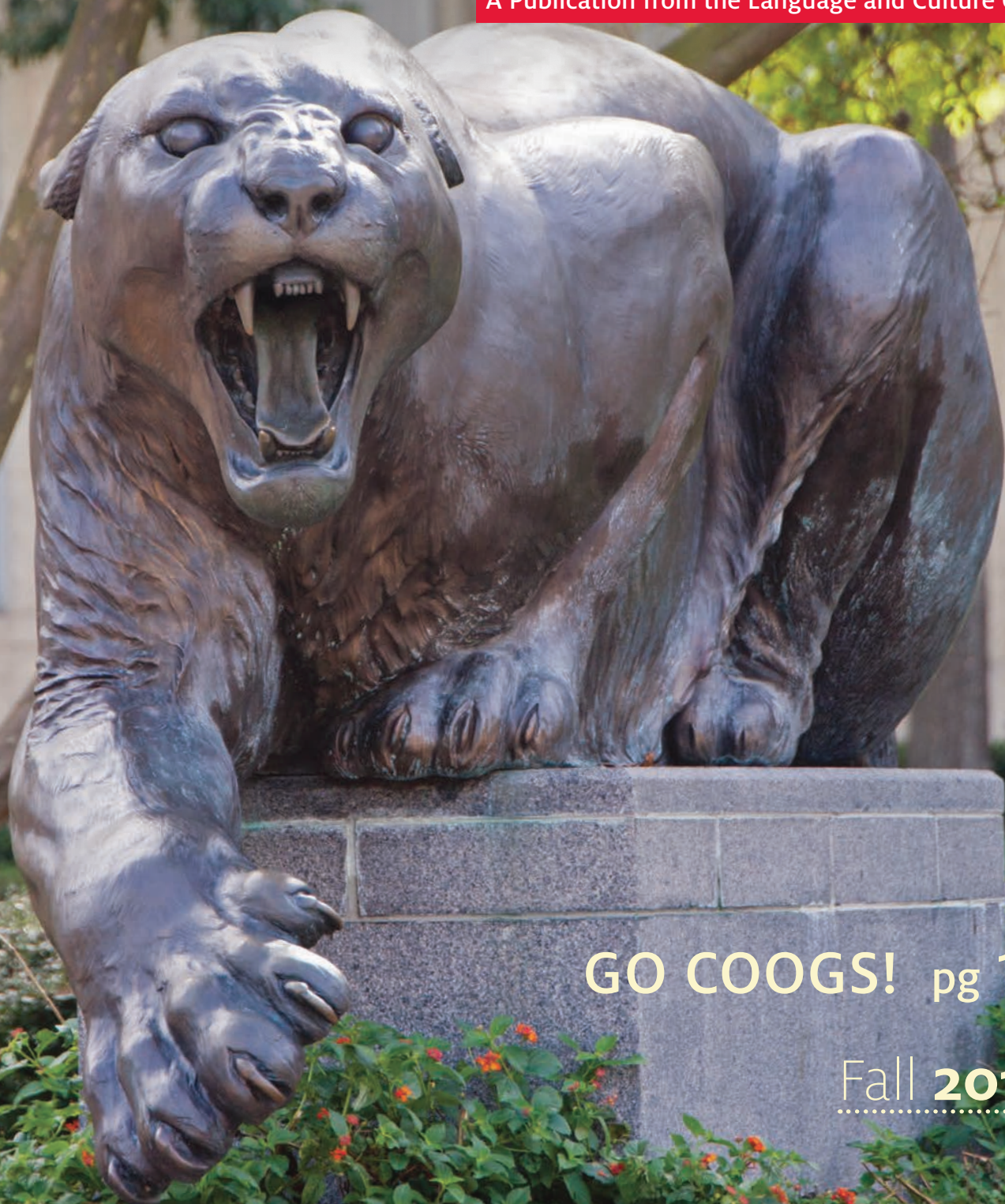


UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

VOICES

A Publication from the Language and Culture Center



GO COOGS! pg 10

Fall 2014

The LCC Team



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- Sandy Woodson – Associate Director
- Adam Chen – Program Director of Counseling and Student Services

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- Anna Lauzon Hood – Curriculum and Special Programs

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- Clint Casey – Acting Microsystems Analyst
- Jessica Cruz – Office Assistant 2
- Thao Le – Financial Coordinator
- Samrach Long – SEVIS Compliance Coordinator
- Cathaleen Robinson – International Student Counselor



Counseling Team

VOICES – Fall 2014

Editors

- Jussara De Magalhaes
- Jana Munoz

Graphic Design and Layout

- Seleste Bautista – UH Printing



Main Office

PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

Abigail Comeaux
Adrianna Nguyen
Carmela Rodarte
Clinton Casey
Eriberto Calderon
Jessica Silva
Jonathan Nguyen
Juan Medina
Julio Torres
Natalie Le
Sagar Rama
Valerie Costanza
Deborah Richardson



International Student Counselor

Hello, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am the International Student Counselor. This has been my first semester at the LCC. I have seen many of you on campus and in my office, but there are still many of you who I have not yet had the chance to meet. Please come by my office anytime to talk. I would love for you to tell me about yourself and how your semester is going. I am here to support students and help find solutions to any issues that may arise in your academic or personal life. I am in room 120 at the Roy Cullen Building. If you ever come by and I am out of the office, you can schedule an appointment with me at the LCC main office. I hope you have had a wonderful fall semester and am sure you are excited for the winter break. If you are going home for the break, enjoy your time with friends and family! Remember to practice your English while you are away. For those who are not going home, what are your plans? Getting out of the house and staying busy can help if you are feeling homesick. There are great things to do in Houston during the winter months. I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable break. I look forward to seeing you in the spring.

Cathaleen Robinson



From the **Director's** Desk



We dedicate this issue of Voices to the memory of our dear friend and colleague, Brad Powell. On August 18, 2014, just a few days after summer graduation, our beloved counselor and friend died of accidental drowning in the Virgin Islands. Having lived his life fully, fearlessly, and with compassion, Brad touched the lives of many of you who are with us this term and of countless students from all over the world throughout his career. He will never be forgotten.

Brad's life and experience were woven into the fabric of the LCC and this university. He began working in the LCC in 2002 when he was an undergraduate student at the University of Houston. After completing his Bachelor's in Social Work, he went on to complete two master's degrees at this university, one in Social Work and one in Counseling through the College of Education. With great excitement about all he was learning and planning to accomplish, he was well into a doctoral program in Educational Psychology when his extraordinary life ended suddenly and way too soon.

He loved his job. He loved the LCC. He began as a student worker, became a teacher, continued as international student counselor, and eventually found his perfect place as Program Director of Counseling and Student Services. Whether you knew Brad for a short time or for as long as many of us have known him, you could never forget him. Everyone remembers his big, beautiful smile, his incredible lightness, his joyous spirit, and his unique brilliance. All of us who were fortunate enough to spend time with him are simply grateful that we knew him. He was our bright and shining star. He will live in our hearts forever.

At the fall graduation ceremony on December 11, the LCC will award the first Brad Leon Powell Scholarship to a deserving student. The scholarship will cover the full cost of one term of study in the Language and Culture Center. Brad's mother will be with us at the ceremony to present the scholarship to the first student recipient. We hope many of you will join us as we celebrate Brad's life and continue his legacy with the presentation of this scholarship in his name.

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

Congratulations as you complete the fall 2014 term of study in the Language and Culture Center. This fall, we have been delighted to have 409 students from 38 countries in our program and on our campus. As the fall term of 2014 closes, we wish you a safe and productive academic break. Fall classes will end at the close of graduation ceremonies on December 11, 2014. The LCC office will be open through December 23, 2014, and then will close for the Winter Break and open again on January 5, 2015. Online registration for the spring term will begin on January 6. We look forward to seeing many of you again in the New Year for the spring, 2015 term in the Language and Culture Center.

Joy S. Tesh – Director

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Counseling and Student Services



*Sam Long -SEVIS
Compliance Coordinator*

Congratulations on completing the fall term at the LCC!

I know that you are ready for the winter break and you have already made plans. Before you make any more plans, there is one more thing you will need to do before leaving the LCC for the winter break.

If you have a student (F-1) or exchange (J-1) visa, you must maintain your immigration status; you are required to study in every term at the LCC unless you are given

permission to take a term off. You can tell the LCC your plans for the spring term by choosing to do the following:

- Continue your studies at the LCC for the spring term (January – April), register online. Go to the LCC website for more information on registration. If you do not register on time, you cannot study at the LCC!
- Leaving the USA during the winter break, speak to a student counselor and obtain permission to return to the USA. The counselor will give you permission by signing your I-20 or DS-2019 (only OISSS staff can sign these).
- Transferring to a new school, turn in your transfer paperwork to the LCC office. You have 60 days from graduation to complete the transfer process. Do not wait until the last minute to transfer or you may jeopardize your immigration status.
- Returning home and not continuing at the LCC, speak to a student counselor. Tell the counselor about your decision so we can report your last enrollment at the LCC.
- Taking a vacation (January – April), you must meet the requirements for a vacation term. You can request a vacation by logging into your student account and clicking on the vacation button. One week after graduation, the LCC will notify you via email about your vacation request.

