

VOICES

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CENTER

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UNIVERSITY
OF
HOUSTON



Государственный гимн Российской Федерации

Angola Avante!

Hino Nacional Brasileiro

Une Seule Nuit

Ô Cameroun, Berceau de nos Ancêtres

La Tchadienne

义勇军进行曲

¡Oh Gloria Inmarcesible!

La Congolaise

¡Salve, Oh Patria!

Caminemos Pisando la Sendas

La Concorde

Himno Nacional de Honduras

Indonesia Raya

رود ملی جمهوری اسلامی ایران

موطني

L'Abidjanaise

君が代

السلام الملكي الأردني

Менің Қазақстаным

애국가

النشيد الوطني

Кыргыз Республикасынын Мамлекеттик Гимни

الله اكبر

Negaraku

Le Mali

Himno Nacional Mexicano

Arise, O Compatriots

A Portuguesa

السلام الأميري

النشيد الوطني

La Marcha Real

中華民國國歌

เพลงสรรเสริญพระบารมี

Terre de nos Aïeux

İstiklâl Marşı

النشيد الوطني الاماراتي

The Star Spangled Banner

Gloria al Bravo Pueblo

Đoàng Quan Viet-Nam Di

الجمهورية المتحدة



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UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON
YOU ARE THE PRIDE

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

As we have all watched world events unfold every night on the evening news, we have been made aware of the need for peace and understanding in a very troubled world. International educational exchange has never been more important. Intercultural understanding has never been more important. The formation of international friendships has never been more important.

Our students and friends from Japan have been constantly in our hearts and in our thoughts as we have watched the tragedy of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan create great hardship in that country. We have admired the spirit and the amazing resiliency of the Japanese people. Our hearts have broken with our students and friends from Libya as they have waited to hear from their families and struggled to get any kind of information from their country. We have admired the strength of our LCC students from these and other countries experiencing upheaval and great change. We offer them our sincere concern and our full support.

We, who work at the LCC, are privileged to know and love students from many different countries on our shared planet. While our mission is to prepare students for academic study in an American university, we know that a very important outcome for students is that of quietly making friends with fellow students from all over the world. We celebrate the friendships that are formed, and we are inspired by the compassion and the support these friends can offer to us and to each other through very difficult times. When language fails, we may choose to sit together in silence, or we may simply cry together. We can no longer watch the evening news and remain passive or uncaring. We are in the same human family, and we care.

This spring, we have been delighted to have 479 students from 40 countries in our Intensive English Program. LCC teachers, counselors, administrators, program assistants, and I hope you have had great experiences in our classes and on the University of Houston campus. I wish you the best as you complete the spring term of 2011, and I look forward to seeing many of you again as you return in May for the summer term of 2011 in the Language and Culture Center. May peace be with us all.



Jay S. Tesh

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

FARRAS AFIF, SOULEYMANE SAMASSEKOU,
GABRIELA CRISTINA HIDALGO LIZARRAGA, AND
JOSE ANTONIO MARTINEZ TORRES
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 fall graduation ceremony on Thursday, December 9, 2010, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to **Farras Afif**, the Davidson scholarship to **Souleymane Samassekou**, and the two merit scholarships to **Gabriela Cristina Hidalgo Lizarraga** and **Jose Antonio Martinez Torres**.



Farras Afif was awarded the Valdes scholarship. **Mr. Afif**, who is from Indonesia, speaks Bahasa Indonesian and is currently studying in level six. He began studying in level five, and this is his second term at the LCC. After he completes his study of English, he plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in hotel and restaurant management at the University of Houston. **Mr. Afif** said of receiving the scholarship, "It was a great honor to receive a scholarship from the LCC. It is one of the few programs that provides not only good teachers and good curricula but also a nice environment to study in."

Souleymane Samassekou was awarded the Davidson scholarship. **Mr. Samassekou** is from Mali and speaks French. He is studying in level six, and this is his third term at the LCC. After completing the intensive English program, he is planning to begin studying for his master's degree in information systems. **Mr. Samassekou** remarked, "I am honored to receive this scholarship, especially from one of the best schools in the entire world where we learn much more than English. The LCC has truly improved my English, and I thank the administration and the wonderful teachers for their hard work."

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Gabriela Cristina Hidalgo Lizarraga was a recipient of a merit scholarship. **Ms. Hidalgo Lizarraga** is from Venezuela and speaks Spanish. She began studying at the LCC last term and is currently studying in level six. After she completes her study of English, she will begin a master's degree in digital media. **Ms. Hidalgo Lizarraga** commented, "There are no words to explain how grateful and honored I feel for having been selected to receive this merit scholarship. Thank you very much."



Jose Antonio Martinez Torres was also a recipient of a merit scholarship. **Mr. Martinez Torres**, who is from Mexico, speaks Spanish and has been at the LCC for two terms. He is studying in level five and through his hard work, was able to skip from level 3 to his current level. He plans to seek a master's degree in computer science when he completes his English studies. **Mr. Martinez Torres** said of receiving the scholarship, "I am proud of myself."

We congratulate Farras Afif, Souleymane Samassekou, Gabriela Cristina Hidalgo Lizarraga, and Jose Antonio Martinez Torres on their outstanding records in the Intensive English Program at the Language and Culture Center, and we wish them great success as they continue to study in the United States. We all look forward to learning who will be the next LCC scholarship recipients at the spring graduation ceremony.

*Sandra L. Hartmann,
Associate Director*



BUMPS ALONG THE WAY



A Stressful Moment in My Life

— Omar Diallo, 4F
MALI

Everyone's had a funny day that they can't forget. Mine took place the first day I came to Houston. Like most of you, I was more than excited; in fact, I was constantly asking the stewardess about our landing time. After 14 long hours of flight, we finally landed at the airport. I forgot my tiredness for a while and was just both happy and amazed to get to Houston.

I followed people through a passage until we arrived at the checkpoint. I was looking at the airport design when they called me. It was at this moment I had a spontaneous recollection of the fact that I don't speak English. I remembered my first sentence when I approached the immigration officer, and it was, "Me don't speak English." I don't know what he then said, but he showed me another office to go to. Mr. Brown Taylor was my interviewer. We never forget the name of the officers who do our first interview. After filling out a form, we started the conversation. At that moment, I just wanted to give up and return to my country. Therefore, I could respond to just a few questions, and the officer was very upset. After two long hours, he finally let me go and told me to learn English as soon as possible.

I would not like to go through this embarrassing situation again. My cousin, who was waiting for me, was ready to go home, but when I told him the entire story

he laughed at me until we reached his apartment.

Learning A Foreign Language — Aidar Smagulov, 3B KAZAHKSTAN

When you learn a foreign language you can see the world in a different way. Learning a foreign language is not easy work, but it has a lot of advantages. The two most common ways of learning a foreign language are studying in your country and learning abroad.

The advantages of learning a foreign language in your own country are the native teachers, tuition, and a less stressful atmosphere. Without a doubt tuition is quite a lot cheaper than it would be to travel to the country where the language is spoken. The cost of airfare, living accommodations, food, and tuition at a foreign school can be prohibitively high. In addition, there is less stress involved in learning in a familiar environment. Studying abroad requires that you speak the foreign language all the time to accomplish basic activities. It is an opportunity to use the language daily in real life, and it can be an exceptionally important way of learning as well.

The advantages of learning a language in a foreign country are cultural context, natural speech, and opportunities. I think that learning a language abroad is the best way to improve your language because you use it daily and speak all the time. Also, cultural context helps you know a lot of things about behavior, for example, learning to order in a restaurant when you are there with native speakers. It will enhance speaking and help you see how to behave in a restaurant.

