by the sea.

Mohamed Lamine Tall, 1A

On Spring Break I went to play soccer sometimes. I played at the UH soccer field. It was not very big but it was green. There were people from many countries. I heard the different languages, and I could not understand what they said, but I played with them. It was difficult because I didn't usually play with them. The sky was clear and it was a little cool. I was happy because I played with some people from other countries.

Thanh Nguyen, 1A

On Spring Break I went to a big mall. When I walked around, I smelled hot dogs and hamburgers. I heard people laughing and talking with family. It was very noisy and bustling. I bought some t-shirts and jeans. I also saw many clothes. In the mall there was a beautiful water fountain and some plants. I saw many musical instruments. I felt very happy and interested when I was there.

Chan Ho Park, 1A

In the Spring Break I visited Denver, Colorado to see my friend. My friend and I went to a casino. I saw a wheel with numbers on it and I saw many tables with many cards on them. Many people were gambling and they were not happy. Many people were shouting, "Go! Go!" I gambled. First, I won a game, but finally I lost my money. I had a good experience because I felt I learned an important thing. I lost a lot of money.



Spring Break Adventures

A Day of Fun as a Volunteer

Dibury Bationo, 4D

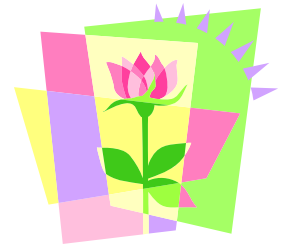
Why do people say, “Live every day as if it were your last one”? I guess it is because they want you to have fun and enjoy your life. Each day brings a certain amount of fun. One of my most special days was when I participated in a volunteer program during Spring Break. It was a day of trail building, telling jokes, and experiencing nature.

This day was special because I helped build a trail in the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center. It was so exciting. We cleared leaves and branches, put them in a carrier, and then ran. It was like a race to see who was the best and fastest worker.

After that, we took a rest for lunch. Inside the room, it felt like the world had shrunk. There was somebody from every corner of the world talking about their USA experiences and the mess they had had. Sometimes somebody brought up a joke or told a beautiful story.

At the end of day, we all went out to wander in this park. It was so beautiful to see the birds and all the little animals. We really enjoyed breathing the fresh and pure air while walking and talking about our own cultures.

My trip to this park was a great day of fun and a new experience. Maybe it was my best day in Houston. I think I will go there again and again.



My Frustrating Spring Break

Alper Ozcan, 6B

The last two weeks, one of which was the spring break, were pretty exhausting due to the things I went through. First, I got mugged in a gas station and lost all my IDs, credit and debit cards, along with my wallet. Second, I got some financial problems. Third, probably the most frustrating and upsetting one was having problems with my girlfriend, who is in Turkey.

About ten days ago, when I was getting gas for my car, two white males with masks and guns showed up and the classical conversation occurred: “Give me your wallet, you #@%&\$!!!” Following this event, I spent the night testifying with two detectives in the gas station, and two or three days after that, I had to identify the muggers among some photos. Since I had to be with the detectives, I wasn’t able to attend the LCC classes and probably it will cost me in the long term.

The day I got mugged was also the day I received the money (\$800) my father sent via Western Union. Consequently, that money was gone with my wallet, and not to freak my family out, I couldn’t tell them about that unpleasant event. Moreover, not to seem like an idiot, I couldn’t lie to them and tell them that I simply lost the money. Therefore, I have been having a very hard time due to the fact that I’m broke.

Finally, my girlfriend, with whom I have been deeply in love for two years, upset me with her strange and rhetorical questions about my purpose for being here. When we were in university, she graduated one year before I did since she is one year older than me, and she went back to Istanbul from Eskisehir. However, at that time I had had one more year before graduating and going back to Istanbul as well. Thus, we had been one year apart and it was a very unpleasant and emotionally frustrating one. At the end of that year, I went back to Istanbul for good; at least she thought so, and then she had to face the awful truth that I had decided to go to America for education. At first she seemed to be OK with that; however, it was the calm before the storm. When we were talking via MSN Messenger last week, she seemed to be very furious and desperate about our future. I can’t blame her since no one should wait and suffer from this kind of long distance relationship. It’s only been two months now and I miss her more than ever despite the fact that we weren’t able to see each other for six months last year. No one said it would be easy, and I know one thing for sure: if we can get over this, nothing will bring us down.