If you have any questions or concerns about your immigration status, please see a student counselor. We look forward to seeing you in the spring. Enjoy the break!



Adam Chen

In fall 2014, the LCC Counseling Team organized several activities, and we were fortunate to share our excitement with LCC students. We went to the Texas Renaissance Festival, where we met entertaining performers, saw unique arts and crafts, and ate delicious food. On Games Room Day, we had a great time bowling and playing billiards and ping pong. Moreover, we went to Moody Gardens in Galveston where we found so much to see: the colorful Rainforest Pyramid, the breathtaking Aquarium, the magical Festival of Lights, and so on. Last but not least, we had the Fall 2014 Culture Festival. There were various cuisines that originated from different countries, as well as traditional Thanksgiving dishes. Many LCC students dressed in beautiful clothes specific to their cultural heritage. It was a blast! We hope that through these activities, you enjoyed your time at the LCC and had an opportunity to bond with your friends, old and new.

I would like to recognize the LCC Singers, their director Katey Porter, and assistant director Caitlin Sapaugh. The choir members worked hard to learn new songs, and they performed at various events: the UH Fall 2014 International Education Week Opening Ceremony, the Houston Zoo Lights, and the LCC Fall 2014 Graduation Ceremony—just to name a few. We are so proud of the choir members, Katey and Caitlin. You have done a fantastic job!

— Adam Chen, *Program Director of Counseling and Student Services*

Hortensia R. Barrios, Benita Mwali Kalwahali, Marta Alises De La Pena, and Robert Tenias,

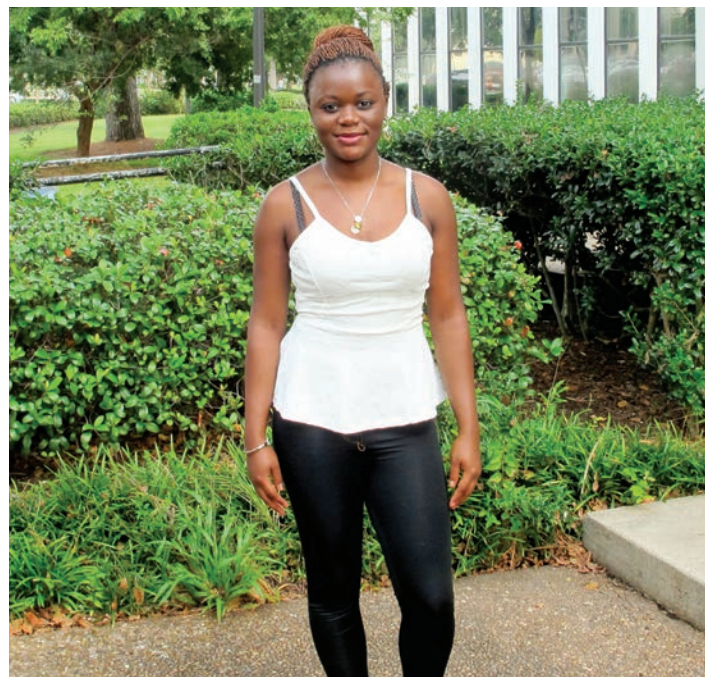
The Language and Culture Center awards four scholarships each term to returning students who best combine academic excellence and leadership with international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Traditionally, one full scholarship honors Joyce Merrill Valdes, the founder and first director of 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 summer graduation ceremony on Thursday, August 7, 2014, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to Hortensia Barrios Gomez, the Davidson scholarship to Benita Mwali Kalwahali, and the two merit scholarships to Marta Alises De La Pena, and Robert Tenias Moya.



Sandy Woodson - Associate Director



HORTENSIA R. BARRIOS was awarded the Valdes scholarship. Ms. Barrios is from Venezuela and is studying in level six. This is her second term at the LCC. After she completes her studies at the LCC, she plans to continue her study of English to be able to teach others and to write professionally. She said, "I feel deeply honored to be a recipient of the Joyce M. Valdes scholarship. Thanks to this opportunity, I am closer to proving that people can be reborn from the ashes."

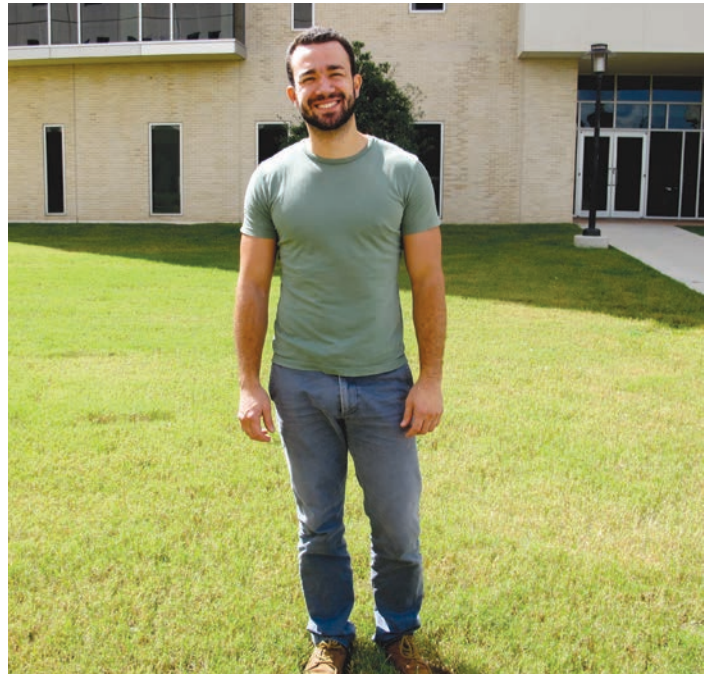


BENITA MWALI KALWAHALI was awarded the Davidson scholarship. Ms. Kalwahali is from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This is her second term at the LCC, and she is studying in level four having skipped from level two. Upon completing the intensive English program, she plans to study Petroleum Engineering at the University of Houston. Ms. Kalwahali remarked, "It is truly a wonderful feeling to know that the LCC recognized my achievements and believed in my pursuit of excellence in everything that I do. Receiving the scholarship has assured me that all of my studying and hard work will pay off."

RECEIVE LCC SCHOLARSHIPS



MARTA ALISES DE LA PENA was a recipient of a Merit scholarship. She is from Spain and is currently studying in level six having been at the LCC for three terms. When she finishes her study of English, she plans to return home and continue working in the area of intellectual property. Ms. De La Pena said, “I’m so glad to have received this scholarship. It’s an honor that the LCC chose my application while I was in level five. I’m trying to do my best to show them that they didn’t make a mistake.”



ROBERT TENIAS was also a recipient of a Merit scholarship. Mr. Tenias is from Venezuela. He is currently studying in level four. This is his second term of study at the LCC. After completing his study of English, he plans to continue his studies at the University of Houston in a master’s program in Systems Engineering. Mr. Tenias commented, “I am very proud and grateful to the LCC for this generous scholarship. It helped me with my term fees and allowed me to buy more books.”

We congratulate Hortensia Barrios, Benita Mwali Kalwahali, Marta Alises De La Pena, and Robert Tenias 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 fall 2014 graduation ceremony.

A MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE - *Brad L. Powell, Jr.*

My son, Brad Leon Powell, Jr. was born on July 23, 1983. He weighed 9 pounds, 12 ounces—a big, beautiful baby. In fact, he was the biggest baby in the nursery that day. During delivery, his left arm sustained permanent nerve damage. This birth injury never did slow my baby down one bit. Neither did it affect his personality. When his daddy started talking, his gaze shifted to him and stayed there until I started talking. Then his gaze shifted to me, and we locked eyes, seemingly forever. Brad didn't cry until the nurses took him to clean him, and he stopped crying once returned to my arms. He was such a happy baby who rarely cried. From that moment on, Brad was and continues to be the greatest and best gift ever given to me by God.

I will not bother you with the details from birth to death because every moment of his life was full, and I would be writing from now until forever. So I will try to narrow it down and tell you what remained true about Brad his whole life. Brad was very smart, even as a little boy. At the age of five, he had major surgery to his left arm to make his wrist stable and give him a little more mobility. During his hospital stay, the medical staff was so impressed with his vocabulary and articulation that they asked permission to give him some educational tests. I agreed, and they discovered that he was already testing out at the IQ level of 138. I remember them being so excited and chattering about how they just knew he was special. I was so proud. I already knew that he was a special boy, and he grew into an exceptional man. All of his life, Brad had a desire to help others and a joie de vivre that was undeniable. He was smart but not arrogant, opinionated but not judgmental, had a very positive attitude, and was a lover of humanity. Brad was the type that never met a stranger. However, he was very particular about who he allowed within his inner circle of friends. He let people in who were open-minded, constructive, encouraging, supportive, and had an upbeat way of seeing life. His inner circle of friends became the brothers and sisters that he never had naturally. He cherished true friendships and was a loyal friend.



