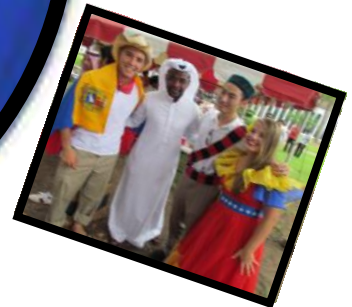




# VOICES



**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**

**LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CENTER**

**SUMMER 2011**

# VOICES



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# From the Director's Desk

Thank you for a wonderful summer term! We had 387 students from 39 countries in our program.

I wish you the best and look forward to seeing many of you as you return for the fall term 2011.



Joy Tesh



## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



**Chon Tran, Boubacar Kone,  
Agamenon Campos, and  
Melba Navarrete Velasquez  
Receive LCC Scholarships**



The Language and Culture Center awards four scholarships each term to returning students who best combine academic excellence and leadership with international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Traditionally, one full scholarship honors Joyce Merrill Valdes, the founder and first director of the LCC. A second full scholarship honors Joseph O. Davidson, who served as director of the LCC for 22 years before retiring in 2006. These two full scholarships cover the cost of tuition, fees, and medical insurance for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. In addition, the LCC awards merit scholarships of \$1500 each for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. At the spring graduation ceremony on Thursday, April 28, 2011, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to **Chon Tran**, the Davidson scholarship to **Boubacar Kone**, and the two merit scholarships to **Agamenon Campos** and **Melba Navarrete Velasquez**.



**Chon Tran** was awarded the Valdes scholarship. **Mr. Tran** is from Vietnam and is studying in level six. This is his second term at the LCC. After he completes his study of English, he plans to pursue a degree in Christian theology. **Mr. Tran** said of receiving the scholarship, "It was a privilege and great honor to be awarded this scholarship. I am very thankful to be part of a good program with hard working and wonderful teachers to help me achieve my goal."



**Boubacar Kone** was awarded the Davidson scholarship. **Mr. Kone** is from Mali and speaks French. He is studying in level three and this is his second term at the LCC. After completing the intensive English program, he plans to seek a position at the United Nations or another international organization. **Mr. Kone** holds a master's degree in international relations. In regard to receiving the scholarship, **Mr. Kone** remarked that he was extremely happy and proud of himself. He added, "It taught me that hard work pays off."

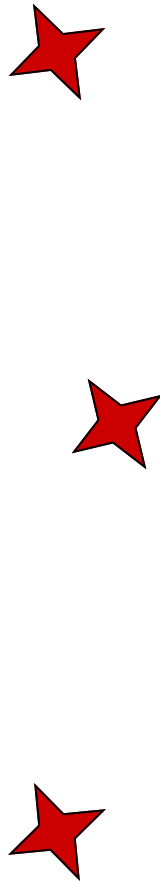




**Agamenon Campos** was a recipient of a merit scholarship. **Mr. Campos** is from Venezuela and has been at the LCC for four terms. He is currently studying in level six. He plans to study geophysics at the University of Houston after graduation from the LCC. **Mr. Campos** remarked that it was very nice to receive the scholarship. He added, "I feel grateful for having been a part of this institution and graduating from the LCC is a satisfaction for me."

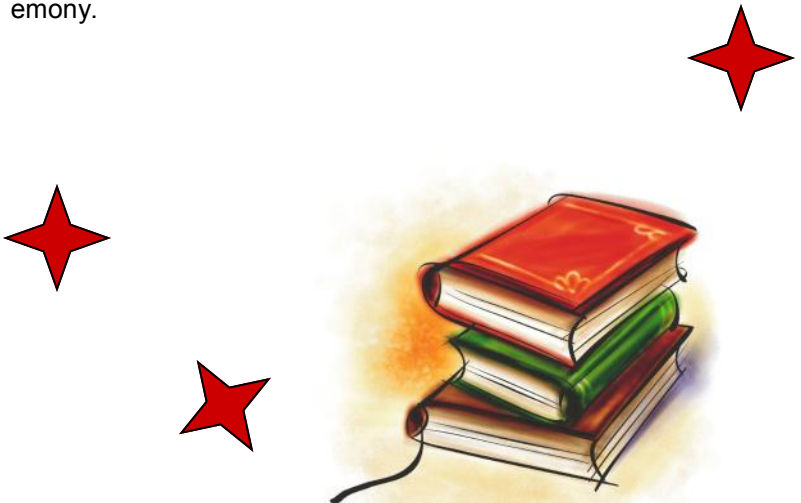


**Melba Navarrete Velasquez** was also a recipient of a merit scholarship. **Ms. Navarrete Velasquez** is from Venezuela. She is currently studying in level four. She closed her human resources consulting firm after 20 years to pursue the study of English. **Ms. Velasquez** commented, "I sincerely appreciate the wonderful initiative of the LCC to reward people for merit who are interested in achieving a superior level in their goals with their own effort."



*Sandra L. Hartmann*  
*Associate Director*

We congratulate **Chon Tran, Boubacar Kone, Agamenon Campos,** and **Melba Navarrete Velasquez** on their outstanding records in the Intensive English Program at the Language and Culture Center, and we wish them great success as they continue to study in the United States. We all look forward to learning who will be the next LCC scholarship recipients at the summer graduation ceremony.





**Visitors are always welcome!**

## An Interesting City to Visit

**So Hyung Kim, 2D**

Seoul is the capital of South Korea. It is a metropolitan city and has around 20% of the South Korean population. It is also a multicultural city. Within 50 years after the Korean War, Seoul became one of the most developed cities in the world. Therefore, it is often called "The Miracle of the Han River."

I would like to introduce five special places in Seoul to you who will be visiting this gorgeous city. First, Myung-Dong is a

popular shopping place that foreign visitors like a lot. It is the central place of Seoul. There are many department stores and road shops such as popular name brand cosmetic and clothing stores. You'll find various choices of low-cost, luxurious merchandise. Second, Insa-Dong is a traditional culture place. In the street, you'll find antique Korean books, paintings, calligraphy works, wooden objects, jewels, and ceramics. Third, you must visit Changkyung Palace, which was built during the Josun Dynasty in the 1400s. Among the exist-

ing palaces in Korea, in my opinion, it is the most beautiful and elegant. This magnificent palace is special because of its many old trees. Fourth, in Samchung-Dong, there are many modern and fancy cafes and restaurants. So, nowadays, it is the most popular place for young people in their 20s and 30s. Lastly, I want to introduce Nam Mountain. If you take a cable car to the top of this mountain, you can see the whole city of Seoul. It is especially beautiful at night. In fact, these five places are located within three miles of each other.

I hope you will visit Seoul and have an opportunity to see the five interesting places that I introduced above. Visitors are always welcome!



## Welcome to Colombia

**Juan Pablo Peña, 2D**

Colombia is a country that is bordered by the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. Colombia has around 46 million inhabitants. Officially, Colombia has Spanish as its first language, but it has two islands where people speak English: San Andrés and Providencia. In addition, it has more dialects specific to different regions, and these are also official.

Colombia is a country with very happy people. For several years, we have been the country with the most happiness in the world, according to some studies. If you come to Colombia, you will understand why we are so

happy.

Geographically, Colombia has a lot of diversity such as deserts, plains, seas, tropical forests, wetlands, ponds, and lakes. Southern Colombia belongs to the Amazonas, which is a region with a lot of diversity in animals and plants. In this region, it is possible to visit and to get to know the culture. If visitors want to coexist with the tribes, to eat their meals, to sleep in their huts, and to learn about their culture, they can do so. Of course, they can also sleep in a five-star hotel.

Colombia has many cities that are very interesting. For example, Car-

tagena is a historical city. Situated on the Caribbean Sea, it was the entrance for the Spanish into the Americas, and it is one of the most visited cities in Colombia. There is also an island--San Andrés--that has the most beautiful sea in Colombia; they call it "the sea of seven colors."

Finally, the capital city, Bogotá, is the biggest city in Colombia. It has almost eight million inhabitants, and it is the place with the most important enterprises and the greatest opportunities for jobs.