In conclusion, my last two weeks were a real nightmare for me due to the robbery, my financial problems, and the problems with my girlfriend. I think the best way is to accept the truth that life is a challenge and realize that I can’t do anything but stand and fight! I hope it is worth fighting for.

Life Lessons

Changes in Me

YunJin Shin, 2C

When I arrived here, I felt anxious because I didn't know everything. I didn't have any friends, so I was lonely. But now, I like living alone because I'm gaining more responsibility for myself. Day by day, my thinking is growing up. And now, I love my country, Korean food, and Korean TV even more. I'm proud of Korea. I now realize that my country is very comfortable for me because I have a lovely family, a lot of friends, and yummy Korean food. Also, I understand my parents better now. They always provided everything for my sisters and me. Now I have a stronger mind. I know why I came here. I'm trying to speak English with my friends; that's most important for me right now. Sometimes, I was disgusted about everything and didn't want to talk to anyone. But I am not a lazy person. I want to finish my language study successfully. That's my way. I think all LCC students think this way. I wish a successful finish for us all.

My Life in Houston

Raúl Jaime, 2B

The first week was difficult because I thought Houston was dangerous and the people were not polite. But that's not true. The people in this city are very polite. The culture, food, TV programs, clothes, music, education, streets, buildings, and cafes are very similar to those in Mexico. I am happy living in Houston with my wife, my best friend, because this city and its people are helping me with my English. I never felt any culture shock. Thank you, Houston.

Before and Now

Si Shen, 2B

In the past, in my country, I liked only noisy places because I was afraid of studying and living alone. I couldn't cook any food. My English was very bad. I only knew a little about different cultures. But now, I have learned to study and live by myself. I can cook simple food. My English has made a little progress. I have learned about many different cultures from my foreign classmates. Now I enjoy living; I am happy every day. I like the changes in myself and believe I can learn many more things here.

How I'm Different Now from Before

Yiburpen (Patrick) Batiano, 2C

I was a guy who didn't care about some things or some people. I didn't like to think seriously. But now, I'm different. After long thinking, I decided that it's important to do things in the right way. I began to change my life when I was 15 because I realized that I must overcome myself to build my dream and become an important person one day. I want to understand each person. I don't want to hurt anyone; that's why I prefer to joke with everyone. Now, when I'm unhappy, I stay alone to avoid hurting anyone, but in the past, I didn't care if I hurt anyone. Now, I take seriously my independence because now is the time to choose and think about what I want to do in my life. Now, I take seriously my activities, but before, I didn't work hard. I preferred to go out with friends to enjoy myself. Also, when my parents asked me to do something, I refused or took my time doing it. But now, I realize my faults and have changed. That's why I study hard to understand and speak correctly my new language of

English. I ignored English when I was in Burkino Faso. I am very happy to be different now from before because with my new mindset, I more easily understand things and am able to improve my relationships with other people.

My Adaptation

Fatimata Tata Samake, 2C

Before I came to Houston, I was very happy, excited, and a little stressed. But when I got here, everything changed because this new city is very different from my country and because of the language barrier. I didn't speak English well and Americans speak too fast; it was hard for me. Also, the weather is bizarre: sometimes hot and sometimes cold. Another problem for me is that the school is far from my house. I am obliged to wake up every day at 5:25 am to take the bus, which sometimes is late. I was bored living by myself until I found a roommate. I was all alone because I didn't know anybody. I did everything by myself: cleaning, washing, cooking, etc. These experiences taught me many useful things about life without parents nearby. It's difficult and people here are very busy, so I must be patient and polite. I miss my family, but now I can say that everything has started to change for the better and that I have begun to adapt even though it's so hard for me.

