When you hear the word “winter”, what comes up in your head? Winter brings back such fond memories of Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. Those are all during winter time. New Year’s Day is an especially big day to everyone, including me. With the New Year approaching, people become very excited to welcome the first day. To celebrate the beginning of a new year, some people go to church with their families while other people go somewhere and have a party. They also watch huge fireworks. All of them have plans for the New Year. They dream up wonderful New Year’s resolutions like getting a boyfriend or girlfriend, losing weight, saving a lot of money, and so forth. Those sorts of wishes are everyone’s wishes. Of course, if wishes were horses, beggars would ride. However, making wishes and taking actions to make them come true give us a kind of self-satisfaction. Again, we can refresh ourselves for a change. Aren’t you excited to welcome the New Year and make new plans for yourself? Have you made your New Year’s resolution yet? If not, it is time to make your wonderful resolutions and to welcome changes. Good luck!
ISP Welcome Team
By: Atsuko Onodera
From: Japan

It’s been more than five months since I graduated from Highline. I am now working in the global division of a Human Resources department for an American company that is located in Tokyo, Japan. I don’t think I would be who I am today if I hadn’t gone to Highline. To be more accurate, I wouldn’t be as successful if I hadn’t held the positions of marketing assistant and ISP Welcome Team leader for a year. Looking back over my student life at Highline, it was all about ISP, where my Highline family was.

Working in a company, I now realize that every single experience, including the joyful moments and the mistakes that I made in ISP, has helped me to work better in a real business environment. Being part of ISP Welcome Team was especially helpful. Still an active group, the ISP team was created to welcome and support new international students at Highline. At the beginning, I had only 8 enthusiastic students and had no idea how it would go because I had never been a leader before in my life. But I changed and my team members helped me grow. All the work you do while on the team is volunteer work. However, there are so many things that you can learn and get from the team.

If you join the Welcome Team, you can: make a lot of friends with different backgrounds who can be your “besties”, improve your English, gain public speaking skills that help you speak in front of groups, join in teamwork in an international environment, write about the team in the personal history column on your resume, be a part of many activities on top of school work (you won’t have time to miss your home country or family), enjoy your student life at Highline more!

Every single thing listed above is important and will help you as you transfer to a university or start working. To help you understand how joining the ISP Welcome Team will help you in the future, I’ll give you some examples. For my job, I deal with a variety of Asian colleagues from all over. Because I learned about diverse cultures through hanging out with my team members, I don’t get shocked by the differences among people from different countries. In addition, I enjoy my company’s diversity in culture. In another case, about 2 weeks ago, I had a presentation in English to give in front of my boss and a regional HR manager about the current hiring status of Japan’s Human Resources. I knew I was going to be alright as I had experienced and overcame such tense situations so many times on the ISP team. In fact, I was so excited during my presentation that I enjoyed it. It turned out quite successful. By being part of the team, you won’t lose anything and will gain many things that develop you.

I want to thank all the people that I met in ISP who supported me. I am proud of graduating from Highline and want all international students to become successful by having a meaningful student life at Highline. Finally, I want to give Amee Moon, my charming ex-boss in ISP, a big hug with my love and respect. I miss OLD team members and expect new members to keep up their great work!
American Experience
By: Alexander Chung (Alex)
From: Hong Kong

“HI! How are you today?” This is the first sentence I heard when I first walked into Subway. But because my English wasn’t good enough, I didn’t know what answer I should give for this question. It was so silent in that Subway, and I felt so embarrassed. To me, those few seconds were a nightmare.

California
By: Winnie Lee
From: Hong Kong

Thanksgiving holiday: A four-day weekend I had been looking forward to since the beginning of this November. I made my plans early. This is a really great opportunity to go out, look around, and experience the U.S. Where would be my next stop? California – the first state that jumped to my mind. I had never been to California and I had really hoped that I could go there one day. People around me are always telling me California is a worthy place to visit. It’s a really different place compared to Seattle. Before I visited California, I was already thinking that California is a place that has lots of sunshine and is a warm, really comfortable place to stay. My imagination made me more curious about California.

On November 25 at 5:00 P.M., we decided to go to San Francisco, California for three days. That’s not really a long time to visit San Francisco, but it’s long enough to get to know a new city.

We started from Federal Way and drove all the way down south to California. After we drove seven hours, we finally arrived at the border of California. We still had another six hours to go to get to San Francisco. When we arrived in San Francisco, it was already seven o’clock in the morning.

San Francisco is located in the northern part of California and it’s the fourth biggest city in California. The weather is kind of cold, but San Francisco is still warmer than Seattle. In San Francisco, there are some modern buildings as well as traditional buildings. Strangely, it doesn’t look weird when modern and traditional buildings are together. The whole picture looks very harmonious.

Chinatown in San Francisco is really different from the Chinatown here in Seattle. When I walk in Chinatown, San Francisco, I feel like it’s a totally different country. The entire Chinatown becomes a “Little version of China.” People are speaking different Chinese dialects and working so hard. Additionally, there is a lot of traditional food in Chinatown, San Francisco. They also have lots of traditional buildings. Those kinds of buildings and the ways that people work are really rare to see in Chinatown, Seattle.