As you can see, Colombia has something for everyone. I hope you can visit my country soon.



# PLACES TO SEE

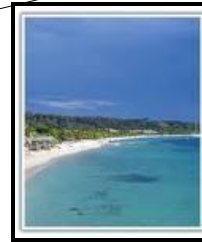
## Hever Castle Adeliya Akchina, 3B

Hever Castle is one of the most beautiful castles in England. The location of Hever Castle is southeast of London. The castle was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Hever Castle belonged to the Boleyn family. There started the very famous love story between Anne Boleyn and King Henry VIII of England, so Hever Castle is an amazing and romantic place. The one impressive place in the castle is the gardens,



where you can see all the beauty of flowers and unique trees. The castle architecture is very elegant and luxurious. When you stay there, you will feel like you are in a fairy tale. Nowadays, Hever Castle is a very famous and popular place. A lot of newlyweds go there to spend their honeymoon. In conclusion, Hever Castle is a gorgeous and special place.

## Roatan Island Daniel Pas, 3B

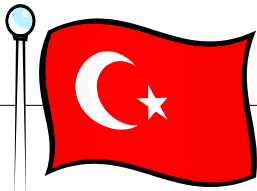


Roatan Island is the best place to vacation for many reasons. First, it is located in the Caribbean Sea. Second, Roatan has the most beautiful beaches in the world. For example, it has a white beach and blue water. Second, it has the second biggest "coral experience" in the world, and you can snorkel there whenever you want to. Third, the island has five-star hotels at a good price; for example, Fantasy Island or Infinity. Fourth, you can eat the most delicious seafood of the Caribbean. Fifth, it has various bars and night clubs to enjoy the night life; for example, the Golden Bar. Sixth, you can take a tour of the ocean and meet the biggest fish in the world. Finally, the people of the island are friendly, and the island is safe. In summary, Roatan Island offers the best experience for vacation in the whole world.



## Exploring Houston

### Hilal Ekici, 2E



I was very excited when I left my country because I was going to meet my husband in the U.S. We had been living separately for a long time. He was working in Houston and I was working in Turkey. Eventually, we decided to live in Houston and I quit my job. I was going from my country to another country for the first time. I was alone on the plane and I couldn't speak English. Fortunately, I didn't have any trouble during my trip. The weather was cold in Turkey when I left, so I was wearing a sweater and a coat. I was surprised when I arrived in Houston and saw my husband

wearing a t-shirt and shorts. Settling in Houston wasn't easy for me because the time is different compared to my country, so I felt very tired. Fortunately, that was temporary. I got used to it within a week. I started to explore Houston slowly. It is a very big city. Houston has a lot of places to visit. First, I went to the Galleria. It is a very big shopping mall. It has many stores and restaurants. I can find a lot of things there. There is a waterfall behind the Galleria. I was impressed when I saw the waterfall. Then, I went to City Center. City Center is like my country because people sit, eat, and socialize in front of cafeterias

and restaurants, or people walk with their families at night there. After that, I went to NASA with my friends and my teachers. NASA is an incredible place. I saw the astronauts' spacecraft for the first time. Houston also has wonderful parks where people can walk and have a picnic. For example, one of those is Hermann Park. It has great pools and gardens. There are colorful flowers in the park. Those parks are a very good place to relax. I had the opportunity to visit a few museums, too. I saw a lot of historical things from different countries. As you can see, Houston has a lot of places to visit. I will continue to explore Houston. I am very happy to be here with my husband.




**Mont Saint Michel Castle Akpedje Amoussou, 3A**

Mont Saint Michel Castle is one of the most wonderful places to visit in France. This castle is located on the ocean. It is like a round island and is connected to the land by a road. The castle is high and has many small buildings in its large yard. It gives the castle the appearance of a city. From the summit, you get a fabulous view of the land, the cape, and the sea. During

the spring, the inside of the castle always smells like flowers. The rest of the year, it smells like pure, but humid, air. This air is not polluted because cars are not allowed to drive in the castle area. Sometimes you can smell the wonderful scent of cakes made in an old-fashioned kitchen. Also, this castle is very quiet and relaxing. The rare sound you can hear is the

harmonious singing of birds. Finally, the unforgettable and impressive things that will catch your attention are the sunrise and the sunset. Attending these events is very romantic. This makes the honeymoon of many new couples a unique and fantastic milestone of their lives. Mont Saint Michel Castle is one place that a tourist in France must not miss because it is calm, clean, and peaceful.

**Boring H-Town: A Myth Luis Carlos Carvajal, 5E**

Is Houston a boring city? As a student at the LCC, I have heard many times that this city is boring, but is it really? Or do we get bored because we don't know what we can do in this fabulous city? The first time that I paid attention to this phrase, I was astonished because it was in my first term at the LCC. I was wondering if I had made a mistake by choosing Houston as my second home. From the first term until now, I have had many experiences that have changed my perception that Houston is a boring city.

First of all, if you like extreme sports or adventure activities, the city of Houston offers a number of different activities to do. I used to ride mountain bicycles in my country, and I wanted to do the same in Houston. Then I found two amazing places to practice this sport. The first place was Hermann Park and the other was Memorial Park. The latter is one of the biggest urban parks in the U.S. It has more than five bicycle routes where you can experience the thrill of the dusty paths. All the paths have different degrees of difficulty. Likewise, every time that you enjoy each path, it is completely different. In addition, you can rent bicycles at low cost in the park or nearby. If

you don't have a car, that is not an excuse to not come to this amazing place. Many routes are available on the Metro transit system. However, if you don't have an adventurous spirit, you might like the next experience that I had.

Last year, some friends invited me to enjoy a picnic at the Miller Outdoor Theatre (MOT). This theater has more than 300 covered seats and a huge space where people usually, without paying, enjoy all the performances. Likewise, the rear part of the MOT is divided into two areas. The first one is for people who are allowed to bring chairs and tents. The other one is for people who only want to sit on the grass or who want to have picnics. In addition, all the performances at the MOT are free in those areas. Of course, if you want to stay in the covered area, you must acquire a ticket. You can enjoy a great number of performances during the summer and in the early fall. If you are interested in enjoying a nice night during the summer, this plan is recommended for you.

If you are still thinking that Houston is boring, there are other reasons why I say it is not. For shopping lovers, Houston has several malls,

such as the Galleria, Memorial City Mall, Premium Outlets, and others that offer several discounts each day. For people who like culture, go to the Museum of Natural Science, Museum of Modern Arts, or the Health Museum. In addition, Galveston Island has many activities that you can do. For instance, you can go to Moody Gardens, spend at the beach until sunset, have lunch in the harbor, or shop for souvenirs in the historical area.

As a final point, the city of Houston has great possibilities to enjoy during your stay. Try to search for things to do on the LCC website ([www.lcc.uh.edu](http://www.lcc.uh.edu)), and surely, you will find a lot of information. Finally, explore your second home and don't feel bored; this is an amazing city.





**Houston**  
**Fahad Al Khalifah, 1B**

Houston is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. I have been in Houston for eight months. The most interesting thing I did in Houston was to go to the rodeo. When I arrived, I was very surprised. There were many games. I have liked to play games since I was child. After that, I ended the party by watching horseback riding. That was fun and interesting. Wherever I go, I could never forget about Houston.



**Tropical Paradise**  
**Tatiana dos Santos, 4A**

*My mental image of paradise is beautiful.  
The most beautiful waterfalls are there.  
The movement of water sounds like a melody.  
The scent of flowers has the power to enchant.  
The timeless mountains are still beautiful and preserved.  
The mountains and trees attract visitors to see nature.  
This beauty has no substitute and will never fade away.  
It is the most beautiful image that I have in my mind.*

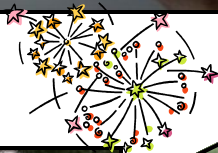


# REASONS TO CELEBRATE

## My Good Day

**Hsiang-Tzu (Sarah) Chen, 1B**

I had a good first day in America on August 19, 2010. This day was my birthday. My home stay family and roommate gave me a good party. I had a surprise on this day. I ate American food and made a pie for the first time in America. My mother told me happy birthday from Taiwan, but I was very homesick for my country and my family on this day. This day I didn't sleep because in America, it was night. In my country it was morning. I didn't change my sleep time. Then I woke up and opened my computer to Facebook. My friend messaged me happy birthday. I was so happy then. This day was very fun for me. I loved my good day.