Living in a Different Culture

Gilman Yeo, 2C

I worried about going to the USA because the culture is so different from mine. Here, whenever I enter a house or a room, I am anxious. In Korea, we take off our shoes; however, Americans keep their shoes on inside the house. It's confusing to

me and I think it is unsanitary. Also, people here have different looking faces; it is strange to me. I miss my favorite Korean food, but I can't eat it here because most Americans don't like foods with a strong smell. I miss the nightlife in my county. America seems dangerous because guns are legal. The weather in Houston is hard for me; the sunshine is so strong and very hot. I don't like insects but there are many insects here. Also, the public transportation here is not good. In the beginning, I always stayed on the campus and was very sad. But nowadays, it's getting better than at first.

Changes in Me

Van Ho, 2C

When I first came here, I had many problems. My flight was delayed for eight hours in Chicago because of bad weather. I was very afraid. I didn't have a cell phone and I didn't have any coins for the pay phone. I couldn't call my sponsor. Fortunately, a Vietnamese man helped me. He gave me his cell phone so I could call my sponsor and he taught me to read the flight reports. On my first night, I couldn't sleep because it was so cold. Now, the weather is okay for me. But I still can't do anything because I don't have a car and don't know the streets. Also, my English is not good. I am living alone; therefore, I have to be careful about my health. I go to school every day because staying home is boring and sad. Then I am homesick. It's not good for me. I need to know where to go to just relax.

My Experience in a Different Culture

Lagou Dabire, 2B

When I came to Houston in January, I was very sad and sick because of the weather. It was extra cold. Back home, it was hot and I prefer that. There are many differences between Africa and the United States. In Africa, people don't waste food because there always

is someone who needs it. I feel strange in Houston because I have needed to become a real adult. I must go to school, cook my food, and wash my clothes. People here don't know or don't want to know their neighbors. Each person lives his own individual life. Americans are very shy when they don't know you. In my country, people like to help each other and the old people get good treatment. In Houston, it is unusual for me to see young people helping old people. It is hard for me to accept this. But the United States has taught me much, and I think I will have more interesting experiences than my friends back home in Africa.

Experience in a Different Culture

Diana Peralta, MD, 2B

Knowing a different culture is a new experience for me because I had never traveled out of my country even though Mexico is next to the USA. When I came to Houston, I felt amazed, happy, and nervous because it was my first time to study in another country. The university was so different for me. Registration Day was amazing because I saw people from many different countries. I like this situation. I need to adapt to different times, customs, and foods as well as to learn English, which is so important for me. My classmates are all great people. Sometimes their different customs are shocking to me. For example, women from the Middle East wear head scarves because it is a tradition in their culture, and the Asian classmates say "Hi" with a bow. Also, the Asians eat a lot of rice. I enjoy my classmates from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. I will never forget this experience of knowing different cultures. Sometimes, I miss my family but when I come to class, I feel "at home" because of the good relationships with my classmates and teachers.

Living in Houston

Trinh Vo, 2B

I came here two months ago. In the first days, I felt scared about everything. I don't have relatives here and everything was new to my eyes. I was shocked by American culture and no one understood what I said. I was sad and homesick for my family. I wanted to go back home. But about a month later, I could adapt. I thought I needed to change myself so I became more independent and friendly. That's why I now have a lot of friends from other countries. They give me more knowledge about their cultures. It is very interesting and now I feel happy. In the future, I hope to find a job at the university because it will help me to have work experience.

Advice to Newcomers



Rahmi Gokcedag, 2C

First, you should open a new ATM account in your country, but be careful to choose an American bank: Chase, Citibank, etc. Second, only bring a few of your favorite clothes because clothes are cheap in the USA. You will need about 80% summer clothes and 20% winter clothes. Also, remember to get a cell phone and to bring your passport, I-20, and cash. Maybe your first month will be difficult for you because everything is so different -- traffic, food, rules, etc. But **YOU CAN DO IT!** After the first month of culture bumps, you will feel better. The people here are friendly, helpful, kind, and polite. Do not be afraid. I have tried Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Japanese food and I also eat American fast food. It's a wonderful feeling for me; you can do it too.

Looking for a Spouse

Nathalia Maciel Bezerra Cavalcanti, 4E

Are you looking for a spouse? Stop! It doesn't work! Choosing a companion for the rest of your life isn't like either finding a fast car or buying a beautiful hat. You can't put people on shelves to analyze them. They should appear naturally to you. You have to be always ready, because the only thing that anyone has to have to be a perfect husband or wife is your heart.

