

MOSAIC

INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT
NEWSLETTER
VOL.5/ISSUE.4 MARCH 8, 2010

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Want
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Write
For
The
Mosaic?



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"Ah, who stepped on my feet?" I heard someone scream out loud in the Student Union. This was probably a terrible experience for the person who got stepped on. Nevertheless, Winter Dance was an amazing experience. If you were at the winter dance this year, I am sure that it will be an unforgettable night in your life.

Planning and organizing for winter dance was the most stressful part. It was a tiring job for all the volunteers who were assigned to decorate, promote and especially the ones who wore dresses in the cold, windy night while filming. Although more so for the volunteers, preparing for the dance also wasn't easy for all the girls who attended. My girlfriends and I started to look for dresses right after winter break. We had visited south center, the supermall, and the commons mall over and over again, in order to find the perfect high heels which could fit us comfortably in the night.

The hardest thing about winter dance was hunting for a date. I heard "Everyone going to the dance party has a date. I think I will just be alone since all of my friends have dates already. Ah... How sad is my life!" I had tried so hard to give my boy friends a hint; come to ask me out for

Enchanted Night at The Union

By Yin Miki Wang, From Taiwan

winter dance. I didn't know if any of my friends were planning to go with dates or not, that was just my strategy to get a boy. Luckily, Highline boys weren't stupid about reading my mind; I finally had found a date who agreed to match my pink dress, even though he had complained a lot, and felt uncomfortable to wear pink shirt and pink tie.

It was a long day before the night of the dance. I had tried to change my hair again and again to make sure my hairstyle wouldn't make me look too much taller, at least not taller than my date. Additionally, most girls would put fake eyelashes on in order to make their eyes look bright and piercing. However, my Brazilian date owned the longest eyelashes in the world, which made me feel ashamed of wearing fake eyelashes which were still shorter than his.

Everything became much more complicated. Just the thought of the long dressing period, the long ride, and the long way walking from the parking lot to the Student Union are all well worth the night. Attending the precious night to meet everyone with a fancy dress filled my body with great excitement, even before we headed out. My anxiety kept me smiling and laughing, all the way in the car, through the doors of the Student Union, and on the Hollywood red carpet. It was quite an adrenaline rush when I felt the flashes. My eyes couldn't stop following the trail of cameras. "Miki Move! Move!" I was in my superstar world until fifteen minutes later when my date impatiently broke my dream. Walking downstairs, I saw that

the floor which was usually cluttered with tables had become a big dancing floor, crowded with people wearing fancy rainbow dresses. Inspired by the cool music and atmosphere, everyone was shaking his or her butt, though hardly with the tempo. Even I, who was shy in public, was also waving my body with the music.

There was a long anticipated line at the hot spot with lots of people waiting, and my curiosity bought me into the room. I had sensed that there was a flash, inside the room waiting for me, and spent an hour inside, taking picture with everyone who had entered the room. My date was smart this time, he went out to fill his stomach instead of waiting for me to finish.

Winter dance was not only the place to look for fun, but also a good chance to let the sparks fly with those secret crushes. Crushes are more likely to date after winter dance; through shopping together for the matching dress and suit, talking on the phone for the details of the after party plan, spending time alone for a nice dinner, and enjoying the romantic moment in the winter dance. It was an amazing dance party, and an amazing night.

Thank you to all the volunteers who contributed to this wonderful night, to ILSC who held this excellent event, to all my girlfriends who had helped me with my hair, make-up, dress, and transportation, and to my date, (now boyfriend) who patiently danced with me even though I stepped on his feet.



Do Something Good and Act Now

By Ayna Omeroglu
From Russia, Saint Petersburg

We have all seen people in need on the news after some major disaster. Perhaps we have walked past homeless people who are living on the streets. Or we have probably seen a bunch of kids just like our

little brothers and sisters and wished we could give them an opportunity to simply smile and taste the sweetness of childhood. They would be pleased just by us smiling or talking to them, and when they feel the love they deserve, it would prevent them from suffering so much as they are too often rejected by people passing by.