There are a lot of opportunities for learning foreign languages. In my opinion, the best way to learn a foreign language is to achieve an intermediate level in your own country and then continue the learning in a foreign country. This way you can really

achieve your goal and make progress in your learning.

A Big Bond Versus a Great Opportunity — Guillermo Moran, 5B VENEZUELA

Where should I study? While in Houston, I have been trying to answer this question. I must decide between staying in Houston and returning to Caracas. Some people think that I'm crazy, and others think that there is no question. The U.S.A. has the best opportunities to study and to work; whereas in Caracas I would have many facilities and be closer to my family. I need to evaluate and balance to decide which is better for me.

I have been in Houston seven months, and I love it. I've gotten to know people from many countries such as Saudi Arabia, China, Japan, and Mexico; that makes me understand other cultures, which is one of the best aspects about living in the U.S.A. On the other hand, Caracas doesn't have that variety of cultures, but it is inhabited by people of my own culture whom I know how to treat, and it is easier for me to study there.

For studies, Houston is far better than Caracas. The University of Houston is Tier One in a country which has the best universities in the world; whereas the best university in Caracas is Simon Bolivar which is the 700th in the world.



BUMPS ALONG THE WAY

A Memorable Experience

— Mariana Puga, 4C

MEXICO

Since I arrived in Houston, I have had many memorable experiences, but I would like to describe my worst time. Even though it was horrible, I learned a few things about people in Houston.

Last semester I had morning classes, and I used to take the bus every day. The first day of class, I decided to take the bus at 6 a.m. because I wasn't familiar with the mass transportation system in Houston. Unfortunately I took the wrong bus, and you can imagine what happened next.

I was in a place I had never been, and my English wasn't good enough to ask how to get to the university. I was worried because I couldn't miss my first day of school. Finally, one man helped me by telling me how to get to the university. I got to the school at 8:15, which was just in time.



No Big Please

— Mohammed Alkhudair, 4E

SAUDI ARABIA

I will talk about a situation when I could not express myself effectively in English. I was in a restaurant here in Houston. The waitress was speaking too fast, and she ate many words. Then I ordered a cheeseburger, and I said, "No big please!" She said, "What do you mean 'no big'?" in a hard tone! I told

her, "I mean no bacon." She laughed for an hour!

Papa

— Nathalie Gonzalez, 4F

VENEZUELA

The first time that I came to United States, I did not have a lot of vocabulary. In one of my first assignments with my professor, I had to write about one influential person in my life or in the world. The first person of whom I thought was a religious one and that person was Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger, called Benedict XVI. After that I started to write about him, and I did not know what to call him, so I entered "Papa," which is the Spanish word for his title, into the translator. The problem was I did not remember that this word had two different meanings in Spanish - papa (like father) or papa (a kind of crop) - and the translation was potato, so I wrote that word in my essay. When my teacher read my homework, he asked me: "Are you joking about Pope Benedict XVI?" It was embarrassing. After that, I corrected my essay, and I did not use the translator anymore.



ADVENTURES



An Adventure in Houston — Othman Ahmed, 4C SAUDI ARABIA

I'll never forget the time I was exploring Houston with some of my Saudi friends. One weekend, we decided to take the bus from the University of Houston to see the city. When the nine or ten of us left the university at 3 p.m., we took the bus downtown, but none of us knew exactly where we were going.

When we got downtown, we walked around to find new places and eventually decided to go to Westheimer because we had heard about some delicious restaurants there.

Fortunately, one of us had a new cell phone with a GPS system. After following our friend with the GPS system on foot, we finally arrived at a Lebanese shawarma restaurant. The food there was delicious, and it reminded me of food from my hometown.

After eating the wonderful food and relaxing, we decided to continue our journey to somewhere that could make our day. We started walking like soldiers again. We were encouraging each other and saying, "We can make it! We can make it!" This time our goal was to get to a nightclub.

When the club was just a few more miles away, we were exhausted because we had been walking for three hours. We stopped to rest at Burger King and decided to take a cab.

Finally, we arrived and entered the nightclub. Even though we were exhausted from walking so much, we still danced to the music that night. We all had fun and enjoyed the long journey that made us smile.

My Trip — Ahmad Abweh, 1B SAUDI ARABIA

My trip during spring break 2011 was to Los Angeles. I met my uncle and my cousin in the LAX airport. I went every-

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where in Los Angeles. I went to Disney Land and Downtown Disney. I played a lot of games. A painter at the Disney store painted me. I went to Lego World. I saw more things in Disney Land. I went to Hollywood. I took a picture with my uncle. I liked that. I walked in downtown Los Angeles. I went to tan on the beach. I saw more stores on the beach. I went to a mall. I bought a lot of things. After two days, I went to San Diego. I liked this city. After that I went to Las Vegas. I liked this city. Las Vegas is maybe the most beautiful city in the world. My trip was a great.

Spring Break on the Road

— Ali Alenazi, 2B

SAUDI ARABIA

The three-hour car trip to Dallas was wonderful. The travel was good, and the weather was sunny. We stopped at a hotel to eat lunch. The hotel was very old, but it was very beautiful and cheap. The ground was flowery, so we took some pictures and sat in the grass in front of the hotel and talked about the trip. We stayed in the hotel for a while to take a nap. After that, we decided to leave, but we were sleepy after lunch. One of my friends said that we should be talking. Since he was the driver, he wanted us to talk to him because he thought if we slept he would sleep too. So we were laughing and making jokes while he was driving. We really enjoyed the road trip, and I even wished it was longer than three hours. I hope we will do it again sometime.

My Trip to Portland

— Chen Liu, 3E

CHINA

My first visit to the United States was in January 2011. My father, uncle, and I flew there. Our first stop was Portland, Maine. Portland is a city where I felt comfortable and relaxed. I think this is the reason why so many people like to visit it.

We arrived in Portland at 11:00 p.m. When I walked outside, there was a lot of snow everywhere. The snow was nearly three feet deep, and it was still snowing and snowing. The city moved the snow from the road to the sides in order for vehicles to pass. The snow was so white and bright. I breathed a deep, “Ohhhhhh!” It was so fresh and cool! From that moment, I knew I liked the place. We stayed in Portland for three days. On the second day, because of the time change, I woke up before sunrise. I opened my window, letting the fresh air in. The sun was rising little by little, and there were only three cars on the road. Everyone was silent. Everywhere was quiet. The city was still sleeping. I took a photo by myself with the sunshine before the sun rose completely. I wanted to remember my first full day in the U.S.

On the second day, we visited a company where my uncle works, and we ate at a restaurant close to the sea. I appreciated the port and the beautiful sunrise. My uncle’s company is a biological engineering company that produces test strips to test the protein content of milk. We visited the process production center. Although I didn’t really understand the principle, I was still surprised by all the advancements made by the company. We ate lunch in his office. My uncle told me that they always eat a very simple lunch in only a few minutes, or one side of the office will eat while the other side works. Lunch consisted only of sandwiches, salads, cake and coffee. For dinner, we got to eat in a boat. Because Portland is so close to the sea, there are many kinds of fresh and affordable seafood. I saw one person eat two lobsters! Our dinner was delicious, and we ate till we were so full.

On the third day, we went shopping. My uncle rented a car and used the GPS as a guide. I didn’t understand whether the GPS reacted slowly or whether we were driving too quickly, but we always missed the intersection or drove the wrong way. Wherever we drove, there were few people. We only saw snow and trees and more snow and more trees. I liked Portland more and more. After an hour and a

half, we arrived at a department store called “Free Port.” There were so many discount stores there. My dad and uncle bought many more things than I did. We shopped in the stores so much, we forgot to eat. After five hours, when all the stores were closed, we just wanted to leave.