You are asking yourself: "How can someone make me fall in love?" It's easy. If you are a confident person, he/she is too. If you are a humorous person, he/she is too. So, start to look at yourself before you look at the traits your supposed partner has to have.

One of the characteristics most looked for in a husband or wife is confidence. Couples are supposed to build their professional and personal life together. Therefore, nobody wants partners who present themselves as being anxious, insecure, and jealous. Low self-confidence develops these traits, which will definitely have a negative effect on your relationship and career.

However, how do you intend to find someone who is confident? Give the candidates a quiz?

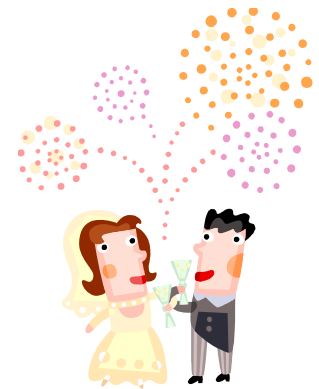
"Twentieth question: Which argument do you use to ask your boss for a raise? A) I tell my boss how I work hard for the company. B) I don't even ask because I know I won't get it." First, make sure your candidate can get a high score on this test; otherwise, the winner will give you just a piece of advice instead of love. The reasonable way to keep confident people next to you is having confidence yourself. It's such a contagious feeling that it can even change the ending of a war. Before battles, if the captain gives a confident speech (even if his soldiers are likely to lose), the soldiers will pull out all the stops to defeat their enemy.

Another desired characteristic in a companion is humor. The importance of humor in a marriage is to know how to handle what is unimportant. Good humor is an essential ingredient in building successful relationships because, with a little bit of it, small daily conflicts can become warm laughs. Disputes over control of the TV, irritations over wet towels on the bed, or discussions about spending weekends at the beach or in the countryside may take a bad turn and evolve into terrible fights. These problems can be eased with a sense of humor.

What can you do to find somebody who is funny? Have a joke competition? Unless you are a very humorous person too, this would be a good idea

only if the contestants are professional humorists. For money, a person will continue to tell you jokes even if you don't laugh at them. The time when people are supposed to put up with a humorless spouse is gone.

If you want a humorous person close to you, be one of them. Laughs attract laughs. If you are able to turn potentially unpleasant situations into enjoyable achievements, you will without doubt be interesting to humorous people like you. Bitter people can't stand being next to people who laugh at things which they (the bitter people) consider a problem. During a child's birthday party, only the ones who are willing to have fun approach the clown; the others who aren't will keep their distance.



Love

Yelka Ruiz, 5C

Love is one of the most important emotions and experiences in our lives.

Originally created by an Omnipotent Being.

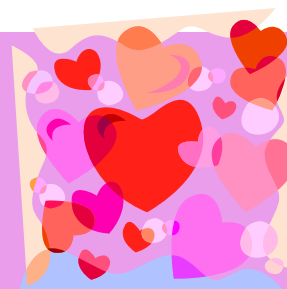
Valuable feeling that is part of everyone forever.

Expressed as a strong affection based on attraction, happiness, constancy, respect, dedication, honesty, enthusiasm, sacrifice, friendship, union, romanticism, family, passion....

However, each person defines this feeling in different ways, but in the end everything means L O V E.

Sow love in your life and pick up a smile, gratitude, joyfulness, friendship, fidelity, loyalty, admiration, a soul mate and a lot of things.

Happy Valentines Day!



In what important ways do you think your life will be different ten years from now?

Javier Cardona, 4E

It is a fact. Ten years from now, I'll be 55 years old. As a result of that, I'll have spent 2/3 of my life. At that time, I wish to be alive and healthy. I hope I will be enjoying my life with Alejauora, who is my wife.

The next ten years is an issue that has occupied my mind for a long time. As a matter of fact, I've been spending time and money preparing the right conditions for those coming years. I would like to have enough money to let me manage my own time without having to think about big economic concerns. I will be able to arrange my own schedule.