Throughout his life, I enjoyed observing the way he would carefully consider things and express ideas that were far beyond his chronological age. I would sometimes wonder if he had been blessed with exceptional critical thinking skills as a way to help him figure out ways to do things with essentially one arm. All of his life, he found a way to do whatever he was interested in, and video games became his first real love at a very early age. I was amazed that he could play them with one hand better and faster than I could with two.

The LCC. How Brad LOVED working at the LCC from the very beginning. No matter what his job title was, I would hear Brad often say, "I love the LCC. The people are amazing!" We had countless conversations where he was excitedly talking about one thing or another that occurred there. Before the LCC, he worked at Astroworld and Target, and I never heard him jabber on excitedly about either one of those jobs. His best friend and brother, Samrach Long, helped him get a job in the LCC, and after that, his work experiences changed dramatically. I was so happy to hear him be excited about a job. He started as a Program Assistant for Information Systems and then worked in the LCC's computer lab, both of which he thought was like getting paid to play on computers. His job title would change, but his love for the LCC never did, no matter what his jobs were, including Teacher's Assistant, Teacher, International Student Counselor, and finally,



Program Director for Counseling and Student Services. He loved working in the LCC until his life ended. Just before he left for vacation, he told me he was excited to have some down time because he had some new ideas that he wanted to work on to help the LCC students. He said, "I LOVE my job!" I don't know what those ideas were, but he was often flirting with new ideas and new ways to help others.

Months before Brad passed away, he talked to me about what he wanted to do once he obtained his Ph.D. Since Brad spent so much of his childhood at the Shriner's Hospital for Children and because they did so much to help him at no cost to us, he wanted to give something back to them. He wanted to donate his expertise to provide free counseling services to children who had physical disabilities. He wanted those children to see that he was just like them so that they would be able to speak to someone who understood and get advice from someone who had been where they are. He thought that he was meant to go back to Shriner's and offer help in a way that only he could. I was so proud of the man he had become.

Brad was an awesome son. We could and did talk about everything and anything. Even though I am the parent, it was Brad that taught me through his example the true meaning of unconditional love. It was Brad that taught me to become slower to anger and quicker to forgive. Brad was truly a gift from God to me. He has always been and will always be the very best gift that I have ever received in my entire life, bar none. He was authentically a good person with a good heart, and he had great ideas from the time he was born all the way into his manhood. His positive spirit was real, and it was a treasure. Because Brad was the way he was, his loss is tremendous and gut-wrenching, not only for me and my family and his friends, but for anybody who had the opportunity to see the light within him shine so brightly, and it did shine. His inner light showed up in his smile. It is that inner light that I saw from birth that I miss terribly. I am not alone in this great loss, because so many of you saw that bright, awesome light too.

- Reba James



The Remarkable Life of Brad Powell Solika Lim and Bernadette Sparks

6B - Cambodia and Mexico

Brad Powell was born on July 23, 1983 in Houston, Texas. Even though his left arm sustained permanent nerve damage during birth, this didn't affect his bright personality. At the age of five, he had a major surgery to his left arm to make his wrist stable and give him more flexibility. All of his life, Brad was sincere, unpretentious, and open-minded. In 2002, Brad began working in the Language and Culture Center at the University of Houston as a Program Assistant for Information Systems. After working at the LCC for three years, he started a master's program and began working at the LCC as a teacher. He went on to become an International Student Counselor and, later, a Program Director. He enjoyed having countless conversations with amazing LCC people. He was always working on new ideas to help LCC students. Moreover, he was always there to help students to overcome their problems and motivate them to accomplish their goals. He loved working at the LCC to the end.

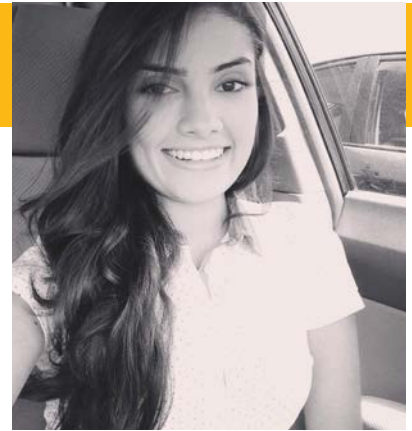
GO COOGS!

Shasta's History

Krisbel Pinango Moreno

6A – Venezuela

Have you ever heard of Shasta? Shasta is a cougar who represents the University of Houston's different teams. In 1927, John R. Bender, a football coach of the Washington State Cougars came to Houston. He was passionate about cougars; therefore, it was the animal he chose to represent the new teams. In 1946, the cougar became the official mascot of the University of Houston. Then a student named Joe Randol won a contest to give the cougar a real name, beating out 225 other students. Joe chose Shasta as the mascot's name, which means "she has to," as in "Shasta have a keeper" and "Shasta have a winning team." From 1947 until 1989, the living cougar existed; however, from 1989 until 2012, Shasta existed as a costumed mascot. In 2013, the university adopted a cougar who lives in the Houston Zoo to be the new Shasta. A costumed student mascot is still used for game appearances.



Shasta's Birthday

Abdullah Alrumaih *6A – Saudi Arabia*

Aala Alteneiji *6A – United Arab Emirates*

September 28th was Shasta's Birthday! Shasta is the mascot of University of Houston. He turned 5 years old. His birthday was celebrated in the Houston Zoo. We went there and saw University of Houston fans greeting Shasta. The party started when they brought Shasta a red cake and sang Happy Birthday. His cage was decorated with red accessories. All the fans were trying to take pictures with Shasta. Shasta was the star of the zoo that day.



Coogs Sculptures History

Eutteum Lee *6B – Korea*

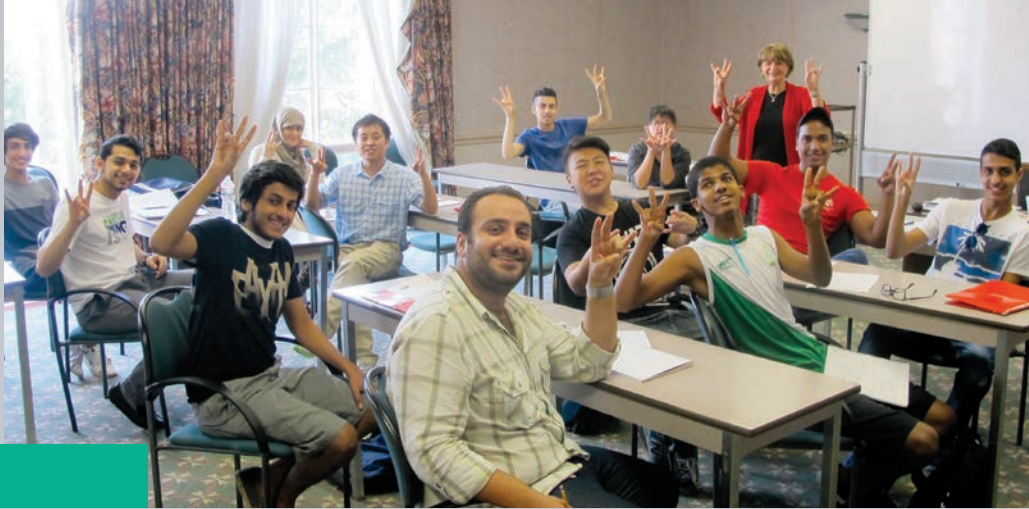
Jesus Bastardo Escobar *6B – Venezuela*

The cougar sculptures, created by R.T. "Skip" Wallen, are located in front of the Ezekiel Cullen Building. It was a gift from John and Rebecca Moores to the University of Houston in 2004. It is said that if you rub the cougar's paw, you will have good luck. That's why a lot of students rub it on game days, and there are students who rub it just for luck on final exams. There are several interesting facts about the cougars. First, the cougar located on the left is a female, and the one on the right is a male. Also, the male cougar sculpture is 10% larger. Some students think it's made of steel, but it is actually made of bronze. We hope you enjoy them. GO COOGS!

Conversation Club



CLASS Pictures



1 A



1 B



2 A and B

CLASS Pictures



2 C and D



3 A and B



3 C and D

CLASS Pictures



3 E and F



3 E



4 A and B



4 C and D

CLASS Pictures



4 E



4 F



4 G



5 A and B

CLASS Pictures



5 E and F



5 C and D



6 A and B



6 C and D

Culture Festival





Welcome to the University of Houston

Jean Banga

4A – Congo

The University of Houston, where I've been studying English, has one of the most beautiful campuses in the United States. The campus has trees and flowers, and you can hear birds singing or watch squirrels chasing each other in the grass.