I like Portland because it is quiet, comfortable, relaxing, and fresh. The most important reason was that there seemed to be fewer people than you see in other cities. My dad said to me that my mind is like an old person’s mind. When I left Portland, I was already in love with this city.



Spring Break

— Treephet Somsak, 2A

THAILAND

I had a great time this Spring Break because my friend Oat, who lives in Boston, came to visit me. Oat arrived on Wednesday, so I went to Intercontinental Airport to pick him up. Another friend Allie joined us, and on Thursday, the three of us went to the Rodeo, and we had such a fun time. We ate a turkey leg and barbecue ribs. Oat was very amazed by the size of the turkey leg. We ordered just one leg; however, we could not eat it all, for it was too big for us. We also took lots of photos with cowboys and cowgirls.

The next day, we left Houston and went to San Antonio. There were lots of people at

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the Riverwalk. By now, we were starving, so the first thing that we did was find a nice restaurant. Oat wanted to sit outdoors along the Riverwalk because he missed the sunlight. He said Boston was too cold, and he did not like it. After we finished our meal, we walked along the river and took lots of photos. After we walked around the Riverwalk, we went to the Alamo in order to watch the sunset. It was a wonderful sunset. We were eating shaved ices while watching the sun go down.

On Saturday, we went to the Comal River in New Braunfels to go rafting, and it was so much fun. After that, we went to the San Marcos outlet mall. We left there around 9 p.m. and arrived in Houston at midnight. There was a super full moon Saturday night, so we enjoyed looking at the huge moon all the way back to Houston. We got up really late on Sunday and went to the

Galleria to have lunch. We spent almost all the time talking about our lives and sharing our opinions about everything. This was the most amazing Spring Break, and even though I did not go outside Texas, I had the greatest time with my best friends.

A Trip to Vienna — Omar Alshammari, 1A SAUDI ARABIA

My family and I went to Vienna to visit my aunt in the summer. We went to the area of Kahlenberg, a mountainous region on the high ground in Vienna. We went to the Danube River Park, Praterstern Park, the zoo, and the Tower of Vienna. I liked Vienna.



CULTURAL SURPRISES

Cultural Adjustment

— Gustavo Gonzalez, 4E

VENEZUELA

Many people experience changes when they move to another country. Sometimes it can be easy to adapt to those changes, but at times it can be perceived as almost impossible. These difficulties are called culture shock, which has many phases where people feel depressed and alone. A few examples of these difficulties are problems in communication, trouble adjusting to society, and feelings of despair, but all of these problems have solutions. On the other hand, when people feel lonely and solitary because they are far from their family and country, it is called mental isolation, and that also can cause depression and sadness.

I experienced these difficulties when I came to the United States on my own. First, I was living with 3 Americans in the same house, and I did not speak enough English to establish a conversation, so I could not have good communication with them. Second, because I was far from my family, I felt very sad and depressed. On the other hand, my girlfriend and her brother were here, so I spent most of my time with them. Sometimes I thought about coming back to my country and continuing my life as it was before, but if you want to overcome a problem, you have to be strong and positive to solve it.

You can overcome both of these problems by being patient and by using your free time to focus on other things, so you are not going to think a lot about these problems. Another good option to overcome these problems is doing things that you used to do in your country, like playing sports, going to concerts, or just watching TV because by doing these activities you are going to feel more comfortable and relaxed. You have to find the way to adapt and feel calm, so you should be positive and open to all the things that you can learn in that new country. Sometimes when you have a problem, you just see the bad things in it, and you are not able to see all the things that you can learn from that problem.

In conclusion, if you want to overcome culture shock and mental isolation, you have to be patient and try to see all the positive aspects that you can absorb from these difficulties.

Learning From Culture Shock

— Abdulaziz (Aziz) Bin Fares, 4D

SAUDI ARABIA

When I was in my country I did not realize how life is when you are far away from your home, family, and friends, so when I came to the United States, I had culture shock. However, I have learned that I should change my life and accept the way that

people live here. With the passage of time, I have experienced a lot of new things. Some of the best experiences since I came to the United States have been learning things about myself that I had never noticed before. Furthermore, I have been building great friendships with people from different countries, and I am proud of that. I hope that I can have a chance to stay and experience many more wonderful things here in the United States.



The Challenges of Studying Abroad

— Khaled Alkhubaizi, 2B

KUWAIT

As you are well aware, any student who wishes to study abroad has to plan and predict solutions for any possible problem he may face alone in the new country. International students who come to study in the U.S.A. usually will face some common challenges. For example, they many face difficulty understanding American English since most of them studied British English. Moreover, Americans usually speak very fast. Additionally, international students may face culture shock when they move from one country to another.

I'd like to share my own experience as an international student in the U.S. The first challenge I had to deal with was the immigration process in the airport, as it is a little confusing. Moreover, I found another situation that I was not used to in my country. At home, all the services are available to us, but here in the U.S.A. you have to depend on yourself and do everything on your own. Finding good Arabic restaurants here is difficult; renting a good and cheap apartment is nearly impossible; fuel costs are high compared to Kuwait. The U.S. is a country where you cannot live as a foreigner without a car and a navigation system.

In conclusion, all these challenges build the student's character and teach him how to depend on himself.

CULTURE FESTIVAL



CULTURAL SURPRISES

Education: Asian and American Cultures — Jianru Yang, 5A CHINA



Have you ever learned about the differences between Asian culture and American culture in the field of education? I had studied in China for 18 years before coming here and found the differences surprising, particularly at the high school level.

First of all, the teaching method is obviously different. In Asia, students have less time to enjoy social or extracurricular activities since most teachers and parents believe these are useless; the student should focus on studying to get good grades on the final exam and go to a top university. On the other hand, in America, teachers and parents encourage students to take part in any activities they like. They want to teach students how to cooperate, become independent, and develop social skills. Rather than always studying, they think the students should do well in many fields, including sports and music. This teaches students to grow and behave well in the future.

Second, at Asian high schools the students take a final exam, whereas in America they take the SAT. Asian students have just one chance to prepare for the final exam which decides which university they can enter; whereas American students can take the SAT many times and choose the best grade. A good American university not only judges by the SAT but also by high school grades.

As you can see, the Asian and American cultures differ where education is concerned. Knowing about different cultures helps us understand and adapt to them.

Surprising Differences — Mohammed Baagiel, 4D SAUDI ARABIA

Since I did not have a clear vision of the United States, I was surprised by the way of life. For example, I hadn't known that you must have medical insurance to visit a doctor in the United States. I was also surprised that most people in United States respect the traffic laws. Another difference is that the cost of living in the United States is higher than in my home country. However, in my country I can pay half as much as I do here for rent and gas. Also, I noticed that there are many homeless people on the streets here. As a foreign student, sometimes I face various stages of culture shock. However, now I am more comfortable with the lifestyle in United States.



How Parents Raise Their Children — Lei Fu, 5A CHINA

Parents raise their children differently in Chinese and American cultures. The differences include ideas, education, and what parents allow their children to do. Especially different are ideas. Chinese parents' ideas come from traditional

Chinese culture. They think children should learn more when they are young, so Chinese children have little childhood. They must study continually, not do anything else, and not fall in love until they have finished their education. In contrast, American parents think their children should have perfect lives with activities in addition to their studies. They can play and fall in love before finishing their education.

Where education is concerned, Chinese parents always want their children to learn more. They have normal classes from Monday to Friday, then art classes on Saturday and Sunday. They always keep their children busy. However, Americans let their children arrange their own time after weekday classes; their children can do anything they want.

Lastly, there's a difference in what children are asked to do in the two cultures. In China, children do housework; most of the time, the parents order them to, and they must do it. American parents don't always order their children to do housework; they ask them. If their children wash the car, they are paid.