By 2017, I'll be living in a country house with some dogs and---eventually---watching my child grow up. I'll have leisure time to enjoy my life while I am working in socially oriented activities.

Sung Mee Cho, 4E

Life has many phases that a person has to experience, and our life changes as we age. What differences can a person expect to have ten years in the future? I have been thinking about this idea for a long time. I came to the United States because I wanted to study and excel in the Ph.D. program in the future. The most important way that I be-

lieve will help me achieve my goal is by doing the following three things: one is to graduate with a Ph.D. degree, the second is to get a job, and the third is to start a family. By the time I have completed these three things, I will have achieved a wonderful life.

First of all, I am going to study the graduate program to get a Ph.D. degree. This is one of the achievements which in turn will help me to have a great future. Having the Ph.D. degree will help me gain respect from others because of my level of education, and it will help me to find a great job as a manager or professor.

Furthermore, I would like to attend a high-ranking university so that I may be successful in my future. When I came to the United States, I just wanted to attend the graduate program at the University of Houston as soon as possible. However, I realized I need to further my communication in English, and by doing this, I knew that I should try to take an English test, such as the TOEFL or GRE again to get a high score. I am really expectant and very hopefully that I will get into the graduate program.

Secondly, one of the important things that I am looking for is to get a job. That is what everybody would love to have after graduation.

I had graduated from a master's program in Korea. I worked at a company as a researcher. I did not feel comfortable, and I felt that I would be happier as a manager in this company at that time. I decided to quit my job in Korea and further my education in the United States so that I could obtain something better. Therefore, I am going to study hard for my job in the future.

Thirdly, ten years from now, I will have started a wonderful family. That is what every single woman in the world wishes to have. Marriage is important for life, having a husband who will be a supporter, an assistant, and a companion. Furthermore, I would like to have my own son and daughter. They would give me a great feeling. My sister has a very beautiful family, including a son and a daughter. Both of the children are so cute, handsome, and honest. I used to stay with them a lot. According to the love that my sister shows to her family, I look forward to planning my own family.

To sum up, the most important things that I have to accomplish in the next ten years are: achieving a Ph.D. degree, getting a good job, and starting my own family. I believe that I will be doing my best and achieving my dream.



HOMEWORK...

María Palacio, 4D

11:30... 12:00... 12:30... 1:00!! Your classes are over!! You should be thinking: I am free... I can go to eat a good lunch, watch TV all afternoon, then go to sleep... really relax. But in the middle of your dream appears a big word: HOMEWORK, and your dream is over. Most of the students do not find it really fun to do homework because they do not have the requirements to feel comfortable while doing their job. Three of the most important requirements are: eat before starting your job, find a good quiet place to work, and take breaks every 40 minutes.

To make your body and brain work, EAT, because food is “fuel.” Without this, all the time you are doing your homework, you are going to be thinking: “I am hungry; I am thirsty,” and it is really hard to concentrate. Try to eat healthy food and not junk food. The first one can satisfy you more than the second one, and it is more nutritious. So the first step to feeling comfortable while doing your homework is: a full stomach.

Please do not think even for a second about finishing your food and then putting your books on the same table!! Well, maybe you can do it, but first clean it up. Check if you have enough light, be sure the chair and table are comfortable, and then you will have an appropriate place to do your job. If you are not comfortable, you will be thinking, “I want to finish now,” and you won’t be thinking: “I have to do a great job,” like you are supposed to be thinking all the time.

When you check your notes, and discover you have a lot of homework, you may think that this is not good news. Just remember that you have to do it, no matter if you want to or not. So take it easy, start your job, and when you feel your head is full of things, stop, take a break, drink some water, and then go back to your job.

Doing these three simple things, you will find more enjoyment in your homework. If this doesn’t work, go and try it at the library. Good luck.



FROM LEVEL ONE TO SIX AT THE LCC

JERRY HO, 6A

What was your reason for you coming to America? Have you ever lost your goal since you came here? Take three minutes to read this story. There are some useful suggestions you might take for solving what you are experiencing.