Another reason why this university is amazing is because of the people, who are friendly, helpful, and always smiling. For example, when I was moving into my dormitory, another UH student helped me carry my heavy luggage, despite the hot sun and our fatigue. We have been good friends since then.

I also like the university because of the buildings. You'll find students studying in the library or relaxing in the game room. You can also find a recreation center with sports like soccer, basketball, swimming, and badminton. These locations, in addition to the beautiful water fountains and the art gallery, make the University of Houston a wonderful place.



Free Recital on Campus

Uyen Tieu

6A – Vietnam

The Moores School of Music at the University of Houston offers a wide range of free but excellent concerts on campus for college students as well as local folks. One unforgettable performance that I enjoyed was an organ recital performed by guest artist Dr. Carole Terry. The recital gave me an opportunity to see and hear the organ's melody for the first time. I was amazed at the huge size of the organ. When the artist started the music, the audience was overwhelmed by the instrument's rich and powerful sound. The recital showed me that the organ was invented not only for the church's service but also to deliver romantic music to the ears. The night was a memorable moment in my time at the university.



My First Football Game

Xiaobo Li

3A - China

It was my first time to watch an American football game in a stadium. I arrived at the stadium at 4 p.m. There were many people standing in front of the stadium. Most of them were UH students. All of them were fans of American football. The iconic color in Houston is red, so almost everyone was wearing red t-shirts. Someone's back had a slogan that said "Keep Houston Red." I wanted to wear the red t-shirt I received from the LCC, but I forgot to wear it when I left home. However, it didn't dampen my enjoyment of the game. When I went into the stadium and found my seat, I saw many girls in uniforms holding pompoms in their hands and dancing in front of the crowd. They were cheerleaders, American representatives of sport games. I have seen them at the NBA games on TV many times before. But on this night, I saw the show in person. Then, the game started. Even though I didn't know the details of the rules, I was drawn into the game. Our team's name is the Cougars because the players are so bold just like cougars. The game was very exciting. When our team got points, the mascots, two big cougars, started dancing. Fans clapped and cheered. What a wonderful night I had.

CULTURE Bump



David Me

David Me

4A – Ivory Coast

Homesickness is inevitable when you leave your home to live far away. At first you experience a sense of freedom that you didn't feel in your parents' house. Eventually though, you start missing your parents, your siblings, and your friends.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for this “mental disease,” but I would advise friends who are homesick to focus on their studies because that is the purpose of living here. Their parents will be proud when they complete their studies.

Davoud Sahban Rafsanjani

4G – Iran

When people go to a new country to live or study, they face a new culture. They might be shocked, so it is natural that at first they reject the new culture and need time to adjust to it.

Actually, I had this experience, and I was challenged by it. I think having fun with my friends was the only thing which helped me overcome it. I would recommend that new students spend more time with their friends, participate in fun activities, and make new friends. Finally, I try to focus on my goals and forget about things that make me unhappy.



Wenqi Li

Wenqi Li

6B – China

Studying at the LCC is my first experience of studying abroad. During the time that I have spent with my classmates, it has been possible for me to see other people from all over the world and to allow me to learn about their culture and customs. There are people from all over the world living in America; therefore, it teaches me how to communicate and get along with others appropriately. We need to respect different cultures, different religions and different customs. When I was in China, all the people around me were Chinese, and we had the same culture and customs. However, in America, I might meet people from anywhere; consequently, it improves my skill of communicating and understanding others. Furthermore, studying in the LCC gives a good chance to make friends from everywhere. Honestly, I really enjoy life at the LCC.



Davoud Sahban Rafsanjani

People I ADMIRE

My Mother

Benita Mwali

4C – Congo

When the world is against me, my mother remains my best friend. She is the truest friend. She has unconditional love for me. She is the real definition of love: a love that forgives, a love that doesn't hurt, and a love that forgets the bad. She is affectionate and knows how to build a strong relationship between her children. She always wants me to be happy and successful. She is the one who cannot see me suffer. She listens to my problems and gives advice. For example, if I am looking for something that I cannot find, she helps me find it. No matter how busy she is, she will always take out time to help me. Moreover, being patient and understanding makes her a wonderful mother. For example, when I do or say something bad, she never gets upset or angry, instead she calmly explains things. She tries her best to provide us with a good education. She is always there to teach me how to talk, live, and treat other people. In short, I consider her as an example of a good mother. Moreover, my mother is generous and caring. She is a woman who doesn't like to see anyone hurt. She helps and supports people all the time. When her friends have difficulties, they call her since they know that she is always there for them and will find a solution to their problems. In short, she is a strong woman with a nice heart, and I am so proud to be her daughter. She is my role model.

Thomas Gallaudet

Saleh Alzarer

3A – Saudi Arabia

I admire Thomas Gallaudet. He began Gallaudet University because he had experience about education. He wanted to begin a school for the deaf, and the school respects him today. He helped a lot of deaf people. He tried to meet with the government, and he offered to help deaf people. He was successful in founding the school. He announced he would help people. He felt happy about the school. He hoped to make a better life for deaf people. In my country, I saw the hard life in deaf education. I went to Gallaudet in 2011. It was very difficult for me. It was hard learning English and American Sign Language (ASL). Also, it was difficult to communicate with other students because I used different sign language. However, I am happy about Gallaudet University because Thomas Gallaudet founded this special University.

My Grandmother

Iracema Santos

4C – Angola

The person I have always admired is my late grandmother because she was always there for me. When she died, I thought that the world had ended for me, but I was wrong. Not only was she my grandmother, but she was like a mother to all. She was friendly, helpful, generous, and smart. I learned many things about life from her. She taught me how to behave, how to talk to people, and how to take care of others. I don't have the words to describe her. She always said to love everyone. My grandmother took care of everybody, both family and friends. I never heard her say mean things to people. I never saw her judging anybody. I remember her smiling, dancing, and taking care of me. As she is no longer with us, I still feel her alive in me. My grandmother was very religious. Every Sunday she went to church. She was always helping people. I miss her a lot, and I know that wherever she is, she's happy. She encouraged us to never give up on our dreams and never stop believing in God. She was a grandmother, a mother, a friend, and the best person I have known ever.

Renaissance Festival



Family and Free Time

Ahmed Alghareeb

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Alghareeb, Ahmed. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 22 years old. In my free time, I like to do many things. I like to play computer/video games. I also like to go see a movie. Another thing I enjoy is exercising at the gym. I like to go to parties and listening to music. As you can see, I have fun in my free time because I like different activities.

Simon Marin

1B – Venezuela

My name is Simon, I am from Venezuela. I am 23 years old. In my free time, I have several hobbies, and I like to do many activities. I like to play basketball, and I go to the gym. I also like to walk in the park, and I watch TV. I like to read my history book. As you can see, I have fun in my free time.

Xianfei Wang

1B – China

My name is Xianfei Wang. I'm from China. I'm twenty years old. In my free time, I like to do many things. One thing I like to do is to exercise because I want to stay healthy. I also like to go see a movie and watch TV because that's very exciting and interesting. Another thing I enjoy doing is playing computer games, but I don't like to go shopping. Sometimes, I just like to sit and watch people. As you can see, I'm very happy in my free time.

Guochang Huang

1B – China

My name is Huang Guochang, but you can call me Jason. I'm twenty years old. I'm from China. In my free time, I have several hobbies that keep me busy. I enjoy playing games on the computer with my friends. I like to go shopping and buy many things. I also like to fly kites. Another thing I enjoy is listening to music, but I don't like to sing. As you can see, I'm very happy in my free time.

Ala Al Zaki

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Alaa Alzaki. I am from Saudi Arabia. I was born on July 4th. In my free time, I do several things. I like to take pictures with my friends. I also like to read English books. Another thing I enjoy is going to see movies with my family. I like to go to parties, and I enjoy listening to music. I also enjoy going shopping. As you can see, I have interesting hobbies.

Shafi Aldossary

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Shafi Aldossary. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 20 years old. I have a big family. My family lives in Saudi Arabia. I have 3 brothers and 6 sisters. I have 5 nephews and 7 nieces. My father's name is Mohammed and mother's name is Wadha. I love my family and miss them.

Hernan Gonzalez Castellanos

1A – Venezuela

My name is Hernan Gonzalez. I am from Venezuela. I'm 27 years old. I have a big family. I have three sisters, but I don't have any brothers. I have two nephews and three nieces. Everyone in my family lives in Venezuela. My parents' names are Hernan Gonzalez and Maurilia Castellanos. My father is 64 years old. He works for a company. My mother is 58 years old, and she is homemaker. They have been married for thirty-three years. My sisters are older than me. My oldest sister married 2 years ago. She has two beautiful daughters. I love my family very much.