Obviously, there are many more differences than these. I have chosen to describe the ways the Chinese and Americans raise their children in terms of educating them, letting them do activities, and doing housework.

Like an Extraterrestrial — Sylva Dongoh, 4E IVORY COAST

Have you ever realized that you were an extraterrestrial? I had never thought that I could be one until I came to the United States on my own.

When I decided to come to the United States, I was so happy, thrilled, and enthusiastic. For me, it was the ideal moment to prove to my parents that I could be independent. I did not know that my

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first feelings would be short lived. Also, I did not know that I would face a lot of obstacles.

First of all, everything was different from what I thought that it would be. At first, I liked these differences, but after one month, I was exhausted. The dishes, which were so tasty at first, were not anymore. They did not have the same savor and the same smell as those which are cooked in my country. People, who were so nice at first, were not anymore. Finally, I realized that they were just friendly. They did not care for me, they always felt busy, and they did not have time for a friendship. In contrast, in my country, people are so close, and they show solidarity with each other. Also, mass was not interesting and was totally different. Because I am used to mass in French, here it was difficult for me to understand, to listen, and to follow at the same time. I felt lost and sad. I had

the impression of being on another planet. One day, I cried for a long time because I felt the absence of my family and friends everywhere. In the long run, I realized that I was experiencing culture shock. In other words, I was experiencing the obstacles that people face when they have to adjust to a new culture.

Because I had to learn many things at the same time, I felt like an illiterate. First, I had to learn how to speak English. Second, I had to learn how to use the metro. Third, I had to learn about American culture. Then because I am Christian, I had to learn how to pray in English. Finally, I had to learn how to become self-reliant. This one was the most difficult because in my country I used to rely on my parents for everything.

My first Christmas in the United States was the saddest Christmas that I had never

had. While I was talking to my parents, I felt lonely and homesick. I really wanted to come back to my country and celebrate Christmas with them. I began isolating myself from people who were around of me. I thought about my country all the time. I wish I had been there. I imagined what my family and I would have done together if I had been there. This phase that I was experiencing is called mental isolation. The mental isolation is the stage in which people isolate themselves from other people and think about their country all the time.

Because I cried every day, I thought that I was abnormal. However, the day I had class on cross-cultural communication with Dr. Carol, I felt relieved and more confident. I realized that everyone who goes to a new country experiences these feelings when he or she tries to adjust to the other culture. Some people adjust to it



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so fast. For the others it takes a lot of time. The time that it lasts depends on everyone.

When I feel homesick and lonely, I listen to music and watch some movies. I multitask to avoid thinking about my country or my family. I also try to focus on my studies and my goals.

The fundamental advice that I would like to give to someone who is experiencing culture shock or mental isolation is to tell yourself that you are not alone or abnormal. Everyone experiences this when he or she goes abroad. Also the best thing to do is to practice the activities that you like. Finally, talking to a person who is experiencing the same phases is very essential because you can encourage each other.

In brief, I think that coming to the United States has been a valuable growing up experience because I learned two things from this experience. First I realized that everyone is a mirror of his or her own culture. For this reason, everyone is unique.

On the other hand, we are the same people because we are all human beings. Finally, this experience helped me to become more mature and self-reliant because I learned how to make some good decisions and also to define my priorities. Today I am happy and exultant because I think that I am on the way to integration, which is the last stage of the cultural adjustment cycle.

Major Religions in Taiwan and the United States — Shih-Kuei Chen, 5B TAIWAN

In the view of many people, western culture means Christian culture, and eastern culture means Buddhist culture. However, that view is too simplistic; it doesn't show the real situation in the modern world. In fact, religion in the two cultures has many differences and similarities.

Over fifty percent of Americans are Christian; likewise more than eighty percent of Taiwanese are Buddhist. The major religions in these countries create different cultures. For example, in the United States we usually mention "God" and rarely mention other gods because there is just one god in Christian culture. However, in Taiwan people use more than ten words to describe "god," and different words mean different kinds of gods.

Religion has impacted the architecture of the two cultures. For instance, in America, many churches were built as high, sharp shapes since Christians think this is a place where we can have a connection with God. In contrast, the temples in Taiwan are usually one-story buildings with many delicate decorations, as they believe there is a higher rule than these gods; everyone should obey the rules of Nature, even if they are gods or Buddhists.

Although their different religions have created different cultures in America and Taiwan, there are many similarities. For example, both religions ask people to behave well, according to their conscience. Furthermore, there are devils and angels in both religions. Although they pray differently, both cultures gain strength and inner peace from their religions.

In conclusion, there are more similarities between the two cultures and their religions than we think. If we open our minds to accept the differences, we may have more understanding of and fewer conflicts with other cultures.



OUR FAMILIES

STUDENTS IN SUSAN WILSON'S CLASS WROTE ABOUT THEIR FAMILIES.

READ AND ENJOY!

My Family

— **Gigliolla Abreu Gonzalez, 2E**

VENEZUELA

I was born into a happy family in a little town near Caracas, Venezuela. In my family, there are influences from two different cultures. My father's father was from Portugal, and my mother's father was from Spain. My brothers and I grew up in a family with a mix of cultures. It was great to share different things with our parents and grandparents. Our parties always had different food, music, and gifts. On vacations, we visited different places in both countries. It was great to grow up in a family with different cultures. I have many happy memories.

My Father

— **Fawaz Binkolaib, 2E**

SAUDI ARABIA

My father has a good personality. He taught me everything about life. When I was a child, he was the person who tried to understand my little words, and he tried to fix my errors. When I became a man, he took me with him to visit his friends. I stayed with him all through the night and listened to his conversation with his friends. I learn many things from my father to help me have a better life.

My Father The Hunter

— **Ilyas Umbetov, 2E**

KAZAKHSTAN

I want to tell you about my father. He is a good hunter, and every weekend, he usually goes hunting in the forests or moun-

tains. One day, my father had a back injury. He could not move for six months. It hurt me to see my father lying in bed. He wants to give me more good skills, and he paid for my trip to the USA. He wants me to have a good future. I am very happy because I have the most wonderful father in the world.

mother has a nice and healthy life. I love my mother.

My Family

— **Ahmad Odeh, 2E**

JORDAN



My Mother

— **Yunlong Bai, 2E**

CHINA

My mother has a nice life. She is a high school teacher, but she doesn't just teach her students to study. She teaches her students to have a good life. My mother does not smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol. She likes sports. She always tells me that if you want a nice life, first, you must be a healthy person. Her friends ask her why she looks so young. She tells them that you must have a young heart and a healthy life. If all people were the same as my mother, we would have world peace. My

I will tell about my family. First, I will tell about my grandmother. She was good to me and loved me because I was good to her. I helped her with everything. I lived with my grandmother, and she helped me. She told me to focus on my studies every day because your studies are good for your life. She was very sad when I traveled to America, but now she is happy. Secondly, I will talk about my father. He is good to me, and he works hard because he didn't finish his studies. My father told me to complete my studies. I love my father, and I miss him. Finally, I will tell you about my mother. My mother is very important to me, and she is the best mother in the world. I have a happy family, a good family, and the best one for me. I was born into a very happy family.

OUR FAMILIES

An Important Relationship to Me

— Tran Ngo, 4E

VIETNAM

My grandmother is a person who is very important to me, so the relationship between us is the most valuable asset in my life. I lived with my grandmother from my childhood until I decided to come to the United States to study in a master's program, and that was a great time I will never forget. She not only is my grandmother but also is my close friend. I can tell her everything, and nothing is a secret between her and me.