After two years of military life in Taiwan, I made a new decision – one that I had previously given up on – to continue pursuing my college degree in America. That was a hard decision for me at that time because my English was awful, and I had just turned 24 years old, an age which many people (myself included) in my country might consider as too old to go to college. But then a friend of mine, who happened to be a former LCC student, recommended that I go to the LCC to study English, and I took his suggestion.

Several days after the Michigan test, I was totally disappointed with my test results, which evaluated me as a level one student. As some students, I could not accept the result immediately and I doubted the fairness of the evaluation. So, as soon as the lesson began, I tried to argue and complain about it to my core teacher, Carol Archer, in class.

However, she did not treat me as a problem maker, but she tried to be more patient with me instead. After three weeks, I finally realized that the evaluation was wrong. Obviously, I should not have gone to level one, but level zero. When I realized how terrible my English was, I tried to study harder than I used to. Sometimes, I almost lost my goal because every word, even a simple word, was difficult for me at that time, and that really made me stressed and exhausted all the time. In addition, I was not like most of the students in the LCC. My family did not support me that much. Thus, I had to find a job on campus when I was studying in level five. It's not very easy to do both school and work at the same time.

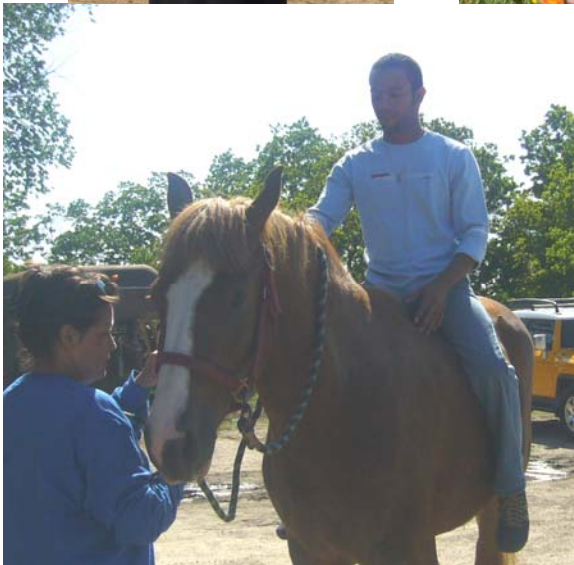
Fortunately, I won the scholarship for level six, which allowed me to take a short vacation from my job. Everything seemed like it was getting better, and I was going to graduate from LCC in one semester; however, after my midterm of level six, I got bad news that my grandmother had passed away. Suddenly, life in American became a nightmare to me, and all of the culture bumps and bad feelings I

thought were gone suddenly came back. I regretted that I had not gone back to my country and that I hadn't spent more time on the phone every time she called me. Since I left my country, I have stayed here for one year and seven months. I always try to save money because I do not want to go back to my country before I graduate from the LCC. However, it seems like a wrong decision, the worst I've ever made.

Hopefully, this story could give you some new ideas during your life in the LCC. I also have some suggestions from my experience which you might take: Never ever think you are too old to study or think the level which you are studying is too low for you. Every teacher and student will treat you like a student and friend. Just try to do your best for yourself. And then, you will see how it pays back. The more effort you make, the more harvest you will get. Finally, go home to visit your family if you are able to afford the tickets or at least give your family a call every two weeks because someone far away is missing you right now.



LEVEL 6 STUDENTS IN DR. CAROL ARCHER'S SOCIO-LINGUISTICS COURSE SPENT A DAY AT DR. ARCHER'S HOUSE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, WHERE THEY RODE HORSES AND LOOKED FOR WILDFLOWERS.



Dave's Page

Notes from the Student Advisor

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Our first trip of the semester was during registration week, when we went to the Museum of Fine Arts and then to the Galleria. We saw many interesting things at the museum. Afterwards, we had lunch, shopped at the Galleria, and returned in the rain to UH.

The next event was the class photo, followed by the LCC Sports Tournament. Everyone had a good time. The winners were as follows:

Bowling: 1st - Kei Ishii, 2nd - Son Trinh, and 3rd - Tetsuji Fujita; **Billiards:** 1st - Tian Bai and 2nd - Abdulmoshen Al Mulhim; **Table Tennis:** 1st - Wissam Mohdher and 2nd - Sung-Hwa Kang.