Thanks to the ILSC I had a chance to volunteer. Sometimes we, human beings, get annoyed because we don't have the most expensive clothes or the newest iPhone or fancy laptop. Volunteering lets you spend some time focusing on others for a while.

I was given the opportunity to volunteer at a food bank. Within 2 hours of arriving, a dedicated group of Highline students had packed great amounts of pears

for distribution to families around the state of Washington. The students were divided into groups – some were making the actual boxes to hold the pears, and the others were to sort out the fruit and pack them. For the first time in my entire life, I was so ambitious to fulfill a project. After 2 hours of packing the pears, with a slight backache we gathered in the hall and one of the workers in Food Bank announced the total weight of the pears that we had packed. It was 16,000 pounds. For a few moments I thought of the people who are desperate for food and how they will really appreciate the help we had shown. Who knows, maybe these pears would be the first dessert that they had ever had.

Volunteering experiences often put you in a different

environment and expose you to people and situations that you wouldn't have come across in your regular life. For instance, you might learn that as close as the edges of your town are some people who really need some food. It feels good to be able to meet a need like that. You'll know that, thanks to you, some kids have food and clothes. I strongly believe that volunteering gives an opportunity to learn much about yourself. You will do things that you never imagined you were capable of. The biggest difference I noticed at the end was the difference inside of me. I will forever be changed because I now have a greater understanding of another culture, I have learned to challenge my personal limits, and I have and always will continue to develop friendships.



Unforgettable Olympic Moments

By Chiara Burt (on the right)
From U.S.A

When I first signed up for the Wii 2010 Olympics, I was just looking for a fun event to go to on a Friday afternoon. I had only tried out the Wii briefly at a GameStop when it first came out, and since I have the XBOX at home instead of the Wii, I thought the Wii Olympics would be a good chance for me to learn how to use Wii. I figured that most of those attending would be people who have a Wii at home, so I felt like I wouldn't do well compared to them, but that was okay - I just signed up to have fun.

I had learned how to ski during last year's Whistler Ski Trip, so I was hoping to get a chance to play the skiing events, since the motions and balancing on the Wii might be more familiar to me.

I was on the Vancouver team. Needless to say, I was thrilled, and the team was so appropriate for me! The first event I played was the Ski Jumping. As I played, I tried to pretend that I was really there. I played as "Princess Peach", and although it seemed that I did the jumps too early on both tries, I was good at balancing while in midair. To my surprise, I came in first place! I thought that the other players would be more experienced at Wii than I, but actually, I wasn't the only beginner. Quite a few of us had never really played Wii until that very day. The fun part was that we all learned from watching each other play, and we all got to try out something new and cool that most of us didn't have at home.

Later, I also did the Long Jump event (I got 4th place), and the Alpine Skiing event (I got 3rd place). I had a wonderful time watching as well as gaming, and

my teammates and I cheered for each other and sometimes for members of other teams too (after all, we were all there to have a good time!). The cheering and shouting was great, and it filled the room with an enthusiastic energy as we all watched each other play video games on a giant, wall-sized screen. My teammate Eva Zhang, an international student from China, was thrilled that I had won 1st place in the Ski Jumping, and throughout the tournament, she was really cool and supportive. There were 2 boys and 2 girls on my team - a good balance.

We all had fun while playing the Wii, yet there was still more to come. After all the events had been played, it was time to compare the scores and the number of medals each team had won. Eagerly, everyone gathered around the board, anticipating the results. I wasn't quite sure what to expect; even though I had won 1st place in an event, when I was watching others play, it looked like some of the other teams had gotten ahead, so I figured we would probably be somewhere in the middle.

Then the moment of truth arrived. Vancouver came in First Place, with 6 medals, three of them Gold! The medals were virtual, but our joy was very real. My team and I were so amazed and happy, and Eva exclaimed to me, "Thanks to you, we won! You helped us win! You're awesome!" We all hi-fived each other and Eva gave me a hug. For the first time in my life I had won a tournament! I felt wonderful - not just for myself, but because I had made others joyful too. I'll never forget the moment when my new friends and I stepped up to Jennifer Banh to receive our prizes - collectible Vancouver 2010 Olympics glass cups. All in all, it was an awesome party, with lots of fun, good sportsmanship, and opportunities to make new friends. I am proud to say that I got to experience it from the best of both worlds - as a volunteer and as a gamer, and I hope we do an event like this next year!