When I studied at high school, I was chosen by my school to participate in an exam about history because I learned this subject so well. I had to learn a lot of things to prepare for this exam; I felt very tired, but my grandmother encouraged me and took care me. She cooked a lot of food that I like, and she also got up earlier than me to wake me up in order to study. So, I felt very confident when the exam came.

I passed this exam, I was one of the pupils who got the best result, and I received a gift for this. At that time, I just wanted to come back my house immediately and donate this gift to my grandmother who always believes in me without conditions. Now, although I am in Houston, I still always call my grandmother in Vietnam on the weekend so that I can tell her everything that I encountered during the week.

My Father

— Nayef Alghamdi, 2E

SAUDI ARABIA

My father has a generous personality. When I was a child, he supported our family and worked overtime every day. For his job, he flew to a lot of other cities in my country. He got a good position in the company. After that, he had more money

to spend for better schools for my brothers and sisters. My father dreamed about a future when all the family would be better with good education. I thank my father.

My Family

— Luis Simao, 2E

ANGOLA



I was born into a poor but happy family. We had many kinds of problems: food, clothing, and, more importantly, money. Despite these difficult problems, we were a happy family. I have five brothers and one sister. Today, we have a good relationship with each other and with our parents. I am a successful adult because I have a good family background. My family is a good example for many families in our neighborhood. We didn't have a lot of money, but we had a good life. I am so glad I was born into this family.

My Special Mom

— Gigliolla Abrue Gonzalez, 2E

VENEZUELA

I think that my mother has a special personality. She can be sweet or strong,

or both together. My mother is always available when I need her advice or support. In my more difficult moments, she has a strong hand for helping me and a sweet smile on her face. My mother is an important influence on me. She is my heroine despite the fact that she married young and didn't complete her university studies. Later, when my brothers and I began university, my mother returned to her studies and graduated. Then she studied for a Master's and a PhD. As a professor,

she saw many students having difficulty because their parents had problems. Then she decided to study law to become a lawyer to help families. My mother studied, worked, and formed our family with her sweet and strong personality. I think my mother has a special personality, and she is my model.

My Family

— Sami Alanazi, 2A

SAUDI ARABIA

I am proud of my father for he is wise and is a symbol of love and compassion. I have never seen a man like him in the whole world. He has strong opinions but makes good decisions. He has a democratic way of thinking. He gives us a wide space of freedom to make up our minds about the issues that we are concerned about in our lives. He is warm and affectionate all the time. My father is so educated that we learn important ethics and values from him, values that give us the push to keep going in life. He encourages us to give our best to the world. My father is the sunshine of our lives.

HOUSTON RODEO

Cowboy Experience In Texas

— Mariana Puga Mota, 4C

MEXICO

Would you like to have a real cowboy experience in just one place? Houston is well known as the medical capital of the world and one of the largest cities in the country. However, in March Houston becomes the cowboy capital of the world with cowboys, cowgirls, and a variety of farm animals coming from different places such as Dallas, Amarillo, and Austin to perform at the world's largest rodeo in Houston. This amazing event gives us the opportunity to know about the culture of Texas in three major aspects: food, western activities, and products.

One important aspect that you may find interesting is the taste of the traditional food of Texas such as barbecue, big turkey legs, and baked potatoes. Also you have to taste the frozen drinks like pina colada or fresh, sweet lemonade. However, you can find all kinds of food from other cities like the delicious funnel cake, which originated in Pennsylvania, but is a traditional dessert at carnivals.

Other Western popular activities from Texas that you may enjoy are tie-down roping, bareback roping, team roping, and my favorite activity mutton busting, where ten riders between six and seven years old try to ride on cute sheep. In addition, at the Houston Rodeo, there are many concerts, art exhibitions, and horse shows that may entertain the visitors.

The Houston Rodeo also has a huge shopping center where you can find all kinds of western products, such as clothes, jewelry, leather goods, and agricultural products. This is a great opportunity to buy beautiful souvenirs from the extraordinary Houston Rodeo.

To sum up, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is an amazing real cowboy program, which I really enjoyed. If you are in Houston during this event, go to the rodeo

and take your own camera because you don't want to miss it or its delicious food, unique shows, and huge western shopping center.



Every Day Is Interesting

— Denis Ebe, 4D

SPAIN

Since I came here, I have had a number of outstanding things happen to me. I don't think I will ever forget any of them. Some of my favorite memories are visiting a museum, spending time with friends, driving one of my favorite cars, and seeing a large horse. All of that was amazing. Another memorable experience is the when I went to the rodeo; I had no idea that it would be so exciting. When you are not in your home country, every day is an interesting challenge.

The Rodeo

— Mohammed Alshaikh, 2B

SAUDI ARABIA

I had a beautiful experience when I went to The Houston Rodeo. It was one of my best times in Houston. When I entered the first gate, I saw big games and a lot

of twisting rides. They were so cool that I couldn't wait to ride them. So, I went with my roommate, and we rode a lot of twisting rides until I had a headache. Then we went to try weird foods like twisted potatoes and smoked turkey legs. There were so many new things to see and eat. After that, we went to the stadium building, and we saw a lot of people that we knew from the LCC. We saw a huge space for the horses and bulls, and we saw the kids riding the sheep. It was so funny. I was interested in the horses with the carts because they were running so fast. I had a good time there, and I wish I could do it again with my family.

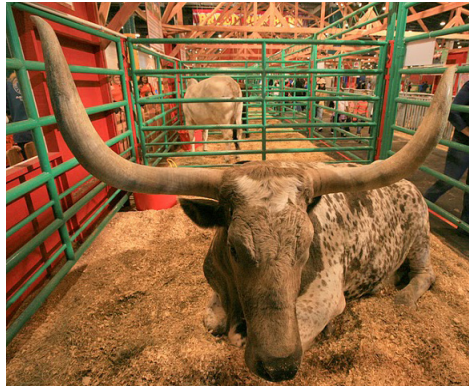
The Houston Rodeo—

— Jefferson Palma, 2D

ECUADOR

The Houston Rodeo is a magical and unique event every year. First, I met the LCC students at the University Center to get onto the bus. After that, we went to Reliant Stadium, and it was a short trip. We took some pictures and listened to advice from Mr. Dave about the event and the time to come back to the university. With my best friends, I went to walk around, and we saw some very extreme games that for me were very dangerous but not for my friends. I think that the food, drinks, and everything else are very expensive in this place. At seven o'clock we went inside the stadium because the show was starting. That was the first time I watched one of these events. It was magical and amazing, with plenty of adrenaline -- the scene, the horses, and the bulls. I had a great time there, and I want to come back to live this experience again in my life. When we returned to the university, I was sad because the fun was finished. I think that the most important things in life are to have fun, to be open to life, to share experiences with friends or new people who are very different from us, and above all, to learn about everyday life from all of our experiences.

HOUSTON RODEO



HOUSTON RODEO



PLACES THAT TOUCH OUR LIVES



Angola, My Home

— Ana Walter, 3E

ANGOLA

Angola is one of the richest countries in Africa. It is located in southern Africa. This wonderful country is divided into eighteen provinces with a total population of about fourteen million people.

Angola was colonized by the Portuguese for centuries. On February 4, 1961, the colonial war against the Portuguese began as a result of Angolans protesting against the colonial regime in the capital city Luanda. The war ended after fourteen years. Consequently, Angola became independent on November 11, 1975.

When the Portuguese abandoned the territory, the Angolans started a civil war, which was between the government and the rebels. This war lasted for years and years, and it left many orphans and people handicapped from falling in mines. As a result, the country was destroyed. There was terrible poverty and lack of employment. In February 2002, the rebel leader died and the war soon ended.