## My Happy Day

**Abdoulaye Diarra, 1B**

My happy day was very special. First of all, I woke up early. Then after a shower, my sister gave me a delicious breakfast. This day was the day after my graduation. When I was ready to go out, my father gave me a key for my new car. I was very surprised and very glad. After that, when I went with my new car to visit my aunt in her house, everyone in her house gave me a present. I couldn't believe it. Next, my cousin James said that he was very proud of me. Then, he took me to the mall to go shopping. Finally at night we went to the party that my best friend organized for me. This day was very special and lucky for me. I won't forget it.



## My Wedding

**Hasna Alqahtani, 1B**

My wedding was nice. That day, November 20, 2010, is my favorite day. First, I woke up early at 10:00 in the morning. Then, I went to a beauty salon to do my hair and put on makeup. My sisters wore dresses, did their hair, and put on makeup. At 3:00, I went to a big wedding hall. I had beautiful flowers in my hand, and I wore a nice dress. The food at my wedding was good. We drank juice, coffee, and tea. Then, my husband took my hand, and I went to my family and my friends. After that, my husband and I cut the big cake and ate it. We listened to music and danced. I loved my husband and my wedding day.



## My Engagement Day

**Sukinah Alhanabi, 1B**

My engagement day was very wonderful. It was on November 9, 2010. In the morning, I woke up early, and I took a bath for about one hour. Then, I went to the salon to do my hair and my makeup. After that, I put on my dress, and I went to my party in the ballroom at my family farm. I saw my family and my friends. I was happy and

nervous at the same time. Next, my friends came to me, and they made me dance with them. After that, my fiancé came into the ballroom. He was holding flowers in his hand for me. When he came closer to me, he gave me the flowers. Then, he put the ring on my finger and kissed me. After that, my family went to the buffet to eat, but

my fiancé and I went to a special restaurant. I was very happy because I loved Hassan five years ago. He talked with me, but I didn't talk with him because I was shy. After that, I ate cheesecake, pizza, and chicken and drank lemonade. Next, he stayed with me at my home. It was a beautiful day.



### Americans and Their Independence Day

**Katherine Benavides, 3A**

American citizens celebrate Independence Day in a unique way. First of all, I think that they feel the pride of that day in their hearts. Americans across the country celebrate the country's independence with parades, ceremonies, and fantastic fireworks meant to mark the nation's birthday. Americans truly respect and enjoy that day as a symbol of freedom. They

use the design of the flag in everything, such as t-shirts, earrings, hats, and more. On the Fourth of July, I went with my friends to the park. We had a picnic and saw the fireworks at night. I have never been in such a crowded place with people united for a single reason.



### My Special Day Hassan Al Hadri, 1A

My special day was my wedding day. First, I woke up early. I took a bath, brushed my teeth, brushed my hair, and got dressed in my traditional clothes from Saudi Arabia. After that, I went to council and was filmed with my family. Then, I went to my wife, and I also took a picture with her. After that, we put on the rings. When we finished, we went to the house. Next, my wife and I ate dinner. It was a special day for me.



### My Good Day Saud Alanazi, 1A

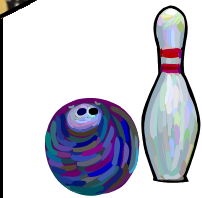
My good day was when I saw my love. I woke up early. Then, I washed my face and got dressed. After that, I drank coffee fast. Then I went to a restaurant. She waited at a table at the restaurant. Then I saw her. Then I went to her table and sat down. After that, we ordered dinner and drank orange juice. Then, we went the cinema and saw a movie together. That was my favorite day.

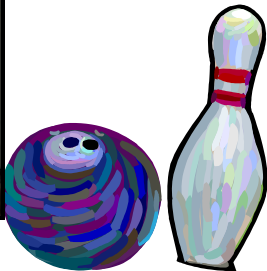
### Camels Ahmad Abweh, 2A

People in Saudi Arabia have houses, but many camel owners don't sleep there. They sleep with their camels! Some camels are extremely valuable. Last year, some camels were bought for ten million riyals each. (That's more than two million dollars!) I think that is crazy! Every year, we have a holiday for camels. The name of this holiday is Al Janadriya. We do a lot of things then. We listen to music and race camels. King Abdullah gave some people gifts; the gifts were camels. We have this holiday every year in Riyadh. A lot of people in Saudi Arabia love to eat camels also. In Jeddah, we have a lot of restaurants that serve camel meat. All Saudi people love it!



# SPORTS TOURNAMENT





# SPORTS TOURNAMENT

## EXPERIENCES IN THE U.S.A.

### A New Goal to Achieve Aura Malpica, 2E

At this time, I have a new goal to achieve and I'm very excited about it. When I was a child, I had a fear of learning English because I thought it was so difficult and impossible to achieve. For many years, I didn't have the courage to try it. However, last year after I got my degree in business administration, I decided to face my fears and learn the English language.

I'm studying English and I'm sure to learn a lot. I promised myself that I would do all that is needed to speak English well. It's so important to me because it will allow me to be a better and more competitive professional. Learning a second language is an advantage in this very competitive world.

Therefore, I opened my mind and began to work hard every day to learn. I'm learning the English language from the simplest things. As a child does, I will make the

English language a part of my daily routine.

For example, I changed the setup of my communication devices to English. Now, I read everything in English when I watch TV, read instructions on the cell phone or chat on the social networks I am a part of. I always watch TV or movies with English captions.

When I am doing my assignments, I take notes of all the teacher's corrections and write the assignment again with the corrections. I try to highlight the new vocabulary to know its meaning, and I also see how the verbs are spelled in the past tense.

I am also looking for opportunities to meet with neighbors and friends in recreational activities to practice this new language.

Finally, I'm studying English and working very hard to achieve the goal of speaking English well. I believe that I am in the right place to be very

### My First Time in the United States

#### Raed Abotaleb, 2B

In September 2010, I came to the United States to complete my studies. When I arrived in Houston, I had new feelings, going between happy and scared. I was happy because I had arrived in a new culture and could make new friends. I was scared because I thought, "How can I communicate with people? I don't understand English very much." I saw everything was different. In addition, I was homesick. It was the first time for me to

stay out of my country for such a long time, and I missed my family. I was waiting for the semester to end.

In December 2010, I went back home again. When I arrived at the airport, there were a lot of my friends and all my family waiting for me. I was so happy. When she saw me, my mother was crying and hugged me for a long time. I felt like an important person to my mother.



### How My Life Has Changed Since I Came to the United States Mai Quang, 3C

A lot of things have changed in my life since I came from Vietnam to the U.S. The first thing is transportation. In my country, I ride a motorcycle wherever I want to go. Sometimes I go by car or bus, but only if I'm going somewhere far away. In the U.S., however, I travel by car, bus, or train. I can't ride a motorcycle here, so it makes it difficult for me to travel, and it always takes a long time. Second, the weather is different. I am from a tropical country, so I always feel cold anywhere that the tempera-

ture is below 84°F (28°C). I usually bring my jacket when I go outside. Third, the day in the U.S. is longer than the day in Vietnam. In my country, the sun often starts to set at about 6 p.m. but in the U.S. it sets around 8 p.m. As a result, I usually go to bed late. Finally, the food is very different. The Vietnamese eat rice, but Americans eat bread and fast food. In conclusion, when I came to the USA, I had to change a lot of my habits to adjust to the American lifestyle.



## Lifestyle of a Fast-paced Society Francisco Silva, 5B

Imagine waking up knowing that at this particular moment, there are people not too far from you with no electricity. Imagine knowing that someone not too far away probably does not have water. Imagine knowing that there are people hungry around you. I admit that this is not my case, but I really was shocked when I came to the United States.