Cosmo is More than a Magazine

By Angi Caster,
From U.S.A

Your faces multiply in my classrooms—Kuan Hung, Ryoutaro, Ngan, Gwinyai, Huong-Ha, Naoto, Takuya, Javhaa—as I struggle to pronounce your names with my culturally disabled American tongue. You rush to help me, reversing the order of your family names and sacrificing your own personal individual identities for American names like Cindy, Sally, Katrina, JV (and, memorably, Eleven !?)—out of respect for my position, Teacher. I wonder which is the worse insult: my mispronunciation of your given names or your forced assimilation into American English linguistics. We know that you pay—gratefully—almost three times what Washingtonians pay for the privilege of this education, and we too are grateful for your high-paying presence since American

taxpayers are less and less willing to pay for public education. Even more sad, most of you work three times as hard as many of my native students who take education for granted. As I look at the United Nations in my classrooms, I realize how globally mute I am, speaking just one language well as you listen to me speak in what is for you your second, third, fourth... sometimes seventh language!

Thus, I do not consider myself cosmopolitan although I have been in every U.S. state and 24 other countries on our rapidly shrinking planet. Merriam-Webster online defines cosmopolitan not as that slutty magazine but as: “having worldwide rather than limited or provincial scope or bearing; having wide international sophistication; composed of persons, constituents, or elements from all or many parts of the world.” That is Highline, but sadly not the U.S.A. Despite our trumpeted independence and individualism, I cannot move easily between nations, neither linguistically nor comfortably, and yet you young people have come 18,000 miles—alone-- to teach me about countries I (guiltily) did not know exist, countries like Palau, Myanmar, Macau. Your presence enlightens me to study

bone structure and family names so I do not grievously mistake Korean for Japanese, oblivious to your ominously opposed histories. I learn that K-12 education is not free in other countries; I learn that Vietnamese and Chinese students get math early, often, and so very successfully partly because you are physically beaten into it. By middle school, your local newspapers post your scores next to your names, for all to see, and I understand the educational power of the collective.

Although internationally mute I am a cosmopolitan wannabe: I advise the Taiko Drumming Club and the Anime Club here at Highline, but unfortunately the members are not international students at all but wannabes: U.S.--born students who call each other Chidori-san, call me Sensei, and go to Sakura-con instead of Japan. I offer extra credit for Conversation Pal, but takers are usually international students who talk to each other not geographically challenged U.S. natives who cannot find Namibia on a map. My cosmopolitan alarm increases with every American soldier we export to Middle-Eastern countries we could not find on a map, with every “English-only” cry from

Floridians (whose state name is Spanish), and I wonder when we will start requiring our American students to go abroad—and to learn Chinese.

As I write this, the 2010 Winter Olympics continue in Vancouver, Canada although NBC says Americans = US so often you would think it did not apply to other North Americans, South & Central Americans too, very few of whom are at the Olympics (why?), but Brazilians are here at Highline. My favorite ad is VISA's Go World, especially now that the world is so much flatter and smaller and national boundaries more fluid. The Georgian ice dancer is not from our U.S. state of Georgia but skates for Eastern European post-U.S.S.R. Georgia—yet she has never been there. One skier holds dual Canadian and U.S. citizenship—and skis for Canada. The Japanese name that came in 4th in women's skating was actually born in and represents the U.S. ! But there should no longer be any doubt at all who South Korea is: one electric blue epitome of grace named Kim Yu-Na whose skating performance broke all point barriers, racking up a score nearly as high as the men's. Her name does not need to be changed—ever. Perhaps it is time that U.S. parents name our daughters Yuna and call our home world Earth.