A new era began for the Angolan people. There was a national reconstruction. Countries like China, Russia, Cuba, Portugal, and Brazil began cooperating with Angola in different areas like construction,

health, education, and sports. There began to emerge new buildings, community centers, universities, hospitals, schools, condominiums, and new roads.

Angola is recognized as a land that produces some natural resources, such as petroleum, gold, diamonds, and iron. The oil industry provides a lot of employment opportunities for young people. The minerals are explored by foreigners who usually come from the neighboring Republic of Congo.

Angola is also recognized for its beautiful and tropical beaches. Two famous islands – the island of Luanda and the island of Musoulo are big tourist attractions. There are restaurants, bars, and many other attractions.

In conclusion, in spite of all the suffering we have endured, we are a welcoming and friendly nation. We welcome all those who wish to visit our beautiful country. For this reason, Angola will continue to be a great country.

The House Where I Grew Up

— Boubacar Kone, 2E

MALI

I was born into a big family surrounded by cousins, aunts, uncles, grandmothers, and grandfathers. My grandfather married four wives, so I have four grandmoth-

ers. My father's mother was my favorite grandmother because she took good care of me. Every Saturday, all the children in our "grandfamily" went to the pond in grandfather's field. Those were the most enjoyable moments in my childhood. My father was a photographer at that time, so I have many photos of my childhood. I remember when our class finished my Uncle Ousmane came to take all the family children home in a mini-bus. We all ate together and later went to sleep. I grew up in a big family, and in my memories my "grandfamily" resembled a kindergarten where all the children were happy.

My Hometowns

— Tatiana Korotaeva, 4F

RUSSIA

When I talk about the place where I grew up, I can't think about only one place. This is because I spent my childhood and youth in two totally different cities, both of which I can call my hometowns.

My first hometown, where I was born and where I actually grew up, is Shymkent. It is a big city, which is located in South Kazakhstan. Shymkent is one of the biggest cities in the country, and it is an industrial center also. I do not remember very well all the details about it because I was very young when I left there, but I remember that it was very comfortable for me. This is a very beautiful city, which includes plenty of places for entertainment. Summer fountains, colored lights at night, and of course my childhood friends forever remain in my memory, and I will never forget them. However, as in any industrial city, there exist some problems with pollution and distance. For example, I had to take three buses to get to the school, and it took about one and a half hours. If I have a chance, I definitely will visit Shymkent again.

My other hometown, in which I lived be-

PLACES THAT TOUCH OUR LIVES



fore I came here, is in Russia. Gulkevichi is a very small town, almost like a village. Despite its size, all its flaws, and small features, I love it. The thing I like about this town is its environment. There are a lot of green places, such as mini woods, parks, and gardens. There I live in a home, which is very close to a river, and I liked to go there to spent my leisure time. This city has many little disadvantages such as problems with transportation, pollution, and lack of public institutions and activities, but I like it because it has one big advantage, which is significant for me—my family and friends.

Gulkevichi and Shymkent are both my native cities. They do not resemble each other, but they are equally important to me.

My Special Place — Riaan Alodini, 1B SAUDI ARABIA

Everyone has a nice place to spend free time. For me my favorite place is Alnasser Club. It is in my hometown. Three years ago I was playing there, and I was on the soccer team. They were the best days of my life because it was my dream to play with the soccer team, and my dream came true. I love my team, and I love playing soccer. My friends are still playing on the team. The soccer stadium is the best place for me because soccer is my hobby, and I like to exercise there. If I have free time, I sometimes play soccer. That makes me feel good.



CITIES UNDER THE LENS

STUDENTS IN SANDRA CARRETTIN-MULVANY'S CLASS WROTE ABOUT THE CHALLENGES THAT GROWING CITIES FACE, INCLUDING THEIR OWN CITIES AND WHY THEY LOVE THEM.



Yanbu

— Abbas Alnakhli, 2B
SAUDI ARABIA

My city, Yanbu, is in the south of Saudi Arabia. It has a very nice beach. It is a small city, so all the people work in oil companies or in plastic factories. I love this city because I grew up and studied there, my family is there, and my friends are there. It is a really good city. In the past, about 70 years ago, people worked in the fishing business. Every year we have a party about flowers, and it is very interesting for families. All the streets have flowers of many colors. Yanbu is small city today, but I guess in ten years it will be a big city.

In my city we don't have any bad traffic problems because Yanbu has big streets for a small city. There are not many people, but we have a lot of accidents, and they are very bad accidents. This is the challenge in my city, but I hope we can solve this problem soon.

Jeddah

— Abdullah Alhamawi, 2B
SAUDI ARABIA

Jeddah is in the western region of Saudi Arabia. It is one of the most important cities in my country because it has a trad-

ing port. It is on the coast, and it has a lot of fish in its sea, so the fishermen always spend their time there. There are beautiful beaches, a lot of ships, and a lot of relaxing places and peaceful spots. You can find many different restaurants from each region of the world, and there are shopping malls and high skyscrapers.

What are challenges that my city faces? First, the housing is not enough for the population. Other challenges are air and water pollution and traffic. Therefore, we must do something to improve our city and solve these problems like other cities must do.

I love Jeddah and I hope it is always a creative city and the best urban center in the world.

Ouagadougou
— Arsene Sam, 2A
BURKINA FASO

My city is Ouagadougou. It is located in the center of Burkina Faso, my country. Its residents are called Ouagalais. Nowadays Ouagadougou has four million people, and the population is growing by 500,000 a year. Ouagadougou is the political capital of my country, so we can see many important people there, and many celebrations of my country take place there, for example, Independence Day. Ouagadougou is about 20,000 square kilometers. Most people have their own businesses, so only thirty percent of the population works for the government. Sixty percent of the people are Muslims, and thirty percent are Catholics. Most young people like rap music, but the older generation prefers traditional music like Warba and Salou. I like this city because people are social, and they live in the community. If you have some problems, you just have to

tell someone, and somebody will help you. People are always together.

Despite those qualities, today Ouagadougou faces many challenges like poverty, traffic, crime, and education. More than fifty percent of the population is poor, so most young people can't find jobs. They finish their studies, but they can't find something to do after their education. Unfortunately, we don't have much infrastructure or services like bridges, subways, hospitals, and many other things, yet there is hope for the future.

Abqiaq
— Fahd Aldossary, 2A
SAUDI ARABIA

Abqiaq is a small city, and it's the center of the Aramco Company. It's a business town, so all of the population works in this company. Abqiaq is in the western part of Saudi Arabia between Alhasa and Dammam. The population in Abqiaq is just 60,000. Aramco Company founded this city fifty years ago. I love my city because I was born there and grew up there. I also love it because it's quiet, small, and beautiful, and the people have a good attitude. In fact, I love Abqiaq because all my memories are there.



CITIES UNDER THE LENS

STUDENTS IN SANDRA CARRETTIN-MULVANY'S CLASS WROTE ABOUT THE CHALLENGES THAT GROWING CITIES FACE, INCLUDING THEIR OWN CITIES AND WHY THEY LOVE THEM.

Ho Chi Minh City

— Hung (Jeffrey) Nguyen, 2A
VIETNAM

Ho Chi Minh City is the city that never sleeps in Vietnam. It has a lot of cultures, and it is a place for chance, fun, and tourism. Almost all the people from other cities move there. Ho Chi Minh City is heavily influenced by French, American, and Chinese cultures after a thousand years of dependence. So the houses in Ho Chi Minh City seem to show a little style of those countries. It is a mix between old and new.