Here in the US, the fast paced lifestyle really amazes me – from 24 hour service to drive-thru fast food restaurants. Before I came to the USA, I would have said that there would be no purpose for a business to be open 24 hours. From supermarkets such as Wal-Mart, that carry clothes, groceries, and even medicines, to banks like Woodforest, the United States

has businesses which are open and available for us at any hour of the day. I find that really amazing, and even though it might affect people in terms of scheduling their to-do list, it also goes hand in hand with helping people who need more than one job. Another amazing thing is the drive-thru. I see the need for fast-food places in the US and how they play an important role. One really amazing thing is that you can make a whole meal with so little. The dollar menus and 39 cent soups could be really handy for poor people. I am amazed by how a fast-paced lifestyle can change a country. Some of aspects of this lifestyle would really be handy back home, especially to feed the poor.



## A Memory for Life Hee-Jin Jeong, 2E

This summer, I am having a very special and invaluable experience. It is living in a homestay. Before I came to Houston, I had two choices. One was living in a dormitory and another was living in a homestay. The dormitory is more convenient than a homestay because it is closer to the school, but I wanted to experience American life and culture, so I chose the homestay.

Now, I'm very satisfied with my choice. My homestay family has five people. They are the homestay mom and four other students who come from other countries. We are very different, but, on the other hand, very similar. Although we have lived in other countries,

we always try to understand each other while we have dinner, go shopping, watch a movie or talk about something together.

Particularly, I met a special person here. It is my homestay mom. Her name is Marcia. Even though we have spent only two weeks together so far, I'm very attached to her. She calls me her Korean granddaughter. It sounds like music to my ears. When I see her, I think of my grandmother that lives in Korea. Maybe, when I go back to Korea in August, I will miss her very much.

Finally, I recommend living in a homestay for international students. It is an unforgettable memory for life.



## EXPERIENCES IN THE U.S.A.

### Learning a Foreign Language: A Funny Experience Maria Gabriela Reingruber, 5E

Learning a foreign language is my dream, which is coming true this year. I have been in Houston since January, and I can tell anybody that this is a wonderful experience. It is amazing not only to study English but also to meet a lot of people. I have learned a little bit of the world through my classmates, and I have realized something special in people who are learning English. That special thing is people in the LCC can communicate perfectly. Everyone understands whatever you want to say. It is like everybody speaks perfectly but when you leave the LCC classroom, students realize that they cannot say what they are trying to say, and this is the funny experience.

I am a level 5 student and I consider that I speak very well. My classmates have told me the same thing, but that happens only in the classroom or with LCC students. I will never forget the day when I was talking with an American friend about a paper that I had to do for my English class. He asked me what I wanted to write about. Then, my answer in

perfect and fluent Level 5 English was: "I want to write about the reasons for going to *Yale*." I thought that my topic was brilliant, but I did not receive any answer. Suddenly, I heard, "What are you talking about? What is the important thing about going to *Yale*? People go to *Yale* because they want to." I was very surprised about his answer and replied to his comment. I told him: "People do not go to *Yale* because they want to. They go to *Yale* because they break a law. So, I want to write about what people do to go to *Yale*." Of course, after that, my friend laughed out loud and he told me: "You meant to say JAIL, not YALE. *Yale* is the University, which is in the US, and your topic is related to breaking laws and going to JAIL."

After that, I have never forgotten how to pronounce JAIL. Besides that, I have realized that learning English is not only a good experience, but also a funny one. We should be careful when we are talking, and we should learn the correct pronunciation of each new word that we have learned in a foreign language.



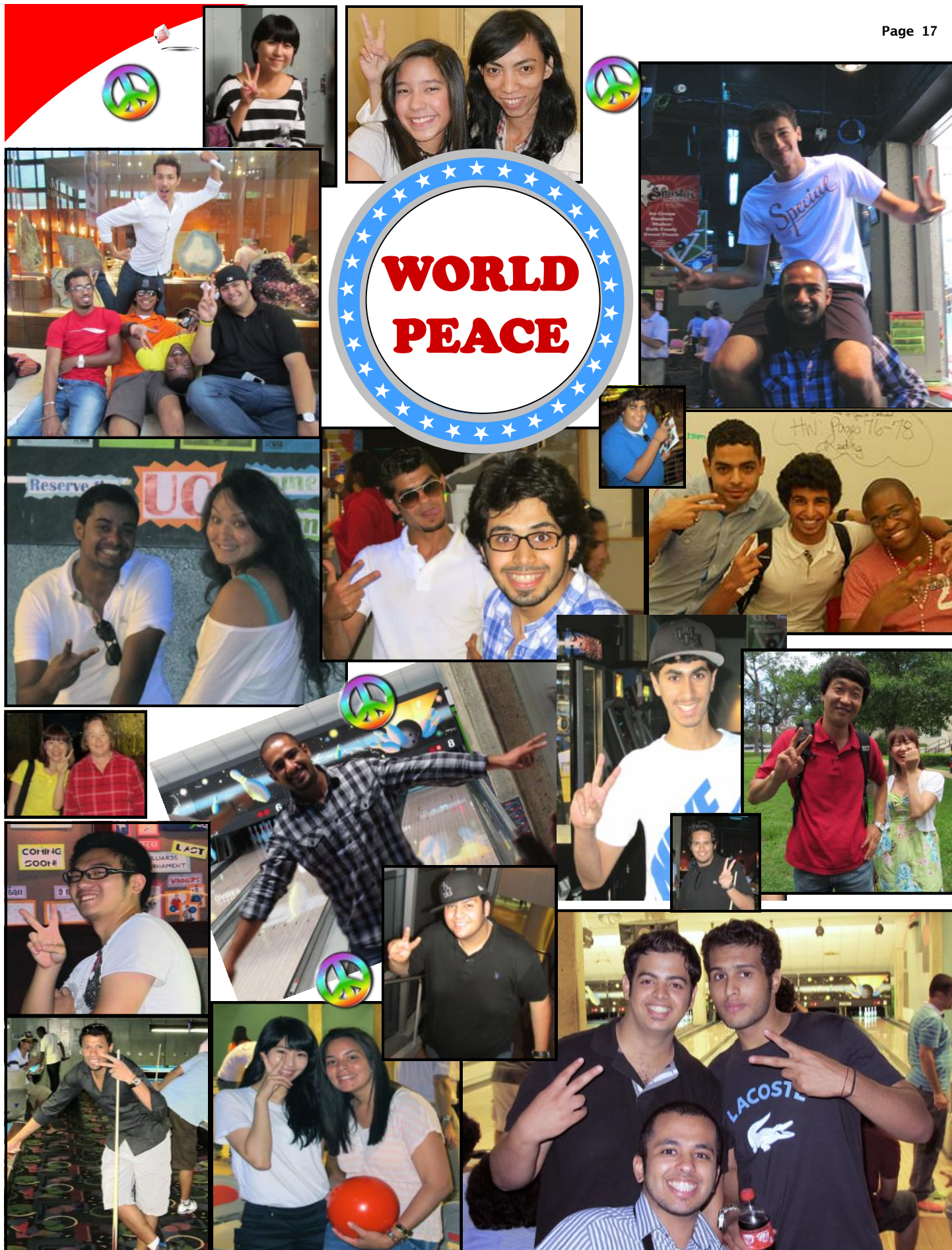
### Personal Space: A Culture Bump Aisuluu Abylbekovna, 5B

This is my second visit to the United States. The first time, when I visited the USA in 2000, I experienced a real cultural shock. Everything looked great and amazing to me. This time in 2011, nothing struck me as that great because I knew and expected to see many of the same things; however, a personal space is something I still question even today. I always wonder why American people prefer to have their personal space, whereas in Kyrgyzstan we have no personal space concept and the idea doesn't even occur to us. I think American people like to have their personal space as a "security guard" or perhaps they prefer to be "protected". Now I know I should keep a certain distance in public places, especially in crowded places, such as while waiting in line at the grocery shops, restaurants, and movie theaters. As I understand it, the preference to have a personal space

comes from the history of immigrants from Europe to the USA, and the issue of personal space was one of reasonable safety. I sometimes forget that a personal space is required for Americans, and I tend to get too close to people, mostly those who are waiting in line in front of me. Consequently, I notice the person moves a little further away from me, or I will suddenly remind myself that space is required here!