Eng 205 Debrief

By Kuan Hung (Eleven) Liu,
From Taiwan

Having studied at the University of Washington for almost two quarters already, I am well adjusted with the university studying environment and the sense of intellectual competition that is constantly

going on in school. Looking back of what I have done in Highline, which may have assisted me in transitioning into a University setting, I recall a class that has caused a dramatic change of my vigor in academia —Angi Caster's Research Writing Class.

Before entering Angi's class, I pictured myself a person who possessed a good diversity of knowledge, but once in Angi's writing class, I was overwhelmed by how much I didn't know about the world. Students in class are constantly investigating the complex reasoning behind various social issues that have been continuously cumulated on

the newspaper's front page. Moreover, the class was formatted in a discussion-orientated setting where students from multiple countries discuss current issues in an analytical and critical approach from topics such as Pearl Harbor, presidential election, to paranormal phenomena, and even cockroaches. In Angi's class, students will be intellectually challenged throughout the entire course. Most of the students walked into her class with timidity, both towards Angi's authoritative tone of voice and the tsunami-sounding amount of workload required. However, we

walked out from her class with a handful of never-thought-possible research papers completed and full of new knowledge we had obtained.

Being situated in an environment where books and books of scholarly writings need to be read every quarter, and where the skill to write an essay varying from 15 to 20 pages, average, in reports is necessary, Angi's writing class was prepared me extremely well, even as an international student being in a four year university. College students are like sports athletes, as we compete intellectually, and Angi's class well equips us for survival in the game that is laid ahead.



French toast with ketchup?!

By Hwi-Kyong Ra,
From Korea

Four years ago (2006), I was in London Ontario, Canada. I had many great experiences in this city and I had some of the best moments and met my best friends there. This is a part of my memory that I would like to share with everyone.

That was the year I graduated from my high school and still remember the “incident” like yesterday. This was in the beginning of fall. My friends and I were trying to catch the last bit of summer and we decided to have a sleepover combined with a party. Our first destination was

Lake Huron. We went to the lake every weekend during summer break, and that day was the last day that we could swim before the water gets too cold. We sang together and swam until the sunset. Red to orange and purple to dark blue, all of us looked at me sun set without saying anything; we were trying to picture the last moment of high school life.

At night, of course was party time! We called out everyone who couldn't come to the beach in the morning and we had a potluck. After that, everyone started to dance and swim in the pool.

We had such great conversations during the entire night and I felt that the time just went too fast. I slept at my friend's house with many others. We playfully fought each other for conquest of the couch but we all ended up sleeping on the floor.

The next morning, all of us were so hungry that even the growling of our stomachs were easily heard and woke us from our slumber. Later that day, we all went to a restaurant which served breakfast all day long. Un-

fortunately I could not recall the name of the diner, but I was able to notice a wall that was covered with autographs and drawings of the people who were alive in the past. I had never seen anything like that before in my life, and I found it to be an amazing sight.

We ordered French toast from a waitress - this is the moment that sparked this entire memory. While we waited for our order, we picked up all the different colors of crayons and started to draw on the papers that we had for a table cover. After a few minutes, the food came and we started to chow down. As we were stuffing our face with food, I grabbed a ketchup bottle and poured it on top of my French toast. Suddenly, all of my buddies paused in bewilderment for a moment. I did not know what was wrong because eating eggs with ketchup is quite common in Korea and I have been doing so for a long time. So I thought that since French toast was actually bread covered with fried egg, what is the problem? I did not realize everyone was looking at me until I had my first bite.

—I asked, “What's wrong?” My friend answered “How can you eat that? You just ruined your good French toast; you're supposed to pour syrup, not ketchup!” I was in shock. I always thought that eggs with ketchup was normal and couldn't understand why anyone would pour sweet syrup instead? This kept going on inside my mind and I explained to them why I did it. After a long explanation, everyone finally understood my “weird” habit with sounds of “ooh” and “ahh.” Everyone except that one friend who always says “that's just wrong.” It was some experience to, without thinking, get everyone's attention. I was glad to learn what was acceptable with French toast.

A few weeks later, I moved to U.S. with all these memories. I will always miss my friends in Canada and whenever I listen to music we listened to or food that ate had together, I think of them. I also do not pour ketchup on French toast anymore.