Vietnamese people are very friendly and social. We always welcome everybody, whether they are friends or strangers. In celebrations annually, everybody shares and invites everyone in the area where they live. They readily assist each other if they can. I love the citizens and my city. However, there are some issues. A small city with a big population has to face a lot of challenges. Ho Chi Minh City, the big city of Vietnam, has to welcome a lot of people who move from other cities every day. Housing is very expensive, and the cost of living is the highest in the country. The environment is full of pollution, but we are changing. We need a lot more time.

Jeddah

— Faisal Saklou, 2B
SAUDI ARABIA

Jeddah isn't like any other city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Some people call it the Paris of Saudi Arabia because it's very beautiful from the sky or from land. There are many tall buildings, but they are not skyscrapers. You will find all kinds of luxury in Jeddah. Everywhere you will find anything you need. There are malls, parks, restaurants, and services.

Every year more than two or three million people come to Jeddah to visit the old area and old buildings. They call it "The Historic Area." This area has been there for 100 years, and most of the merchants start from this spot because they know that famous people from the Kingdom of Saudi and other famous places in the world will come there to go shopping. Jeddah is the bride of the Red Sea because it's the most

beautiful city on the Red Sea.

Despite its beauty, Jeddah has some challenges like other growing urban areas. A big issue in Jeddah is the infrastructure. There is very little in Jeddah, so the people hope for a solution to this problem. Every year people in Jeddah spend more than two million S.R. to fix cars because of the lack of infrastructure and streets that aren't



able to handle all the traffic. The second problem is pollution that comes from cars and factories. I hope city planners can find a good solution for these challenges soon because this is the best city in the world. In my opinion, we have to keep this urban center beautiful for both us and all the tourists.



CITIES UNDER THE LENS

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Luanda

— Daniela Briffel, 2A
ANGOLA

I love Luanda because it is the smallest city in Angola, it is near the coast, and there are many things to do and places to visit such as the National Park and the Slavery Museum. There is also a wide variety of restaurants from all over the world. The most important places that all tourists should visit are the beaches. They are very clean, and the sea is very warm in all seasons of the year. There you will find natural and native drinks. There is also an island called Mussulo. Luanda has a lot of music that is heavily influenced by other types of music like R&B and Samba, but we also have a specific kind of music called Kuduro. It is like our flag, and it's a mix of different rhythms. Everyone who visits Luanda feels at home.

Like other growing cities, Luanda is facing many challenges like pollution, traffic, jobs, housing, and crime. During the week, traffic in Luanda is terrible. Many cars are stuck in one place for hours because their workplace is in the center of the city. Everyone has to work, but Luanda doesn't have public transportation. Some places are dangerous to walk on the streets



at night. Lack of jobs is another issue. Everyone wants to live in Luanda, but there isn't enough work for all, nor enough places to live. The government is located outside of Luanda, and it encourages the people to move there by constructing cheap apartments and creating new jobs. Despite these issues, Luanda's economy is growing fast.

Malabo

— Pedro Nze Mangué, 2B
EQUATORIAL GUINEA

My city, Malabo, is the capital of my country, Equatorial Guinea. Malabo is a very developed city. There are recent developments in urban planning. There is new construction of houses in the Buena Esperanza area, and the government plans to build more houses in other places.

In the educational aspect, my city is growing every year, especially high schools and universities. All this development is thanks to the United States because in our country there are many American companies

working in oil production. That production gives us many benefits to the economy. What are the challenges for the future in my city Malabo? The primary challenge is to improve the technical and professional schools and develop the teaching programs. In my opinion, I think that we need some help from the United States to find that solution because the United States has good technology and amazing teaching.

Shanghai

— Zeling Shen, 2B
CHINA

Before I came to Houston, I lived in my hometown Shanghai. It is a city with a lot of modernization and prosperity, and it also known as "The Far East Paris." Shanghai is a harbor city. After the Opium War in 1842, Shanghai became an important trading port. The United Kingdom and the United States let their armies stay in Shanghai, so Shanghai was influenced by western culture earlier than other cities in China. Nowadays, Shanghai is one of the biggest international cities in the world. It has kept large numbers of the old buildings made by the western colony countries, which made Shanghai more attractive. By the year 2000, Shanghai was already acknowledged by the world due to large numbers of international meetings held there, such as APEC, WTO, and the Exposition. Those events confirmed the position of Shanghai in the world. This is my city and the city I love. I hope Shanghai's future will be better and better and that more and more people will fall in love with Shanghai.



PEOPLE-WATCHING



A Famous Venezuelan Conductor

— Miguel Hidalgo, 2B

VENEZUELA

There is a great orchestra conductor in Venezuela named Gustavo Dudamel. He leads one of the best and most well known orchestras in my country: the Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra has given concerts all over my country and also in other places like the U.S.A. The amazing thing about Dudamel is not that he directed a big orchestra, but that he started conducting when he was only fifteen years old.

A Famous Korean Figure Skater

— Hye Seon Kim, 2B

KOREA

Yuna Kim is a figure skating athlete in Korea. She is called “an angel on the ice.” Her movements are awesome! She has everything: a pretty face, a beautiful body, lovely speaking skills, and a lot of money. But most of all, she has the qualities of tenacity and concentration. When she was a teenager, she practiced for a lot of time, every day, over and over. Eventually she became the champion. At that time, the whole nation was excited to hear the news.

Now, every girl in Korea wants to be like her. I want to have her tenacity.

An African Queen

— Boubacar Kone, 2E

MALI

Last week when I went to a nightclub with my friends, I met a dream girl, an “African Queen.” We arrived at the club at 2 a.m. There were many people inside, but instantly, I saw one girl across the room. She was wearing a beautiful red dress and was dancing to the African music with a rhythm like the Samba. I was very attracted to her. She is a good dancer, and so am I. I had just one thought in my head: to dance with her. When the music stopped, I made my entrance onto the dance floor, and a miracle, she chose me as her partner. My dream became a reality. We danced for a while. When I felt that she was tired, I invited her to come with me for something to drink or eat. At 5 a.m., my friends wanted to leave, and I left with them. I had never seen my dream girl before that night. I only know her name and where she comes from. I hope I will see her again because I want to be her dance partner again.

Obama’s Speech

— Lloyd Ntoutoume Eko, 3F

GABON

I will never forget Barack Obama’s first speech. On this day, the world stopped moving for this great moment. In Washington, over one million people came to listen to the first black president of the United States. It was just incredible. Everyone was very excited. Some people cried, and other people just couldn’t believe it. I watched this speech on my TV with my parents, and it’s not my habit to watch TV with them. In his speech, Obama paid tribute to the forefathers and American unity. I think that many people, like me, will never forget this address.

Famous Venezuelan Singers

— Paola Rivas, 2A

VENEZUELA

Two famous people in my country are “Chino y Nacho.” They are excellent singers and very good songwriters. In Houston I heard their music, and I was excited to know that people in Houston listen to Venezuelan singers. Chino and Nacho are young people, but they care about helping the poor and sick children who live in the streets. They always give donations to organizations that help people with problems. I love their music because it is both romantic and good for dancing.



My Special Friends

— Osvaldo Izata, 4F

ANGOLA

I have a stunning privilege that I would not change even if somebody provided me with the opportunity to enjoy all the wealth in this life. Actually it is more significant than the lottery or even getting rich; it is a treasure that I am going to carry forever, no matter what I go through; I cannot deny it. In fact I am talking about my special friends.

Sometimes I think that I do not deserve this kind of friendship because I used to hurt them in many ways, but they are

PEOPLE-WATCHING

always ready to lift me up and guide me to the right track; even when I am wrong, no matter in what situation, they carry me.

Somehow, to consolidate this kind of relationship implies hard work, submission, and self-control because we have to prove that our friendship does not depend on material things such as money, cars, race, color, and so on. Starting with the point that people nowadays are too vain, mean-

ing they are just looking for rich friends in order to guarantee success in life, it has become really tough to find special friends.