In Kyrgyzstan, we have no personal space in crowded places, in waiting lines, or on public transportation. We tend to stay very close to each other; in fact, we might even touch each other, and nobody will care or think about the space between us. Actually, if you keep a distance in a line, people will misunderstand you and look at you in a surprised manner. Personal space is really amazing and totally different in the USA compared to my country.





**WORLD PEACE**

# CULTURE BUMPS

## Talking to a Stranger: A Positive Culture Bump Cecilia Leon Obone Ndong, 5B



One day I was at bus stop waiting for the bus. Then a lady came up to me, and she was smiling at me. In fact, this lady always smiled at me. I began to wonder why she was looking at me like that, and I was a little surprised because this behavior seemed unusual to me. While we were waiting for the bus, she asked me where I was from, how old I was, and many other personal questions. At this point I thought to myself, "Oh my god, is this an examination?" Therefore, I may have been a little bit cold at first. After a while, she started to talk about herself, and I was amazed by the ease with which she talked to me about her life because I had rarely seen or experienced this back home in Gabon! That was not the kind of conver-



sation you would have with someone you just met. I found her a little bit indiscreet, but welcoming. Her behavior reminded me of the friendly people in Gabon even though they don't behave like that – talking to strangers in public places. I have experienced many situations like this in which strangers come up to me and discuss things with me as if we were friends. So, I have named this behavior "American spontaneity" because it was the first time that I experienced this while living in a foreign country.

## Greetings and Smiles with Strangers: A Positive Culture Bump Wen-Hao (Joey) Chen, 5A

Most Americans are friendly and polite. I have noticed that here people always say, "Hi" or "How's it going?" to others if they have eye contact. I think this is a good way to help people improve their relationships. In China, most people are shy, and they neither speak to strangers nor do they smile at them. If a boy smiles at a girl, the girl

will think he is an idiot or some other negative word will come to his mind. But I like the way that Americans greet strangers. It makes me feel comfortable. For example, my 19-year-old Japanese friend and I had a conversation about an incident in my room where we were staying. We both felt that people in China are excessively strict for no reason, and they are just cranky in every way. Both of us have a similar background; however, we have had totally different experiences in the USA. This culture bump made me realize that the culture of the country greatly affects one's perspective on the smallest things--like saying "hello".



## Stereotypes: A Negative Culture Bump

### Nathalie Gonzalez Escobar, 5A

Trying to connect with someone else is not as easy as it seems. Depending on which country you come from, being a funny person who makes jokes might be effective, but what happens if it results in offending someone? That incidence was the first of a series of numerous culture bumps I have experienced since I moved to the United States of America. To be specific, I am talking about ethnic jokes; these are humorous pranks that are related to an ethnicity, racial, or cultural group, often referring to any one of its stereotypes. Venezuela is well known for the spontaneity of the people, and there is great cultural diversity, from Afghans to Zimbabweans; hence, joke-making is done to have a relaxing moment.

In my opinion, in the United States, you should be aware of the consequences of every word you say. Often, making jokes to somebody you do not know well can be a demonstration of racism or a kind of verbal violence, also called hate speech. It differs from South American countries, in which making jokes usually shows other people that you are

kind, funny, sociable, and friendly. This difference can be well appreciated in the following example in which I demonstrate how the same situation can be misunderstood depending on which country you are from.

While in the USA the word "negro" can be considered derogatory or discriminatory, in Spanish speaking countries this word is commonly used to refer to close friends regardless of the skin color. Since Venezuela is in part a country of African descent, this word can also have a sentimental connotation using the diminutive, "negrito". After this explanation of the word, you can imagine what happened to me! In my first week in the USA I was uncomfortable with my lack of proficiency in English. One day, while I was eating in the cafeteria, I was talking with one of my best friends and I said: "Hola, mi Negro!" which in English means: "Hi, nigga". The woman who was ahead of me turned around and said, "Excuse me? You are being really rude," so I had to explain to her what happened. That was a really embarrassing situation; I am glad I learned not to do it again.

## Kind Strangers: A Positive Culture Bump

### Moayad Alsuliman, 5B



When I first came to US, everyone was talking about culture shock, and some people were asking me if anything shocked me when I came. I was laughing because it didn't happen to me.

Why not? When I was a kid I used to watch Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, Disney Channel, and much more. I've never watched any Arabic movies in my life. I was raised in a city on the east cost of Saudi Arabia, which has a lot of Americans. Most of my friends were Americans, so I knew about their culture.

However, there was one thing that amazed me and made me want to stay here for the rest of my life. I arrived in the U.S. at 9 p.m., so I barley saw anyone. However, in the morning, when I woke up, I went to the leasing office to do some paperwork for the Saudi embassy. There, I met this old lady who was cleaning the office, and she smiled at me and said, "Good morning." I was shocked. I couldn't say anything to her because in my country, if someone is cleaning the room he's always angry. Here in America, neighbors, police officers, and people who are walking on the street are smiling. I think that is a great thing. I hope one day Saudi Arabia will change in this way.

## Helpful Strangers with Valuable Advice: A Positive Culture Bump

### David Sardi, 5B

When I first arrived here, I felt a little confused even though I always thought that the United States culture was the same as Venezuelan culture. However, before I came here, people in Venezuela told me many things about United States, like how I should act if I wanted to be accepted by the people here.

One of the things people told me was that I had to be very careful when I expressed myself in public because Americans were very conservative and inflexible. At first, I didn't want to speak with anybody because I was afraid of saying something that might hurt them or that might be offensive. Hence, I couldn't practice my English with anybody.

Two weeks after I arrived in Houston, something funny happened. I was downtown with my girlfriend when we got lost. We were looking for the University of Houston, and we were in a hurry because we needed to be there at a specific time, but we were late. I was very angry because I knew

the right way, but we went the wrong way because my girlfriend insisted on leading. We were standing at one of the Metro Rail stations when the driver approached us. He was a very nice colored man who came to us and asked if we were lost. Then he began to talk with me because he realized that I was mad at my girlfriend. He told me things that were very important for me at that moment. One of his phrases I will remember forever was, "To find the right way, you need to get lost once in a while." I have heard this phrase before, but at that very moment, it was most helpful to me.

This was a culture bump because I thought that people in America weren't helpful to strangers; however, someone did help me. Then I began to talk everyone I could, and I realized that people in America don't care if you know how to speak well. They will still help you if they see that your speech is confused. Sometimes they go away from you because they are afraid they will not understand you; however, that happens because you are insecure, and you transmit that to them. This situation really helped me with my speaking and made me feel that I can be part of American culture.

## I Believe in Making My Father Proud Wala Alismail, 6A

My father came from a simple family. He had to work very hard for everything he wanted to have. He started working at an early age, yet he never missed a day of school. My grandfather believed in the power of education and how it could help an individual. He believed education was the only key to success. My father made it to King Fahad University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM), which is one of the best universities in Saudi Arabia, and he graduated as a civil engineer.

Like father, like son, my Dad as a father of five also encouraged us to study hard from day one in elementary school. My family went through bad economic times, and we lost almost all of our savings. But despite these hard times, my father refused to withdraw my sister from the private college she was attending, and he did his best not to trouble us with his problems. My sister graduated as a dentist,

and after seeing the proud look he had on his face when she received her certificate, I knew he deserved no less than that from me.

My father always encouraged me to follow my dreams, and in my heart I had one strong dream: to study abroad. Despite the objections from some of my family members, my father was there for me and he guided me. I made it, and got the scholarship to study in the United States. On that day my father told me that I should feel proud of myself because all my hard work is what turned this wish into reality. The greatest moment in a parent's life is when his children meet the expectations they had for them. One day in the last week before coming to the United States, my Dad told us that what we had achieved was beyond his expectations for us. I believe after all these years and all the effort that my father put into raising us, he deserved no less than being proud. I believe in the power of influence that a parent has over his or her children.