Yellow Protein

By Yan Pui (Crystal) Kam,
From Hong Kong

A total stranger suddenly came up to me while I was shopping in Walgreen, and said, “안녕하세요” (a Korean greeting). I felt really weird at that time because I wasn't accustomed to the American culture—talking to strangers while you are shopping at grocery stores—also, I wasn't really sure if he was talking to me or not; what he said wasn't my language. So, I chose not to reply to him and continued on shopping.

However, by the time he came up to me to say something, there was no one around, and I was sure he was talking to me at this time, so I answered, “Sorry, I am not a Japanese.” When he heard what I said, the guy became silent for three seconds, and then he replied, “Um...I was speaking in Korean.” My face rapidly turned a bit red like a tomato, and I just pretended that I didn't hear anything. Obviously, the guy realized that I am neither Japanese nor Korean. This was the first culturally embarrassing moment that I have had in the United States, which made me more aware of other cultures and languages, and when I speak them.

After staying at Highline for a year and a half, I have learned a lot of different language greetings, and I thought that kind of moment would never happen to me again. However, knowing nothing about other cultures makes me embarrassed. This

winter, I went to Whistler in Canada, where I had a second culturally embarrassing moment.

I went to the ski trip planned by International Student Programs. I had never skied or snowboarded before, so I chose to take a snowboarding lesson with the coach in Whistler. After the lesson, I went to a beginner trail with my friends. While we were taking a rest in the middle part of the trail, one of my friends said he was thirsty. When we looked around, there was nothing around us but snow. So, we recommended him to eat the snow since it looked really clean and white. Suddenly, I remembered the unique advice my coach told us to do if we got stuck in the mountain; to eat the yellow snow because it contains lots of protein. So I told my friends to find yellow snow and eat it. At that moment, they started laughing at me really

hard, just like the other students were after the coach told us about the yellow snow. I became very curious about what I said because I didn't understand why they were all laughing so hard. After they stopped laughing, they told me the reason the yellow snow contains protein is because that is someone's pee, and my coach was just joking. I felt so stupid at that moment. I had thought my coach was serious, and I didn't know that it is actually a common joke among the skiers and snowboarders. If I had experienced more about other cultures that have snow, that might not have happened to me.

I have experienced these kinds of cultural embarrassing moments since I first came to the United States. Although, every time it made me felt really embarrassed, at least I am always learning from these experiences.



Lip Cream??

By Rina Ohara
From Japan

Many international students have experienced a moment when they have felt embarrassed about their language skills. I am one of those students who has experienced a

lot of embarrassing moments in where is far from my country, but the most culturally embarrassing moment was when I was a senior in high school. At the time, I came to the United States as an exchange student. At first, I could not speak English at all, but only easy conversation. So it was very difficult for me to communicate with people in English. The most difficult thing about speaking English for me was pronunciation, and especially enunciating the letters “L”, “TH”, “R” and “V”. Therefore, I had always practiced those pronunciations by saying words or sentences that my eyes see in everywhere. However, it was still difficult for me to pronounce some words, so I kept practicing to pronounce the hardest words over and over.

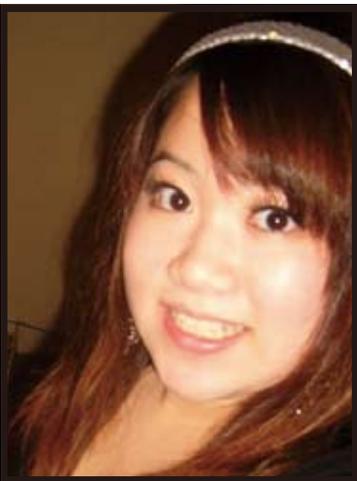
After awhile, I was getting a bit better, but my pronunciation was still not as perfect as native speaker. One day, I experienced

my most embarrassing moment. Since the weather in Wisconsin was super cold during winter, I really needed a lip balm because my lips were very chapped. However, mine was not good, so I wanted to get a new one. I asked my host dad to take me to the store to get the chap stick. When I asked him, I told him that I wanted to get “lip cream” because most of Japanese people say a “lip cream” for the meaning of “chap stick.” I did not even imagine there are a lot of differences of words between the United States and Japan; I thought that all American people say “lip cream” instead of “chapstick”.