Nevertheless, we cannot just look for perfect friends; sometimes it is necessary to discuss in order to ameliorate the relationship among ourselves. We ought to be ready to face any kind of troubles; even when we are extremely upset with

somebody, we could not hold them back to change their opinion. It is our mission to support our friendship in order to overcome whatever we pass through.

To sum up, I have to say that there is no one else for me beside my special friends, whom I will keep in my heart. In the same way, I have been asking in God to let me enjoy this privilege, and I am pretty sure that our friendship is going to last forever.



TECH IN TEXT

Effects of Technology

— Saoud Al-Qahtani, 5F
SAUDI ARABIA

We are living in a time of exciting and rapid revolutionary changes in the world. Technology is becoming more and more advanced. Most people would think that technology has made their lives easier and consider it a blessing. However, from my point of view, technology has done quite the opposite. While considering technology from the usability point of view, various social and economical effects of technology need to be considered.

Technology has made lives easier and quicker but dangerous as well. Some of the modern inventions we use in our daily lives, such as the Internet, help us get information faster and allow us to stay connected with friends and family. TV allows us to watch a number of different channels, which might seem to make our lives easier and more efficient. Looking at the other side of the mirror exposes some shocking truths as well.

Moreover, technology creates financial problems in families because most technology is very expensive. People always keep pace with the development of technology. Take the television, for example. In old times, a simple TV had two dials: a volume controller and a channel changer. In modern times, if people need a TV, they look for something with extra features, such as a satellite receiver and a DVD player. This is a waste of time and money.

Modern technology has taken away comfort from our lives and introduced a new form of stress. It has made things harder for us and distracted us. It feels like machines now own the world. People rely on cars and vehicles to travel short distances and hardly do any exercise, which makes them more vulnerable to diseases. People are getting unfit, less social, and more frustrated.

In short, nowadays, all we care about is checking our email and text messages without true emotional bond and relationships with each other. That is what technology has brought to our lives.

Energy Today

— Abdulaziz (Dave) Alfahaid, 3B
SAUDI ARABIA

Have you ever tried to live one day without electricity? Have you ever asked yourself how companies make it? At this time, there are many dissimilar ways to make electricity, such as nuclear energy, solar energy, and oil energy.

Nuclear energy is one of the most useful types of energy, and the most dangerous. It is a non-polluting energy, but it the most dangerous because of the trash that comes after nuclear fission. Also, nuclear energy is still the most dangerous if it explodes.

Nuclear energy is powerful, but we have to be aware when we use it.

Solar energy is one of the modern instruments to produce energy. Also, it is more safe and friendly to the environment. It is spreading in many countries in the world, but there are some problems faced by it, such as it is less affordable to make. In addition, solar energy still needs sunlight. So that means solar energy is unavailable at night and on cloudy days.

Oil energy is the most popular these days. It is affordable in any place but for a limited time because it is a non-renewable energy. However, that makes many scientists who experiment with energy try to think about other ways to create energy that is renewable, such as solar energy and wind energy. People will use oil energy in spite of the pollution that it makes on earth.

Even though the ways to make the energy are different, they are still important because all of them make energy.



TECH IN TEXT

The Ease of Life With Technology — Bahi Qutub, 3B SAUDI ARABIA

Have you ever seen a house that uses high technology to control every single thing in it with a tiny smart machine? Or has anyone driven a car that can park by itself? Have you ever seen a doctor who uses a robot to be connected with his or her patient? People nowadays can enjoy using modern types of technology almost everywhere like in houses, cars, and hospitals.

People use technology in their houses to make their lives easier. There are many different types of technology in houses. For example, sensors can control the lights and sound in a certain room. Also, there is a trashcan that has a sensor to open and close by itself.

Second, modern cars use high technology that has never been used before. If a person bought a car these days, he or she can find many useful technological features.

For example, if a person doesn't have the ability to park perfectly, he does not have to worry about it anymore because some cars have this magnificent option.

One of the options for doctors today is that they can work at different places at the same time. Busy doctors do not have to worry about time because they have invented a robot that can help doctors to do their jobs easily. This robot has technology

features that can help doctors connect with patients through a camera and a screen. Also, this robot can help in the operating room. By using the magnet, it can hand the surgical instruments to the doctor.

In the twenty-first century, technology is considered to be one of the most predominant resources that people can use in different situations. In this century, many people cannot live without technology.



DAVE'S PAGE

NOTES FROM THE DESK OF THE STUDENT ADVISOR



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

New students and continuing students went on the first trip of the spring term during registration week. This gave us the opportunity to get to know one another and make new friends, as well as see some interesting things. We went to Houston's Museum of Fine Arts, 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 quick stop for photos at the Waterwall because of the cold weather and then home to UH.

In February, we had the LCC class photo and sports tournament. After the photos, many students went to the University Center Game room to participate in billiards, table tennis, and bowling. The winners were as follows: Bowling: 1st – Luis Carlos Carvajal Arenas, 2nd – Gustavo Enrique Gonzalez, and 3rd – Anas Basodan; Billiards: 1st – Mohammed Aldossari and 2nd – Fawaz Binkolaib; Table Tennis: 1st – Wenjun Ying and 2nd – Salloom Alsallom.

The next event was the LCC Culture Festival. We learned about each other's cultures and tasted dishes from around the world prepared by our own students and staff. We had plenty of good food. Many students wore clothes from their countries. A variety of music was played, and students danced to their own music, as well as the music of other cultures. Student must have been having a good time considering how long the Festival went on. Thanks to everyone for helping make the Culture Festival a big success.

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

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

SOCCER TEAM

The LCC soccer team, the Falcons, had a great season. They went to the play-offs and were in the quarterfinals. The game ended in a tie so play continued in sudden death overtime. Unfortunately, the Falcons did not win. But they played very well this term, and we are very proud of them.

The Falcons represent us well and are a real asset to the LCC. Please join us in congratulating them. In addition to our Captain and team manager, Sevando Hernandez Vargas, our team included Anas Alodini, Riann Alodoni, Pablo Ruggeri, Naif Jalawi Alqahtani, Youssef Kone, Matias Nve Andeme, Jose Silva, Boubacar Kone, and Riaan Bin Ahmad.

Go Falcons!!!!!!



DAVE'S PAGE

IMMIGRATION

Students in F-1 status need to make sure they maintain their immigration status. If you are planning to take a vacation during the break, see Dave Burns or Sam Long first. If you are travelling outside of the U.S., you need to either have your current I-20 signed on the back or get a new one.

Students in F-1 status need to make sure they maintain their immigration status. We have to

update your SEVIS record at the beginning and end of each term. SEVIS, which stands for Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, is an electronic tracking system that keeps student records for the Department of Homeland Security. It is very important that we know what you will be doing in summer so that we can keep your SEVIS records current and so that you will keep your F-1 student status.

If you are planning on transferring to a new school for summer or on taking a summer vacation, please see Dave Burns or Sam Long to make sure so that you can follow the proper procedure. If you are transferring, you must have your transfer recorded in SEVIS and 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, available at 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 cannot 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. It is very difficult to get your student status back if you lose it.

If you move to a new apartment or house, you must notify Sam so that we can update your SEVIS record. This is required by immigration law.

LCC PHOTOS

Photos for the spring term are posted on the LCC web page. You can copy the ones you want. If you have photos of these events, please share them with other LCC students.



MEMORIES



MEMORIES

ASK YOUR FRIENDS TO SIGN THIS PAGE AND INCLUDE SPECIAL MEMORIES
FROM SPRING 2011 AT THE LCC.



Editors: Johanna Campbell and Anna Lauzon

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