## Experiencing Hard Situations Is a Blessing Chon Tran, 6A

After reading the story of Eva Birch, I was really moved and sympathized with her situation. Her story reminded me of my life in the past. It happened around 20 years ago. When I left my country for freedom, I faced many dangerous events, even potentially fatal ones. I left Vietnam by sea and will never forget it. I survived dangerous events such as famine, storms, and pirate attacks. Thanks to the Lord, He loved me before I knew Him, and He saved me before I believed in Him as my Savior.

When I arrived at the camp where I stayed in captivity for most of my youth, I did not have any relatives who could help me with my physical or spiritual needs. I was under a lot of stress and felt sad, bored, tired, and hopeless. I could not see myself having any future. I just lived day to day because I had to survive. My life had no meaning. Many of my friends went back to Vietnam because they could not stand the hard situations in the camp. Sometimes I felt that way, too.

While in the camps, I did not have enough food to eat. I did not have enough clothes for the cold weather. There were no sandals to wear, and no tables to study on or to

## THIS I BELIEVE



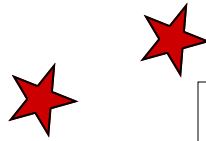
write on. I had to share my space with a friend where we used one three-meter plank as our bed, house, dining room, and kitchen. In sum, we did all of our everyday activities there.

However, God was so good to me. He changed my life from hopelessness to hopefulness. One day, He sent his children to meet me and encourage me, to comfort me and help me know God, and I believed in Jesus Christ as my Savior. I found happiness in Him every day by worshipping Him, glorifying Him, and having a relationship with Him in both difficult and good situations.

Those days helped me to get into the English university easily when I was forced back to my country. Also, the situations in the camps helped me learn to stay happy in any situation, good or bad. I became resilient. Those days prepared me for today so that I may attend an American university in order to apply for seminary. For more than a decade it has been my dream and I am finally reaching it.

I sympathize with Eva Birch in her difficult situation of being alone without much support. I appreciate her spirit in trying to overcome those hard days in order to have these successful days in her life. I absolutely believe that experiencing difficult situations is a great blessing.

# THIS I BELIEVE



## I Believe in the Power of Friendship Lei (Alex) Fu, 6B

I was born into a poor family. Sometimes we didn't have food to eat in those dark times. My father did everything he could so that I could go to school. When I started school, I began making friends. At first, I didn't understand the importance of friendship, but I soon understood. One day while playing basketball, I hurt my leg and couldn't walk. My father wasn't able to take me to school because he had to work. My friends knew about my problem, so they would come to my home and take me to school every day. Even when I had to use the restroom, they took me there without getting angry. At that time, I began to understand why friends are important.

After that, I knew that by having friends, I would always have someone to help me-- someone with whom I could always share my sadness and happiness. Not only would I always have someone who could help, but I could help them too if they were ever in need. Real friends don't care if you are rich or poor. No matter what problem you have, you can talk to them, and though they may not be able to do anything, at least they will listen to what you have to say. I cannot imagine ever living without my friends; I truly believe that friends are treasures. And because I never want to lose my treasures, I will forever take care of them. I believe in the power of friendship.

## I Believe in Laughter Agamenon Campos, 6B

Have you ever thought how horrible it would be not to have the pleasure of laughing anytime you want too? We are living in a society which is constantly being affected negatively by people's anger. However, we have to keep in mind that the only way to deal with this is by laughing. When I was younger, my mother told me that laughing is a good medicine to

forget about our problems. Also, laughing helps me to have many friends because my laughter helps to give people positive emotions, and they enjoy being with me.

Imagine a world without laughter; it would be horrible because we could not live with just sadness. At the time my grandpa was sick with cancer, I used to make him laugh a lot as laughter helped him to forget about his illness. Each of us has problems, but we should remember that laughter will help us more than we can imagine.



## I Believe in Education Regina Silva, 6A

I believe in education, whether it is education learned at home or academic education. I believe in respect, love, care, morality, and treating others the same way you want others to treat you. A good education is the foundation of a good human being. Education builds personality and character. It affects the way you act towards others, the way you sit, talk, and walk, and even the way you react to certain aspects in life.

ever, sometimes children often get educated by outsiders, who can have a good or bad influence. People are born with a certain personality, but most of the time they go the way their parents want them to go. Education is something so basic that people often forget about it, but at the same time, it is so complex that it is able to change a whole society.

## Nobody Can Accomplish Anything Alone Leonardo Santos, 6A

I was taught by my parents to work hard to achieve my goals, and I really believe that things don't come for free in life. However, life has taught me that I can't accomplish great things alone. First of all, we need opportunities to keep growing, and it means that someone trusted us before knowing what we were capable of. Second, great goals demand great teams. That's why teamwork and leadership are appreciated in schools and businesses. Many times our abilities to make a team

work better are even more important than personal aptitudes.

Not only colleagues are important, but family is the foundation of our lives. Giving great advice and being an important factor in our motivation, our relatives are vital to our individual success. After all, we can't say that we've done things just because of our talents; we need to recognize the ones who helped us develop these talents, kept us motivated, and worked with us so we could accomplish our goals.



Parents raise their children to become someone in life—a person who will make them proud. How-

# THIS I BELIEVE

**I Believe in the Power of God**  
**Huy Nguyen, 6B**

*"There can be miracles when you believe.  
 Though hope is frail, it's hard to kill.  
 Who knows what miracles you can achieve  
 When you believe somehow you will.  
 You will when you believe."*

Lyrics by Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey

For me, this song in one of the most uplifting songs ever heard. No matter what difficulties and adversities you are in, there are no such wrong things when you believe and look at the brighter side of life. I think optimism and self-confidence are such important characteristics in professional life. Just see it for yourself and believe in the strength within you.

I am Catholic, and I believe in God. Just imagine when you meet such a dark period in your life that you have to exclaim, "Oh God, why me?" The answer could be, "Do you believe in me?" You'll feel the darkness ease up. Keep doing the right things; then one day you'll see the brightness. I usually feel calm just because I know that I am not alone. He's still

there lifting me, consoling me, and strengthening me. Thinking that way, I am so confident I can do anything, no matter how difficult it is. I pray every day, especially whenever I meet a challenge. Just try your best, and he will do the rest. In addition, he is always there telling me to be good. That makes my life more valuable. I believe in the power of God.



**I Believe in the Power of the Internet**  
**Luisa Alexandre, 6B**

I believe in the power of the Internet. I believe that the Internet has changed our lives and changed the way we view the world. We are now able to communicate with people around the world--to see people from any part of globe even though they are far away. We can also do many things now that we couldn't before, such as shop online. The Internet has made our lives much easier now. It's incredible that we can do things never before imagined! I believe that this extreme progress in technology is a gift be-

cause it has changed our lives in a positive way. Sure, it has some negative effects, but that only applies to people who do not know how to use it to their benefit. I believe in the power of the Internet.



# NICE TIMES...



### A Scary Experience Bilal Aldossari, 5D

It's amazing how one can mature from having a scary experience. Many times life puts you in a hard situation in order for you to learn from it. The bright side of this is that regardless of how bad the situation can be, it often comes with a lesson, and you just have to learn from it.

Several years ago, I had a really scary experience. It was September 23, a national holiday in Saudi Arabia. After a long day of partying, it was almost midnight when I started driving back to my house. I wanted to get home as quickly as possible, so I drove at a very high speed. While I was driving, there was a car beside me. The driver was looking at me in a bad way and out of nowhere he turned his car towards me. I saw him coming close to me, and I got scared and turned my car away very fast. My car went out of control and started to spin very fast toward the wall on the side of the road. My car hit the wall and flipped over several times. When it stopped, I had flown out of the car through the passenger window. As I was lying on the side of the road, I could see the car lights flashing on and off and then I passed out. One good person stopped and took me to the hospital. I had my leg broken and my arm, too, and I ended up spending about one week in the hospital.