In San Francisco, public transportation is very convenient. You can take the bus and the train very easily. The train seems like the main transportation there. I could see a lot of people taking the train everyday. Whenever you walk in San Francisco, you will feel like you are hiking because the roads are steep slopes – even between one street and another street. For me, it was really interesting to experience walking there.

I also went to Pier 39 in San Francisco. Pier 39 is the place that has a shopping center and popular tourist attractions built on a pier. At Pier 39, there are shops, restaurants, a video arcade, street performances, an interpretive center for the Marine Mammal Center, the Aquarium of the Bay, etc. After we visited Pier 39, we drove back to Seattle. After coming back from this trip, I totally agree with what people told me about California; it’s a really good place to visit. If I have another chance, I really want to go there again. I also really want to go to other states and countries to experience other cultures.

After a while, I decided to ignore what the Subway employee asked, and I just ordered a chicken breast sandwich. When I thought the nightmare should have been over, I heard another question: “What vegetables do you want?” Again, we looked at each other for another few seconds with the awkwardness surrounding us and then I walked closer to the counter to check what vegetables they had. I saw that there were lots of vegetables I like, so I thought I would be fine. I opened my mouth and got ready to order. However, as soon as I opened my mouth, I closed it again, because I realized that I only knew how to say the names of these vegetables in Chinese! The only thing that I could do was to try to point at the vegetables that I wanted. But the glass that stood between me and the vegetables made it so hard for the sandwich maker to understand which vegetables I wanted. Therefore, in the end, I left Subway with only 5 pieces of tomato, 5 pieces of cucumber and some chicken in my sandwich.

This was a very sad memory of my stay in the U.S., but I didn’t give up on myself. Instead, I worked even harder to talk to others in English. So now, I’m not afraid to answer others’ questions. I know I still have many things to learn, but now I don’t get scared of those things. I believe everything will just get better because I’ve already fallen in love with new my American life.
Leavenworth Trip
By: Thein Thein Myint (Vivian)
From: Burma

During Thanksgiving break, I had the most wonderful, unforgettable trip; do you know what kind of trip it was and where it took place? It was a trip to Leavenworth and it was really awesome and beautiful. You will never know that feeling unless you go there and check it out for yourself. Leavenworth is a small German town filled with old German buildings and full of romance, especially when it is snowing and lit up by sparkling lights. We had a lot fun there and ate a famous hotdog in Leavenworth. When you take a bite, the flavor and the smell will suddenly go through your brain and at that moment, you forget who you are. Secondly, I want to introduce you guys to traditional German food. There are many different kinds of German food. I ate beef; I forgot the German name for it at King Ludwig’s restaurant. It is really delicious. When you take a bite, the meat and the sauce that go into and melt in your mouth is fabulous. It was an unforgettable moment. It was a taste of heaven and is so hard to explain. After dinner, we walked around and took a lot of photos before going back to the motel.
WONDERFUL WASHINGTON

By: Vu Dao
From: Vietnam

Enjoyably strolling along the world of emerald, astonishingly amazed by the breathtaking view of the forest, the Olympic National Park (ONP) and Forks trip printed into my memory many wonderful images which are truly colorful and fascinating.

In the middle of this fall quarter, the International Leadership Student Council held a trip for students to one of the most beautiful parks in the US – Olympic National Park – and to an amazing place in which the famous Twilight series was filmed – Forks. “Take one look and fall in love.” That is what happened when I first breathed in the dewy air and saw the captivating beauty of Lake Crescent, a deep lake located entirely within the ONP. The heavy rain made the attractive scenery even more enchanted just like I’ve seen in pictures drawn by talented artists. From a distance, I could see the imposing splendidness of Mount Storm King around the shore of the lake. Hiking along the trails leading to Marymere Waterfall, I had a chance to acknowledge and see a variety of natural creations, such as salal and other interesting plants. At the end point, which has the magnificent 90-foot high waterfall, the drops of water splashed onto me and brought the refreshing feelings of coldness and breeze.

After roughly two hours of driving from Lake Crescent, we reached another famous hiking trail – The Hall of Mosses. This forest is filled with temperate trees, covered in green and brown, which freely spurred my imagination toward the movie Avatar. Looking around, I felt like I was lost in a world of dreams. Fabulously, the mosses from the trees hanging upside down form beautiful shapes and add another dimension to the enchantment of the rainforest. There were clusters of huge trees, which, I estimate, should be big enough for ten people to put their hands around their trunks.

After a busy day full of cool activities, we spent a night at the vampire town – Forks! This trip was not only held for Twilight fans, but also to make non-fans of Twilight (like me) fall in love with that fantastic vampire series as well. It is very interesting that almost every place we went to was related to Twilight, from the outside layout to the inside decoration. The rain showers added to the trip a little chilly feeling which excitingly brought us into the mood of the movie world. We visited Bella’s truck, the Swan’s house, Spartan High School and the outlet mall where Bella works. It is fascinating that everything from the movie appeared right in front of my eyes. Even though I was not interested in Twilight much, after the trip I just told myself that I definitely would go and find out more about the movies and book series which touched many hearts.

Living in Washington State is just amazing. There are various beautiful places waiting for you to explore; ONP and Forks are two of those places you must visit in your lifetime. “A sight to see. A sight to remember.”
Past events

Leavenworth Trip
Olympic & Forks Trip
Halloween Party
White elephant Party
Rotating Restaurant 2