Mohammed Alhajri

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Mohammed Alhajri. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 19 old. I have a big family. My family lives in Saudi Arabia. My family speaks Arabic. I have 11 sisters and 6 brothers. My father works in Aramco. My mother works in a school. I have 4 uncles and 7 aunts. I love my family very much.

Osama Trombi

1B – Saudi Arabia

My name is Trombi Osama. I'm 19 years. I'm from Saudi Arabia. I have small family, and all my family lives in Saudi Arabia. My mother is a math teacher. My father works in Aramco. I have 1 brother. He is 27 years old. I also have 4 sisters. I love my family, and I miss my family.

Rabab Al Saud

1A – Saudi Arabia

My name is Al Saud, Rabab. I am from Saudi Arabia. I am 18 years old. I have two brothers and two sisters. I have a big family. I have one nephew.

He speaks English. My father's name is Salman. My father works at Aramco. My family speaks Arabic. My family lives in K.S.A. I have three uncles and two aunts. I miss my family.

Rashed Alenezi

1B – Kuwait

My name is Rashed Alenezi. I'm 17 years old. I'm from in Kuwait. I have a small family and I like them. I have two younger brothers. My grandfather and grandmother live in Kuwait. My family lives in Texas. My oldest brother is 22 years old and will be an engineer. My family is smart. I don't have a nephew. My brothers study in Texas. I love my family.

Wayel Fanous

1B – Jordan

My name is Wael Fanous. I am from Jordan. I am 28 years old. I have a big family, and we all get along very well. I have four brothers and four sisters. We love each other. I miss them.

Houston

My Experiences In Houston

Hussain Alibrahim

3B – Saudi Arabia

Since I have been in Houston, I have had new experiences. First of all, I have learned English and American culture, and I have gotten new methods of learning English grammar, listening, speaking, and writing since I began studying in LCC. For example, the teachers are native speakers who teach me English correctly, and the LCC provides several activities such as Conversation Club and trips. Second, American culture is very different from mine. For instance, when I came here, I realized differences such as people love keeping dogs and cats, so I was surprised in the grocery store the first time. I found a special section to buy everything needed for pets. Moreover, I have learned more about this culture since I have been here to avoid culture shock, such as knowledge of law, rules, and their traditions. Finally, it is exciting to live and learn new things here. In short, learning about and living in Houston is very useful and gives me new experiences to improve myself.

What I have Learned about the U.S. Culture

Man Lie

3B – China

This term I have learned much new information about the culture and history of the U.S. First of all, I found that American people highly value their history. For example, the U.S. has lots of national monuments and historical markers scattered in many places, reminding people of the important historical events that took place. Another example is the Texas Renaissance Festival, where people dress in old European style. This is a way to celebrate as well as to remember the past history of the European pioneers. I also learned that the U.S. is like a big “melting pot,” where people from different countries live, study, and work. My classmates come from Asia, Europe, South America and Africa. We come from different countries to study in the U.S. My friend who works in a company also has colleagues from all over the world. Even my neighbors also come from India, Thailand, and Venezuela. People from different countries come here to study, work, and have a better life. Finally, the public library system in the U.S. impressed me. Wherever I live, I will find a public library not far from my home. The library has lots of good books, CDs, DVDs, and computers. Also, it provides many activities to help or enrich people’s lives. To sum up, I learned things which I did not know clearly before I came to U.S. Americans highly value their history and knowledge, and they have an open mind to welcome people who come from different countries.

At The Museum

Sultanah Albalawi

3A – Saudi Arabia

When I saw dinosaur skeletons at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, I loved this interesting place and learned new things. I met my teacher and classmates at the entrance. We took a picture in front of the largest dinosaur skeleton. When we went inside, we saw many dinosaur skeletons of various sizes. After that, my group and I went inside to see more. While we were looking at skeletons, we found the smallest dinosaur skeleton, and we took pictures and wrote some of the information about it. Then we looked at the mouth of a dinosaur, which is very large. I was very surprised because it can eat humans. When we finished, we went to another place, but the dinosaur skeleton exhibit was the most amazing place for us. I want to return to the museum when I get a chance and learn more about dinosaur skeletons

Evolution of Humans

Anh Vu

3A – Vietnam

I went to the Houston Museum of Natural Science last week, and I was really impressed about the evolution of humans, how people have changed over many years. That was the most amazing thing I had ever seen. Over six million years ago, people were like animals such as the Hominid. Their brains were not big, and they moved on four limbs. Before humans knew how to make fire, they used to gather fruits. Then they generated primitive weapons and learned speaking. I was surprised that humans knew how to work in organizations and had a leader. I believed it made humans more special than the others. I would like to come back to the museum when I get a chance and learn more about the evolution of humans.



A Japanese Supermarket

Mitsuru Matsuura

3A - Japan

I went to a Japanese supermarket with my friend, Yen-Feng. Because this place is so far, I rarely go there. It took two hours by bus from the University of Houston, but this store is very useful and valuable. When I arrived at the bus stop near the supermarket, Yen-Feng was walking from the intersection to the bus stop. After we checked the location of the Japanese supermarket, we went to the Japanese restaurant next to it. However, the restaurant was closed on Sunday, so we found another Japanese restaurant and ate lunch together. After we finished eating lunch, we left for the Japanese supermarket. There were some people in the store and BGM, a kind of Japanese pop music, was playing, so I felt at home. After we finished shopping, we left for our bus stations. The bus station was on the other side of the street, and we checked for cars because the traffic was heavy. Then we crossed the road and said "good-bye." I was really satisfied, and I will go there again in two months. Before I go there again, I think I also want to go to China Town with my friend.

My First Impressions of Houston

Linjing Fu

4G - China

When I arrived in Houston, I was surprised that it was warmer than my hometown. I was living in the northeast part of China, and it is cold in the winter and always snows. Houston is a big international city. There are many Chinese restaurants and some cuisine from other countries. My teachers and classmates are friendly. I am so glad that I can study in the LCC, and learning new knowledge makes me feel happy.

HALLOWEEN



What I'll Tell My Children about the U.S.

Josee Kahambwe

4B – Congo

Many years from now, I will tell my children how my time in the United States helped me become who I am. When I arrived in the United States, I was surprised that people were kind, friendly, and helpful; I hadn't expected that.

I was also surprised by the teaching methods in my English classes, which were different from those in my country. My classmates were from countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Ivory Coast, Venezuela, and Peru. In that multicultural program, I learned about American culture and my classmates' cultures. I discovered many things about others and about myself. Although many people were there for me, life wasn't easy. While I was there, I had to be strong because I had a goal that I wanted to achieve. Even though life wasn't perfect, I had a wonderful experience, and I met wonderful people.

Yuxi (Zoe) Yan

4A – China

When I went to the United States to chase my dream, the people there were warmhearted like those from my hometown in China. The most unforgettable event was when I got off the plane and couldn't find my suitcase. It seemed hopeless until a worker at the airport came up to me and asked me what had happened. I told her about my problems, and she helped me search for my luggage. Eventually, she found it with the baggage on the next plane that arrived. That was the first time I felt like I was respected and treated fairly even though I was a foreigner. At that moment, I realized I could follow my dreams because I knew I would have opportunities and support.

Monira Alabbad

4A – Saudi Arabia

Dear children,

My life in the United States was amazing. I had the opportunity to improve my life and myself. I met people from different countries, and I visited several places. The people there were friendly and helpful.

You are my children, my life, my everything. I'm telling you about my life in the United States because I want you to know that you have to learn new things in your life. You must challenge yourselves even when it is hard.

With all my love,
Your mom

Tram Nguyen

4B – Vietnam

Years from now when I have children, I will tell them about my time in the United States. First, I will say that studying in the United States was one of the most important decisions I ever made, and it was also my best choice. I will tell them that my teachers used interesting teaching methods, so my English improved quickly. Last, I will tell them that they can learn and explore new things in the United States because it is a multicultural country with many different communities.

Fatimah Albahrani

4A – Saudi Arabia

When I have children, I will tell them that I have many wonderful memories from the United States. I will tell them that I went there because I had a dream, and I challenged myself to make that dream come true. I will also tell them that my best time in the United States was when I was studying at the LCC because I met people from many different countries. Even though our cultures had some differences, we became close and helped each other like brothers and sisters. I really enjoyed my time in the United States.

Maria (Meche) Perez Hernandez

4A – Venezuela

Years from now, I will tell my children or grandchildren that my experience in the United States was awesome. When I arrived, I was afraid because I didn't know anyone, and I didn't know what to expect. Because I was so far from my family, I had to depend on myself. During the first months, I wanted to return to Venezuela because I didn't think that I could be in America alone. Thanks to my parents, though, I believed that I had to finish what I had started.