This whole experience helped me realize that I didn't gain anything by speeding. All I did was get myself hurt. More importantly, it helped me realize how fragile and precious life is and therefore it should be saved for something more meaningful than being killed by speeding.

### A Taxi Driver Youssef Nadio, 5C

Most of the people living in Tunisia, a country in the north of Africa, tend to think that those from the south of Africa do not know enough about new technologies.

I still remember that evening when I was trying to go home after my classes. I tried to catch the bus as usual, but I was not successful. So, I decided to take a taxi.

After a few minutes of waiting, I finally got a taxi. It was brand-new and very beautifully decorated. Inside, the driver was playing music with all the glass windows closed, so it was very relaxing to sit back and enjoy the music.

A few moments later, I said to the driver that he had a wonderful taxi and he thanked me for the compliment. However, it was a bit hot in the taxi, so I asked him if he could kindly lower the glass windows a little bit so that the breeze could come in. The taxi driver regarded me as someone who did not know anything about cars, for he said, "It's all about technology, my young friend! If you want the glass to go down, just say it, and it will go down by itself!"

Upon hearing this, I said to myself, "Does he take me for a stupid man?" However, I did not say anything in response but tried to play his game by making myself even more naïve. So, I said aloud, "Glass, go down!" As he had the remote control button on the driving wheel, he pressed it in a way that he thought I could not see him. As the glass went down, I said, "Wow, what a wonderful taxi!"

Full of pride, he added, "This happens also with the volume of the radio. If you say, for example, 'Volume, go up! It will do so in no time.'" I looked at him, pretending to be very surprised. "That's for real, man," he told me and added, "Say it if you do not trust me." I said it, and again, he made it happen.

I finally arrived at my destination, but before I got out of the taxi, I said to him, "I made myself look as if I did not know what you were doing. Seriously, do you think this kind of car exists?" He was so disappointed that he asked me to apologize to him. But I just shrugged my shoulders and walked away.

### My Favorite Toy Car Rafael Aponte, 5D

Ten years ago, when I was fourteen years old, my hobby was buying and playing with remote-controlled toy cars. I spent all weekend playing with them. At that time, I had three very beautiful toy cars. One day, after I had played with them, I forgot to take them back into the house. The next morning, when I got up, I went out to look for them. When I found them, I was shocked. The cars were broken, and I had no idea what had happened to them. They looked like they had been chewed on by a dog. I felt very bad and angry at that moment. I spent all day thinking about my broken toys and what I could do with them.

The next weekend I was very bored. I missed my cars, but there was nothing I could do now except to throw them away. When I was taking them to the trash can, I suddenly had an idea. Maybe I could assemble one car using the good parts left of each of the three cars! I looked at them carefully and decided that it was not a bad idea.

I sat down on the floor and started to disassemble the three cars and to look for the good parts. The first car had the engine without any damage; the second one had the tires and the transmission shaft in perfect condition; and the last one had a body that was less damaged than the others. The first thing that I did was to try to see if the engine from the first car still worked. When I was sure it worked well, I connected the good tires and the transmission shaft from the second car to the engine and put them all into the body of the third car. All this done, I painted the car in black and white. When the paint finally dried, I immediately tested the reconstructed car to see if it worked. It worked! I didn't know why but I must confess that I enjoyed playing with this car more than with my first three cars.



**Sim Cheong  
Eunhye Jeong, 2B**

*My country is Korea. In the past, most Koreans took care of their parents. There is a famous story about that. It is the story of "Sim Cheong." This story shows the filial devotion of my country's people. But now, most young people in my country have changed. They don't want to take care of their parents, so I'm so sad.*

Sim Cheong was a girl. Unfortunately, she didn't have a mother because her mother went far away. Her father couldn't see, and he was very old, so she had to take care of him. Unfortunately, Sim Cheong didn't have enough money to take care of him, so she was very nervous. She chose to be sacrificed to get some money. At that time, her town was very dry; it had a drought, so it didn't have enough rain to grow plants. The leader of the town said, "We need someone to give to the Spirit to get some rain. If somebody does that, we will give a lot of money and a special promise." Sim Cheong wanted to do it. The next day, she went to the leader and promised to be the sacrifice. In the morning, she rode in the ship that would go far out to sea. When it arrived at its destination, something suddenly appeared. It was the Sea King! He said, "Girl, you are so commendable. Your choice to be sacrificed to take care of your father is excellent. I am impressed, so I will give you the gift of good luck." Then, the king disappeared! Sim Cheong went back home and was surprised because her father could see. Also in the yard, there was a very large amount of grain. She was delighted. She contributed a lot of grain to the people in her town. Thus, the people could survive the drought.



# STORIES TO TELL

**The Crossing of the Snake  
Ferdinand Nkot-Nkot, 2A**

*When we were younger, all my family learned the same story, which my ancestors taught to all the youth of our tribe: "The Crossing of the Snake." This story is a very important part of the history of my tribe, the NANGA-EBOKO.*

They say that many years ago, the Nanga-Eboko lived on one side of the river which is called Sanaga. Every day, the people crossed the river on the back of a big snake because they didn't have a canoe to go to the other side of the river. However, one day a curious young boy wanted to discover what they were crossing, and he hit the snake's back with his lance. The snake was very angry. It sank to the bottom of the river forever, and no one has seen it since then. Because of what happened, the people who stayed on the right side of the river are now called *the BAKO-KO*, and those who crossed to the other side (left) are called *the NANGA-EBOKO*, which is my tribe. That is the main reason we have almost the same language and the same habits on the two sides of the river *SANAGA*.



**An Arabian Folktale  
Nouf Alhussain, 2B**

Many years ago in the desert of my country, there was a Bedouin woman. She was a little bit crazy. She was living with her tribe. After many years, her family all died during a war, so she became a rich woman. One day some bad men planned to steal her money and her gold. While they were looking for the woman, she was hiding behind the mountain talking to herself and singing, "My uncle is coming now. My uncle is coming now." So, the men were scared and went away from her, but in fact, she was just pretending. She tricked the men. After that, the woman lived happily ever after.



# CELEBRATING CULTURE



# CELEBRATING CULTURE



# MEMORIES OF HOME

Students from 4C and 4D considered sights and sounds that bring back memories of their childhood and favorite relatives. These are excerpts from their writing.

### Honking Horns Ali Adeeb Alsaba, 4C

Hearing the sound of horns makes me remember my father. I heard his horn each day when he was waiting in his car for my mother, my brother, my sisters, and me to hurry up and come downstairs. Then, wherever we went with him, such as the beach, the mall, or the zoo, we heard similar honks from other cars. I remember that when I was in high school, waiting for my father to pick me up, he would honk his horn to announce his arrival.

### My Father's Snoring Daniela Briffel, 4C

Snoring reminds me of my father. During his naps after lunch, his snoring was loud and deep. Then, when he came home from work around 8:00 each night, he would sit between my brother and me on the sofa and always say, "Now I am going to watch the news." However, within five or ten minutes, he was sound asleep and started to snore, so we always laughed at him. On Saturday afternoons, my father liked to read in our backyard. Shortly after he started, though, he would fall asleep and start to snore. Even when I was in my own bedroom trying to go to sleep myself, I could hear my father snoring throughout the night.

### My Father's Bus Aram Raheem, 4C

Every time I see a bus, I think of my father's old, long, white bus with a loud horn that all our neighbors knew. None of our next-door neighbors could ever park their car in the front of their house because my father had to park his bus there. Fortunately, no one got angry about that since he was always ready to do anything to help them. Also, he was older than they were, and they wanted to respect him. Since I've been in Houston, I remember him when I see the Metro bus and hear its loud engine. I imagine myself riding my father's bus around the city or going with him to pick up visitors who need to go out to the Kirkuk Oil Company.