My host dad took me to the store, and as I was following him in the store it seemed like we were going to the cold food storage area. I was wondering why he was taking me to the cold area. He suddenly stopped and said that “here is the ‘WHIP

cream.’ This is what you wanted, right?” My mind was filled with questions. I did not know what he was talking about. He thought that I said that I wanted a “WHIP cream”, so he took me the cold place. However, I meant that I wanted to get a “LIP cream” which means a “chap stick.” And then, I explained to him that I wanted to get stuff for my lips. Then, he said that “you mean you want to get a LIP STICK!!”

After all the explanation finished, we could finally understand each other, and I got a chapstick. Now, the language difference is still difficult for me, especially pronunciation. Whenever I pronounce words incorrectly, I still feel embarrassed, but I am always trying hard to learn. I do not want to have the same experience again, so I will never again say “lip cream” in the United States.



Overcoming Hugs

By Ting-Yu (Fjuki) Tsai
From Taiwan

When I first came to the United State as a high school exchange student in Illinois, I was confident that culture barriers wouldn’t be a problem for me, but it turned out that I was wrong in my thinking. One day, one of my friends saw me in the hallway and greeted me. He said “Hi!” to me and waved his right hand in

the air, and so I gave him a wave and smiled back. After talking a while we noticed that both of us needed to reach our next class, so I quickly waved my hand and said good-bye. When I was about to turn myself to another direction, he immediately stepped forward, hugged me, and said, “See you later.” I was totally shocked that my instinctive reaction was to push him away, and I looked at him with embarrassment. I saw how perplexed and embarrassed he was by his facial expression, and he said, “I am sorry. I didn’t know you don’t like hugs.” My emotions became complicated because he was only trying to show his kindness, and my reaction seemed to hurt his feelings as I pushed him away. I apologized and explained to him that the reason I pushed him was because hugging wasn’t usual for me, and he told me that the next time we met he will only wave to greet me. That night I told my host family about this, and they said hugs are usual in

the Western countries, which means when people hug me, hugging them back is necessary to show my respect. After the talk, my host family wanted to give me hugs like my friend did, but they also felt that I was lost when they hugged me, and so I practiced many times that night until I had a tranquil expression on my face while hugging. The next day I saw him walking in the hallway, and I went to him and said “Hi”, and this time he shook me with his hand instead of hugging or waving. I felt kind of weird that he shook my hand and I told him that what happened the day before was a culture shock for me. In Taiwan, where I come from, people don’t usually hug each other when they meet. Instead, it is more common to wave your hand in the air as a greeting. For instance, my family and friends in Taiwan do not usually hug when meeting others, which results in most people only hugging their significant other, but not friends or family. Also,

shaking hands seems too formal for an ordinary greeting; handshakes are more often seen in business conferences or other formal meetings. After explaining this to him, he then asked me how I would prefer people to greet me. I told him “I will go for hugs from now on,” because I want to overcome this cultural difference. After a year of staying in Illinois, I had overcome my unfamiliarity with hugging and I now comprehend the beauty of a hug.

**ANY COMMENTS
AND
TOPICS
YOU WOULD LIKE
TO READ FROM
THE MOSAIC?**

PLEASE E-MAIL
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PAST EVENTS HIGHLIGHT!!



▲ PEOPLE DANCING THE CHA CHA SLIDE AT THE ENCHANTED WINTER DANCE.

▼ TAKING A GROUP PICTURE IN THE PHOTO BOOTH AT THE ENCHANTED WINTER DANCE.



▼ STUDENTS PLAYING WII AT THE WII OLYMPICS EVENT.



▲ STUDENTS PLAYING WITH A BEACH BALL AT THE MT RAINIER POOL PARTY.

▲ TAKING A GROUP PICTURE AT THE SUPER BOWL PARTY.

▼ STUDENTS BOXING TONS OF PEARS AT THE "WHAT THE PACK???" EVENT.