That experience helped me grow and mature, and knowing English helped me find career opportunities. If I hadn't had that wonderful experience in the United States, I would not have become who I am.



Restaurant Reviews

The Bubba Gump Shrimp Company

Oksana Rusakova

4G – Russia

Do you want to have a great time and food on the Gulf Coast not far from Houston? The Bubba Gump Shrimp Company can provide all of these to you! I prefer this place because it is based on the movie about Forrest Gump and has a lot of worldwide locations, so wherever you go you can find it. Also, they have three types of menus: regular, gluten free and kids. There is a huge variety of seafood. Forrest's Favorite is an appetizer which includes fresh fish, roasted ribs, and shrimp. My favorite dish is the seafood platter. This one has all in all: hand dusted and fried catfish, homemade seafood hush puppies, fried macaroni and cheese bites, and fried shrimp.

Usually when you enter the restaurant, the staff will find a table for you, or you can book it in advance. In addition they give you a menu, and while you are looking through the menu, the sign on your table will be - "RUN FORREST RUN." At the moment when you are ready to make an order, you need to change the sign to "STOP FORREST STOP." After that a waitress will come to you. They are usually energetic, fun, and polite. If you order, for example, a margarita, they will dance, or if you have a birthday party, they will be prepared for it and make it as fun as they can. The ambiance there is amazing. The furniture is made of wood, is modern and stylish, and everything reminds you of the movie about Forrest Gump. There are a lot of quotations on the walls, tables and in the restrooms. There are also a great number of license plates from different states. Furthermore, you can admire the splendid scenery of the Gulf of Mexico from the restaurant. The Bubba Gump shrimp company is open daily, and located on Galveston Pleasure Pier. It will take one hour to drive from UH to this place. Nevertheless, it is the great place that I would strongly recommend you visit.

Enjoy your time there!

Uptown Sushi

Genoveva del Carmen Pastrana Perez

4G – Mexico

The "UpTown Sushi" is a Japanese restaurant located at 1131 Uptown Park Boulevard # 14 in Houston, Texas. The Uptown area is considered a wonderful place to visit because it has a lot of restaurants and bars.

For this restaurant review, I will focus on five different aspects of the restaurant: the food, ambiance, prices, quality of service, and hours.

The restaurant is spread over one floor, and the decoration style is elegant and modern. The furniture is comfortable. The lamps, which are in the shape of a jellyfish, are magnificent. Also the walls are decorated with golden colored curtains which go with the rest of the decoration. In the background, the restaurant has nice music, and the lighting is lovely, which helps to create a perfect atmosphere for a romantic dinner.

The menu offers a variety of dishes for lunch and dinner. However, the specialty of this restaurant is sushi and drinks. We had the opportunity to taste three different kinds of sushi, and each one costs 15 dollars on average.

The first kind, named the Uptown dragon, has the taste of different flavors of shrimp tempura and avocado, and it was the best in my opinion. Also, the other two sushi dishes, which are called 7 1/2 and Godzilla were delicious too. Now with regards to drinks, the Apple martini is a refreshing and delicious beverage, which costs 15 dollars. Our starter was lobster soup, which I really recommend to everyone. The average cost of a dinner is around 70 dollars per person, which is a fair price for the quality of the food. Additionally, the service provided by the wait staff was pleasant and very polite.

If you want to have an excellent dining experience, you have to visit the restaurant "Uptown Sushi," which has wonderful food and excellent service. The restaurant is open Monday to Wednesday from 11:00 am until 11:00 pm, Thursday and Friday from 11:00 am until 12:00 am, Saturday from 12:00 pm until 12:00 am, and Sunday from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm. For more information visit the web page: www.uptownsushi.com.

Red Lobster

Jesus Hernandez Garcia

4D – Venezuela

If I have to choose my favorite restaurant, it would be “Red Lobster.” It is a place where I can have delicious seafood at an affordable price. I consider myself a seafood lover because I have tried a large variety of different seafood dishes to find a place that deserves my admiration. Now, I can say that I have finally found the one. Red Lobster fits and passes the criteria of a great seafood restaurant. Combining high quality of ingredients with great service makes it stand out from the rest of the restaurants in Houston. The dishes are always colorful, and they offer new options every time that you visit them. This is one of the reasons why I never get tired of going to Red Lobster. Although it is not a kind of restaurant that you can go to every day, it is a good option to consider for special occasions because of its ambiance, food quality, and reasonable prices.



Black Walnut Cafe

Khang Ma

6A – Vietnam

During my stay in the United States, I have eaten at a lot of restaurants. I must say that some of them were really horrible and some were actually good. I would eat again at a place called “Black Walnut Café.” In my opinion, I think it is a great place to have brunch with family and friends or maybe just to hang out. The service was terrific, employees always place top priorities on their customers, and they have quite a selection of food, which brings me to my next point. The food at “Black Walnut Café” is delicious as well as satisfying. I would recommend trying the Bacon Cheeseburger Benedict. The eggs are cooked enough that the yolks are still gooey, the bacon is cut into bits mixed in with chopped potatoes, and it is all served on a plate covered with hollandaise sauce. Their gelato is quite good as well; however, I don’t recommend the coconut flavor because it is too sweet for my taste. The atmosphere inside the café is really cozy. The walls and floor are covered with wood, giving the place a nice warm, woody feeling that is perfect for cold weather. In short, I think you should give it a try sometime because it has tasty food, cozy space and great customer service. The café has several branches in different locations around Houston.



The 20th Century's **Most Important Inventions**

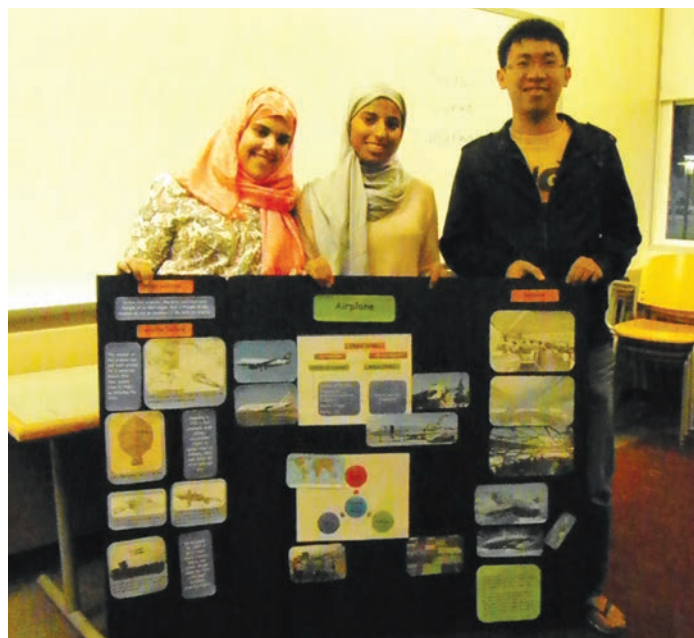


The Internet

Marta Alises De La Pena, Jirayut Poksawat

6C – Spain, Thailand

The Internet is the most important invention of the 20th Century, in our opinion. The World Wide Web (WWW) was born on March 12, 1989 in the CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research). One of coworkers, Tim Berners Lee, invented a system in which all coworkers could share information and documents, which was the beginning of the Internet. The widespread use of the Internet has benefited our society in many aspects such as education, communication, and business. Having access to an abundance of information and enabling students and teachers to communicate easily are the two most important uses of the internet in education, which help students learn better. There are three major benefits of the Internet use in education: easy contact, school projects, and online learning. In addition, the Internet use has also benefited communication and businesses. For example, it allows people to keep in touch with family and friends even though they are studying abroad. Moreover, it gives small companies an opportunity to expand their businesses. For instance, a small Spanish company can sell its products to a Chinese company without face-to-face communication because they can communicate through the Internet. In conclusion, there are a number of great inventions in the human history, but the Internet is one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century.



The Airplane

Haya Almugarry, Norah Aldayel, Yingjie Yang

6D – Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia, China

The idea of flight is very old, but the first successful airplane was invented in 1903 by the Wright brothers. Since that time, the existence of airplanes has benefited our society, economy and health. This is why we believe the best invention of this century is the airplanes. From a social aspect, airplanes enable us to learn about different cultures and share knowledge between two distant countries. Also, they bring people closer to their friends and families, who are working or studying far away from them, improve living standard, reduce poverty, and increase the economic growth through tourism. From a financial aspect, airplanes facilitate economy by facilitating international trade for perishable products, such as fresh fruit and vegetables. In addition, according to Air Transport Action Group, aviation has created about 56 million jobs around the world and generated \$2 trillion in global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The final benefit of airplanes is the health aspect, by which the delivery of emergency and humanitarian aid as well as medical supplies became available to those in need.