### My Father and the Beach Rocio Sanchez, 4C

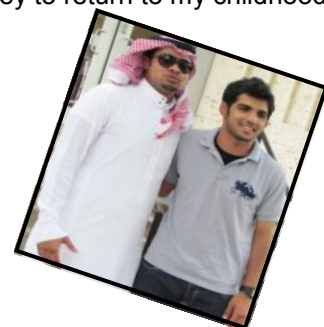
The smells at the beach bring back memories of my dear father. First of all, the smell of the coconut grown near the beach reminds me of the Piña Colada drinks that he used to make. The smell of sunblock makes me think about all the times he applied sunblock for my brothers and me. I remember the way the way his hair blew in the wind when I smell the fresh air from the beach. Last, since my father often bought fresh fish from the villagers, that smell also makes me think of him.

### My Mother's Song Apivit Saibandith, 4C

The sound of a certain song reminds me of my mother. When I was young, I always heard my mother sing because that was her favorite activity. She especially liked to sing a classical song, which made me feel bored because the rhythm of the song was slow. However, now that I've grown up, I appreciate that song because it has meaningful lyrics and a difficult tune.

### Arabic Coffee and My Uncle Osamah Alanzi, 4C

The taste of Arabic coffee is the strongest reminder of my Uncle Kalid. Whenever I visited my uncle's house, the first thing he would do was give me a cup of coffee. When I was in high school, he spent time with me to show me how to make it and serve it to the visitors. Because of Saudi customs, I often serve coffee to friends and family members now, and I remember my uncle every time. Now the taste of coffee is like a key to return to my childhood.



# MEMORIES OF HOME

## Classic Arabic Music Saleh Alfallaj, 4C

The sound of classic Arabic music reminds me of my mother. When I woke up in the morning, I heard her playing it in the living room. She always sat in a comfortable wood chair in the living room while she listened to the soft sound of classical music. She played that same music when she cooked in the kitchen. Now, when I play classical music on the radio in my car, it reminds me of my mother.

## My Father and the River Ying Zhang, 4C

The sight of the river triggers strong recollections of my father for a number of reasons. His favorite sport is fishing, so he went at least twice a week in the summer. When I was a child, he took me with him several times. If it ever started to rain, he would protect me by covering me with his huge raincoat. Also by the river, he cooked fish soup to keep me warm.

## Cologne Tra Nguyen, 4C

The smell of cologne makes me miss my father. He always wore it when he went out because it made him feel more self-confident. He has been collecting cologne for more than twenty years now, so he has a wide variety. His friends and family members know his favorites, so they give him cologne on his birthday.

## Marquge Abdulfattah Alqahtani, 4D

The taste of "marquge," a traditional dish made of bread and meat, reminds me of my mother. When I arrived home from school, I immediately knew what my mother was preparing for lunch because of the delicious smells coming from the kitchen. My favorite food was the marquge. These days, my wife often cooks this dish for me because she knows that I remember my mother when I eat it.

## Spicy Food Meansy (Suparat) Phokapan, 4D

The taste of hot, spicy Thai food brings back memories of my mother. She does not like spicy foods, but my father and I always ordered those in restaurants. One time after a waiter accidentally served my mother some spicy food, her face turned bright red, and her mouth felt like it was burned. As a result, she never returned to that place. Despite her dislike of certain foods, she still cooked dishes that were our favorites, such as Tom Yom, for my father and me.

## My Father, the Poet Fernando Amaral, 4D

The sight of a poem reminds me of my father because he taught me how to write poems when I was about fifteen. When he wanted to write, he liked to stay alone in a silent place, and he said that it would give him inspiration to write. When I was learning, I thought that he was crazy, but now I see that he was right because I write better in solitude myself.

## My Brother and the Farm AbdulRahman Alsaif, 4D

The sight of farm animals brings memories of my brother to my mind. When we were children, we had goats, chickens, and flocks of sheep. He and I worked hard on the farm that we had with our father. We had to feed these animals special foods such as hay. In addition, we had to breed the animals during birthing seasons. We took care of all the animals, and we cured injured animals and brought them back to excellent health.



# CREATIVE WRITING

## ACROSTICS USING NAME, COUNTRY AND FOOD

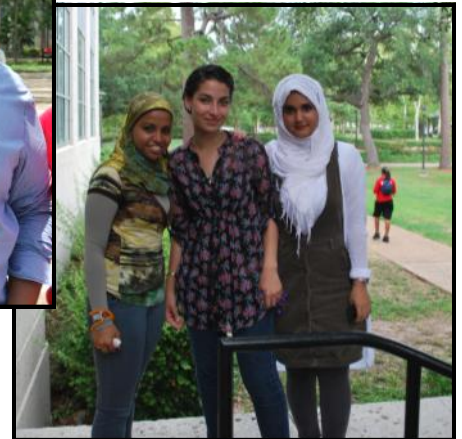
### Herbert Briffel 3A Angola

|          |          |            |
|----------|----------|------------|
| Healthy  | Amazing  | Fantastic  |
| Eager    | Natural  | Unique     |
| Rare     | Gorgeous | Nutritious |
| Brave    | Original | Good       |
| Educated | Large    | Expensive  |
| Real     | Awesome  |            |
| Talented |          |            |



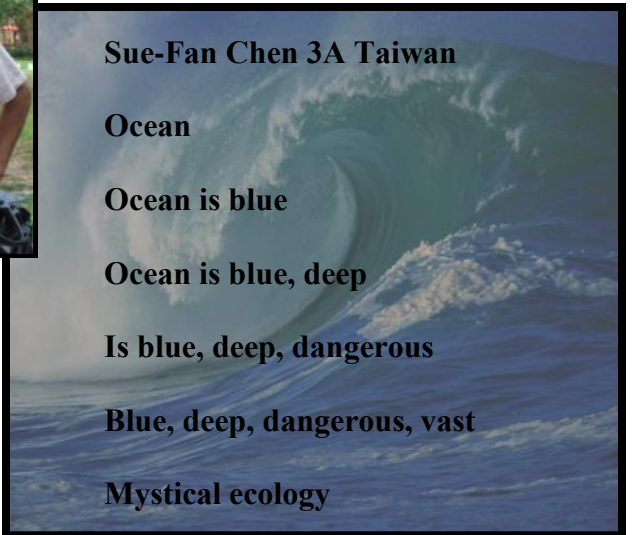
### Minkyoung Han (Tina) 3B Korea

|             |           |             |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Magnificent | Kind      | Beautiful   |
| Innocent    | Organized | Unique      |
| Nervous     | Relieved  | Luscious    |
| Kind        | Exciting  | Greasy      |
| Young       | Amusing   | Organic     |
| Obedient    |           | Good        |
| Unusual     |           | Inexpensive |
| Noisy       |           |             |
| Gorgeous    |           |             |



### Sue-Fan Chen 3A Taiwan

Ocean  
 Ocean is blue  
 Ocean is blue, deep  
 Is blue, deep, dangerous  
 Blue, deep, dangerous, vast  
 Mystical ecology





## DAVE BURNS



### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

New students from summer and continuing students from spring went on the first trip of the semester during registration week. This gave us the opportunity get to know one another and make new friends as well as 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 where we took photos and then home to UH.

In June, we had the LCC class photo and sports tournament. We met at the fountains for the photos. After the photos, students went to the UC Game room to participate in billiards, table tennis, and bowling. The winners were as follows: **Bowling:** 1<sup>st</sup> – Luis Carvajal Arenas, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Albaraa Alfaifi, and 3<sup>rd</sup> – Yahya Alyahyan; **Billiards:** 1<sup>st</sup> – Tung Huynh and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chiang, Kuo-Ting, **Table Tennis:** 1<sup>st</sup> – Daniel Paz and 2<sup>nd</sup> – Hsuan Tsai.

At mid-term we welcomed a large number of new students who joined us for the summer II session.

The next event was the LCC Culture Festival. We shared each other's cultures as we tasted dishes from around the world prepared by our own students and staff. We had so much good food. Many students wore



**DAVE'S HAPPY TEAM**





**Editors: Kitty Barrera and Alida Nakic**  
**Thank you for your contributions!**

**SUMMER 2011**



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