On March 9th, many students, teachers, and guests enjoyed a real Texas experience by going to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, where they saw prize-winning animals, visited the carnival, and saw the rodeo. The rodeo was followed by the popular Texas singer Pat Green.

The LCC Culture Festival was another popular event. We got to share each other's culture as we tasted dishes from around the world prepared by our own students and staff! We were entertained by music provided by LCC students, who also danced. Many students wore clothing from their countries. We enjoyed seeing clothing from Africa, Vietnam, China, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, and other countries.

We will end the semester with a trip to Sam Houston State Park near Huntsville. This is a day when we can relax with classmates and teachers, have a picnic, and enjoy being out by the lake. The day after the trip, we end the semester 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 for welcoming the new students who will be joining us.

SOCCER TEAM

The LCC is well represented this term by two excellent teams, the LCC Eagles and the LCC Falcons. Ali Al Yami, a former student who is now in the university, has been in charge of both teams as well as captain of the Eagles. As this is being written, both teams are expected to go to the play-off tournament. Our thanks go to all the players for a great job.

IMMIGRATION

If you are in F-1 student status, you need to make sure you maintain your status. SEVIS, which stands for Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, is an electronic tracking system that keeps student records. We have to update it at the beginning and end of each term. It is very important that we know what you will be doing so that we can keep your records current and you will keep your F-1 student status.

If you will be transferring to another school, it is important that you see Dave Burns or Sam Long so that you can follow the proper procedure and have your transfer recorded in the SEVIS and can get a new I-20 from your new school.

If you are planning to take a summer vacation, see Dave or Sam first. You must fill out a vacation request form. You can get one in the LCC office.

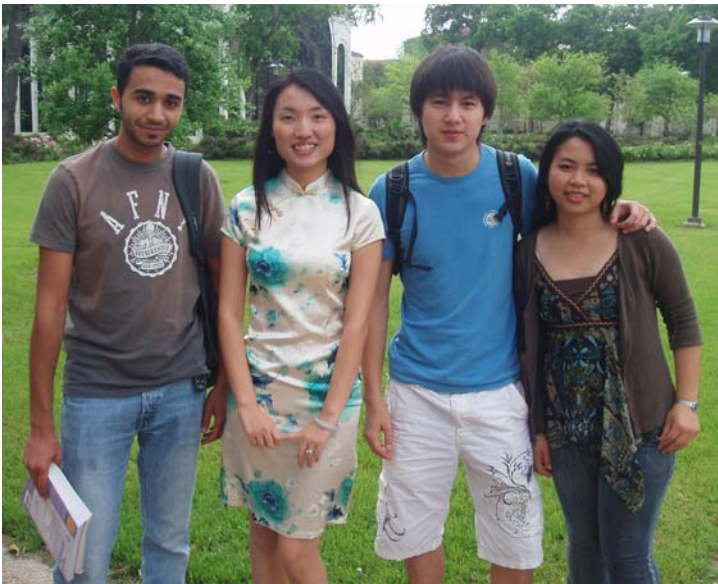


The rules for intensive English students are a bit complicated in regards to summer vacations. If spring was your first semester to study, you can not have a summer vacation UNLESS you are planning to leave the U.S. during the summer OR you have finished your English at the end of the spring semester and will be entering a college or university for fall semester. If you do not qualify for a vacation and you plan to stay in the U.S., attending only the summer II session is not enough to keep your full-time student status. You will have to attend the whole summer to maintain your F-1 status. If you have any doubts or questions, be sure and see Dave or Sam. It is very important that you maintain your F-1 status. Because of the changes in immigration law, it is now very difficult to get your student status back if you lose it.

If you are traveling outside of the U.S., you must have your current I-20 signed on the back. Your visa must also be good.

Students who made the Special Registration when they entered the U.S. must check out at the airport with Homeland Security when they leave the U.S. See Dave if you need to do this and get the instructions on how to check out.

If you move to a new apartment or house, you must fill out a change-of-address form (available in the LCC office) so that we can update your SEVIS record. This is required by immigration law.



Voices

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