The Artificial Heart

Diosdado Iyanga Mbula, Abdulmalek Alsana, Douvere Soro

6C – Equatorial Guinea, Saudi Arabia, Ivory Coast

Technology is improving so fast that what was impossible decades ago has become achievable. It is the replacement of one of the most important part of a human body, the heart. Therefore, we think that the best invention of the century is the artificial heart for two reasons: it improves the quality of life and the life expectancy of patients who have heart failures. In fact, research shows that about 39,000 people die every year due to heart failures, and there is a wide gap between the number of people needing a natural heart and the number of donors. In addition, when an artificial heart is implanted to a patient, doctors do not need to apply any immunosuppressive drugs. This means that the artificial heart will perform a real heart's work. At present, many companies are conducting research to enhance the performance of artificial hearts. For instance, some companies are working to make artificial hearts of different sizes so that they can fit in different size bodies, and they are also designing new artificial hearts with longer life expectancy than the previous ones. Due to these amazing facts, we believe the artificial heart is the best invention of the century.



Electronic Cars

Luis Carvajal, Hortencia Gomez, Yacoub Aljwaied

6C – Venezuela, Venezuela, Kuwait

In the past, electric cars were just concepts in people's minds, but today they are real. The electric car is an important invention because it benefits both people and the environment. From our point of view, electric cars solve environmental problems by lowering the carbon emissions and diminishing pollution in the air, which might lessen the effects of global warming. A healthy environment is necessary to live a healthy life. If electric cars are used globally, the lives of people in the entire world could be improved. In the future, electric cars will be especially useful for disabled and elderly people with limited mobility. If used wisely, electric cars can become an exceptional tool for the people of the future who want to take care of the environment without compromising their comfort.



The 3D Printer

Zhijian Liu, Rana Al Sulaiman

6C – China, Saudi Arabia

Are you ready to create your own products? Even though everyone wants to get things at a low price and in a fast manner, this goal is not easy to achieve. However, the 3D printer can satisfy people's demand. A 3D printer, a kind of additive manufacturing, is the best invention for a number of reasons. It refers to different processes where three dimensional objects with successive layers of material are laid down under computer control. It can print any shape, and it is a kind of robot. Due to this reason, 3D printing has a lot of benefits, such as printing new structure and less waste. First of all, this printer can be used in the medical field, which can solve many problems with organ donation shortage. Nowadays, some doctors print out organs with a 3D printer. For example, Dr. Atallah, a well-known surgeon, had a patient who was suffering from kidney failure. By using this invention, the patient got a new kidney. According to scientists, this printer can solve problems in organ replacement because it can eliminate the common problem of organ rejection by the body as the 3D printed organs are made with the patient's own tissue cells. Therefore, it can save many lives by providing organs. In addition, 3D printers can be widely used in the military to treat wounded soldiers. In addition to its benefits in health, it is also used in many schools and

universities for educational purposes. For instance, some American schools have used it in their facilities to teach children about lab items. Due to the reasons mentioned above, we believe the best invention of the century is the 3D printer.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS Practices

Successful Entrepreneurs

Maria Alonzo Leon

3A – Venezuela

Only a few entrepreneurs can be successful because they have special characteristics. First of all, a successful entrepreneur needs to be intelligent, passionate and an optimist. For example, success comes when they have intelligence to develop a brilliant idea, passion to get reach their goal by hard work, and they must have optimism because often business or companies go through problems. Second, entrepreneurs need to have a clear vision. It is difficult to achieve a goal if you don't know what you want and exactly how to get there, so they must be visionary, having clear ideas about what could happen in the future. Finally, people who never take risks never win. At the beginning, it is obvious that entrepreneurs are afraid of failing and losing all effort or money invested. Indeed, the most difficult thing about starting a new company is having bravery to start and make decision carefully. Consequently, the results of hard work, effort and passion will come with gaining great reward, achieving dreams and leaving a mark in history.

Company Strategies

Samer Alaamer

3A – Saudi Arabia

There are three strategies companies use to persuade people to buy products. First, reducing price is one strategy usually used by smart companies. For example, some companies make the first price very expensive, and they reduce the price after some time. Similarly, the company sometimes gives the customers some coupons. In addition, some companies use a famous person to persuade the customers to buy the products. For instance, sometimes the company takes a picture of a famous person when he uses the product. The company has an interview with a famous person and asks him to speak about the product. Finally, some companies add special gifts with the product. For example, they add a simple or cheap product with their product. Also, some companies add some toys or a picture of a cartoon character or school supplies with their product. For these reasons, many people find themselves buying several things they don't need.

Marketing Strategies

Jing Lu

3A – China

Nowadays, more and more goods attract our attention. There are three strategies companies use to persuade people to buy their products. First of all, they give consumers excellent service. For example, when consumers go to the Apple store, the salesman smiles at them and shows how to use their products. Customers feel happy to receive their good service. After the sale, they will provide repair service for three months. On the other hand, some stores add a special gift, such as when you buy shoes, you can take a special gift, or you use a ticket to choose gifts or refund your credit card 10 percent. Moreover, companies use a famous person. For example, many girls like to use make up. Girls love to use what a famous person uses, too. They get this information by watching TV shows. A movie star says, "It made me more beautiful." In conclusion, these three strategies affect our lives. It is very popular with people.





How to Publish a Book

Anastasiia Evtikhina

5A – Russia

Book publishing is not only the printing and binding of a manuscript. We should make efforts to produce a really good edition. The editorial publishing process is more than you can imagine. It is a combination of interrelated organizational, management, creative, production, information, and marketing activities, aimed at the preparation and distribution of publications.

The editorial publishing process can be divided into three stages. The first stage deals with the preparation of the manuscript for printing, the second stage touches upon the printing of the edition, and the third stage is devoted to the book distribution.

If we have already identified the reader's preferences and chosen the author and the manuscript, we should prepare the manuscript for printing. What does it mean? At first, we need to make the publishing original. We should edit and improve the author's original, as well as create and edit graphic materials which represent the elements of the design and illustration of the book. Also, the publishing original has to contain the special markup for printing and a technical specification. The last step of preparation of the manuscript for printing is proofreading. It is the editorial and technical processing of all materials during its preparation for delivery to the printing house. If we don't fix spelling and punctuation errors, don't achieve uniformity of text elements, and don't check the categorization system, among other things, then most likely we will take a chance on publishing a terrible and shameful book as a result. We can observe so many examples of these on the shelves. We cannot afford these mistakes.

The next stage of book publishing is production i.e. printing. It begins with the submission of the publishing original for printing and ends with the receipt of copies. At this stage of the publishing process, a large amount of work falls on the proofs -- reading of proof sheets and making corrections. The final step at this stage is checking the advance copy (testing the version of the edition before you let it go to public release). When it is signed, the copies can be printed. It is very important to abide by these steps. Otherwise,

we will spend so much money and lose our time and energy. Many beginners in publishing have made these mistakes and gone bankrupt before they could try to sell their books.

Finally, we reach the last stage – book distribution. It includes a variety of methods of marketing and advertising of a book. First of all, we need to establish the channels of distribution. It is vital to find the distributors. That is half of the success. But it is also necessary not to forget about promotion. Good advertising can work wonders. You can hire an advertiser or do it by yourself. Anyway, you should be prepared for difficulties. Many good book projects have failed because of bad promotion and a bad distribution plan. If you are a newbie in the publishing market, you had better develop your distribution strategy.

All in all, the editorial publishing process is complex and labor-intensive. People should not underestimate this professional field. You should take into account all of the earlier described steps and recommendations to publish the prospective product.



Thanksgiving

Phat (Ben) Cao

4A – Vietnam

In Vietnam, we don't have a specific holiday to remember what we are thankful for. Instead, we keep everything we are thankful for in our mind all the time. Several people have done favors for me, but two people stand out in my mind.

First, I want to thank my wonderful mother for giving birth to me and raising me. She sacrificed her life for my brothers and me until she died. I wish I could have had a chance to take care of her the way that she took care of us.

Second, I am grateful to God for creating me and granting me a wonderful life. God has always been beside me during the dark times of my life, helping me overcome difficulties, motivating me, and providing me with everything that I need.

I am thankful for everyone who enters my life, even if they are my enemies, because they teach me how to live, how to treat people, and how to know what true happiness is.

The History of America

Tao Wu

3B – China

From my perspective, the history of the U.S. is interesting. First of all, the original inhabitants of North America were Indians. Second, the full name of America is the United States of America. It was a British colony, but they got freedom and became an independent nation. From 1776 to 1783, America won the war of independence under the leadership of Washington. In addition, from 1861 to 1865, the North and South had a war, called the America Civil War. Finally, the North won and unified the nation. Furthermore, America developed beyond everyone's imagination. In the 19th century, the United States entered the Industrial Revolution and increased economic power. In the 1990s, the American computer industry developed rapidly and opened up a new revolution. It is like it opened a new world. This knowledge is interesting, and I want to study more history.

My Favorite Trip

Jesus Urias Lopez

4C – Mexico

When I was a child, I went to New York which is one of my favorite places, and I had so much fun there. New York is a wonderful city full of people and a lot of things to do. I enjoyed the time that I spent there, and as a family we visited a lot of interesting places like the museum, the zoo, and the stadium. The city was enormous and there were a lot of large buildings. The Times Square is full of large electronic billboards and huge departmental stores. We also visited

the Statue of Liberty, and the tour was excellent. In addition, I also visited the Empire State building and the view of the city from the building was amazing. However, there were also many homeless people asking for money or singing in order to get some change, which was a negative point about NY. When I went to the metro station, I was shocked to see people pushing each other in order to get on the trains. I was only 10 years old, so I was very nervous and I still cannot believe how so many people fit in that relatively small place. It was surprising! In short, that was the last day that we spent in New York, and I still remember all the things that we did and the places we went seven years ago. I had so much fun, and I cannot wait to visit New York again and see other new things that the city has to offer.

Comparing Specials Celebrations in Venezuela and China

Daniel Hernandez

4D – Venezuela

In each country, people have celebrations that are part of their culture. Each culture has different events to celebrate according to the peoples' beliefs and traditions. For that reason, Venezuelan and Chinese cultures celebrate many events. Venezuelans celebrate the Holy Week while the Chinese commemorate the Spring Festival, and these celebrations are held on different dates and calendars. Even though the Holy Week and Spring Festival are celebrations, they have more differences than similarities.

One of the differences is that the Holy Week celebration is about religion, unlike the Spring Festival which is based on the Chinese Lunar Calendar. In Venezuela, people reaffirm their Catholic faith during the Holy week—commemorating the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the months of March or April of the Gregorian calendar. In contrast, the Chinese Festival celebrates the passing of the year and welcomes the spring.

Another difference is found in the belief of people about what can be done during the Spring Festival. Chinese people believe there are words that cannot be said during this time, like the barrel of rice cannot be empty or no medicine cannot be taken. They believe that by doing these things or saying specific words, it will bring bad luck. In contrast, Venezuelans avoid eating meat during the specific days of the Holy Week.

Despite the differences, there is one important thing in common between the two. That is, people enjoy family time during these celebrations. In both countries people happily wait for the arrival of these celebrations to share family time. The Chinese enjoy preparing special dishes, decorate their houses, and wear

traditional clothing. Like the Chinese, Venezuelans go to church and spend family time together. All the workers get two days off to observe the Holy Week.

To conclude, each culture has different celebrations, and the reasons for their celebrations are not the same. It is important to understand how each culture is different and how it is celebrated.

The Shortage of Housing in Saudi Arabia

Maryam Alqahtani

5A – Saudi Arabia

Although Saudi Arabia is considered a big country in terms of area and income, housing is one of the major problems that Saudi Arabia struggles to solve. According to a recent article from Arab News, seventy three percent of citizens do not have houses of their own. This percentage has increased greatly during the last five years due to three main causes: complex bureaucracy within the Ministry of Housing, low household income, and population growth.

The Ministry of Housing has the responsibility of issuing home loans as a financial support to Saudi citizens to deal with the huge demand for new houses. However, the ministry's processes seem to be the key factors that have caused massive housing problems. For example, the time frame from applying and receiving a home loan is between 10 and 15 years, which is caused by the mismatch between the number of applicants and the number of distributed loans. This situation arises as a result of the inability of the Housing Ministry to issue all loans utilizing a limited budget from the government. Another concern that has been caused by the ministry is that the allocated amount of individual loans is not enough to cover the current costs of building a new home. Consequently, the Saudi government has sought the ministry to prepare lands for building houses and distribute them quickly among the deserving citizens within a timeframe. The ministry has complained about scarcity of lands and low quality of available contractors. As a result, the Ministry is failing to meet the growing demand for housing.

Another cause of the housing problem is low household income for Saudi citizens. Usually, Saudi family size is between five to ten members, which means the average monthly expenses for utilities, education, health, shopping, and rent is over 70% of the average income and the rest of the income is not enough for purchasing land and building a home. In addition, the prices of real estate and building materials are likely to keep on growing, which makes them out of reach of the middle class. For example, the average land price is between 500,000- 700,000 Saudi Riyal, which means people have to wait for a long time to save money for securing the land and building a home. Meanwhile, the suppliers of the building materials

push prices up because of lack of regulations that control sale prices. Accordingly, people are unable to afford to buy their own homes, and they prefer to rent apartments or houses.

Population growth is the third cause of the housing problem. According to World Population Review, "In 2012, the population of Saudi Arabia was estimated to be 29.2 million, the 43rd largest in the world. But a recent estimates for March 2014 indicated the total population has grown to 29.65 million," which means the population is continually growing. Consequently, this growth continues to push the housing demand upwards. Moreover, in the past, owning homes was not a problem like nowadays because family members used to live together in the same home even if they got married and had kids, but in the modern times, young people tend to be more independent by owning private homes. As a result, these factors contribute to the increase in the demand for housing.

In conclusion, this housing problem may continue for several years to come. The government has to take serious steps to resolve the reasons behind it. I suggest that the government do the following. First, more budget needs to be allocated for the ministry of housing. Second, the government has to control sale prices of land and building materials in order to protect citizens. Finally, the government needs to encourage people to settle outside busy cities.

An Unforgettable Field Trip

Ngoc Huynh

4C – Vietnam

Most of the students dislike the final exams, so did I. However, I was really interested in the special field trip that I had in the last year of high school. It was held at Cat Tien Reservation. This trip was one of the most wonderful experiences as it gave the students the chance to learn, have fun, and build relationships. Cat Tien Natural Park is located in the Southern Lam Dong province which is about two hours away from city's center. This place is a well-known rare animals and plants sanctuary and is also considered a famous tourist spot. On arriving, our teacher took us through the forest. Although it was a long walk to reach the middle of the forest, we were all very impressed by the spectacular landscape. The mountains were covered with many types of plants and flowers. We also visited the green lake which was in the middle of the forest. At the lake, we were asked to do experiments with the plants. We learned a lot about the plants and the flowers that grew there. At night, we had a camp fire, and we shared ghost stories while sitting around it. Even though it was exhausting, we learned a lot on this field trip. After the trip, I made more friends, and we share a very strong relationship even now.

HAIKU

Haiku is a beautiful Japanese poetry form consisting of three unrhymed lines that often invokes an aspect of nature.

Vietnam

Hung Nguyen

2D – Vietnam

It is a beautiful country.
People are friendly.
I love it!

My Father

Eman Alahdari

2C – Saudi Arabia

I love my father so much.
He is so gentle.
No one like my father.

My New Friends

Tran Vay

2D – Vietnam

They came from other countries.
They are friendly.
I love them so much.

School

Mohammed Alyami

2C – Saudi Arabia

The school is good for your future.
You must get to school early.
Every day we do homework.

A Student

Mohammad Darmussa

2D – Palestine

I'm from Palestine.
I study English, and
I'm so happy in Houston.

The University of Houston

Rashed Aljubarah

2D – Saudi Arabia

There are a lot of trees here.
It's a beautiful university.
I love the people.

My English Course

Beatriz Jaimes Villamil

2D – Venezuela

I study in Houston.
The course is very intensive.
I need to learn more.

Life

Maria Guadalupe Gomez Chavarin

2C – Mexico

Life is beautiful, blue, rosy.
But life is a dream.
Then you wake up.

Grammar

Edna Pereira

2D – Angola

Everybody has questions.
English is too crazy.
But we like to learn.

Houston

Naimu Xiao

2C – China

Houston is a big city.
People are friendly to me.
I like this place.

Field Trips



ADMISSIONS at UH



LCC Calendar

Intensive English Program Program Calendar

Spring Term 2015

Tuesday, January 6

Online Registration Begins

Tuesday, January 13

**Student Check-In
Tuition and Fee Payment**

Wednesday, January 14

**Testing
Late Online Registration**

Thursday, January 15

**Student Activity
Late Online Registration**

Friday, January 16

**First Assembly, Orientation
Last Day of Late Registration**

Monday, January 19

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, No Classes

Tuesday, January 20

Classes Begin

Monday - Friday, March 16 - 20

Spring Holidays, No Classes

Monday, April 20

Final Testing

Tuesday, April 21

No Classes

Wednesday, April 22

Final Student Activity

Thursday, April 23

**Student - Teacher Conferences (morning)
Graduation Ceremony (afternoon)**



UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

LANGUAGE and CULTURE CENTER

116 Roy Cullen Building, Houston, TX 77004-3014

Tel: 713.743.3030 / Fax: 713.743.3029

lcc.uh.edu / Email: lcc@uh.edu

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