I Love Snowboarding!
By: Yu Fujiura
From Japan (Right)

After the final examinations in last December, what I looked forward to was the Whistler ski trip! I enjoyed snowboarding for two days and staying at the hotel with my friends. I came to love Whistler because I had fantastic experiences there.

Why could I have a great time in Whistler? The main reason is because I love snowboarding! I tried it for the first time just two years ago, and I have snowboarded just three times since then, and from these few times, I like snowboarding a lot. Even though I had skied since I was about 6 years old, snowboarding attracted me much more than skiing. I guess it was new for me, and I was tired of skiing. Anyway, snowboarding has absorbed me since I started.

In Whistler, there are some courses which are broad, long and not so steep, so I could practice snowboarding safely on the slopes. I think the most important point of snowboarding is not to be scared. If you want to be good at snowboarding, you should try without any fear. That is also the most difficult part. Therefore, I tried to snowboard without being afraid of failures. I bruised my hips, my back, and everywhere else, but I could snowboard better on the second day. I felt satisfied with the achievement of succeeding. I think that is the reason I love snowboarding.

I am glad to have had a chance to snowboard while I am staying in the United States; I think Whistler is a great place for anyone who wants to snowboard. I really enjoyed spending time there. Someday I will go back and snowboard more in Whistler and, meanwhile, I will keep improving my snowboarding skills.

My First Trial In Whistler
By: Ayumi Murasawa
From: Japan (Left)

I was really excited about the Whistler trip because it was my first time to try snowboarding. The first day, we didn’t have time to go to the mountain, so we went to the village at the foot of a mountain to eat dinner. The village was pretty as it was decorated with lights and it heightened my excitement. I went to bed early to prepare for the next day.

The second day, I was so excited and nervous because I had never snowboarded. Before I went there, one of my friends told me that her friend broke her leg while she was snowboarding, so I needed to be careful. This was always in my mind during the trip and while I took my one day lesson. My instructor taught my group how to stand up, go forward, and turn. We spent all day long mastering them, but in the end, I snowboarded by myself with confidence.

I went up to the mountain with Yu and my other friend next day. They had some experience and were much better than me. I was excited to see if I could keep up with them. However, it was challenging and I just tried not to get hurt, so I went down slowly. At last, I gave up going down with them and I took a gondola. I really wanted to go together, but it was the limits of my physical strength.

Although I got some bruises on my bottom, I really enjoyed snowboarding and I will go snowboarding next winter again.
A Life Experience
By: Emmanuella Shasha
From: Democratic Republic of Congo

A well-known phrase from my language says “you’ll never be better in another place than home.” But when it comes to Highline Community College, I feel that I am home. I am not only emphasizing the good quality of education the college provides to its students, but the campus population. As an international student, you might be lost and feel homesick if the college you go to is just a boring place, with boring people. But at Highline, the International Student Programs (ISP) work hard to bring up some new and interesting events to brighten our minds and provide an atmosphere for relaxation to cope with the stress of school.

The last event I have been to was the November 2010 Leavenworth trip, a trip to a small German town in western Washington. It’s a three hour trip by bus from the college. During the ride, we were blessed with a beautiful view of the state covered by snow. It was so pure and beautiful. Once we arrived at the hotel in Leavenworth, we just dropped our belongings and hit the road for a long visit of the town. That place may be a small town, but it can bring you a lot of joy and fun if you are surrounded by awesome people, friends, or family members. I was accompanied by six of my good friends, and together we made the perfect team. We visited every single spot of Leavenworth’s downtown and we took pictures everywhere. During the time of the year we visited it, the town was nicely decorated with lights. In the middle of downtown was a band singing some Christmas anthems and other melodies. We enjoyed live Christmas music, something I missed so much since I usually only hear the holiday music from the radio or television. At the end of the first day, we enjoyed some German food in one of the best restaurants in town, along with good music and excellent beverages. For some of us, it’s hard to find time to organize a sleep over or such things. During this short trip, we had the opportunity to spend a lot of time together without thinking about school at all. Fun and happiness were our hosts during that trip.

The next day, on Sunday, after breakfast, we went back on the bus and drove south to this outlet mall called the “North Bend Premium Outlets Mall.” There was nothing to visit there, neither landscape nor scenery, but I enjoyed shopping very much. Then we drove to the Snoqualmie Falls such a wonderful natural place, it was amazing!! I’ve never seen a waterfall so powerful and high. I loved it and I took so many pictures which satisfied me. Even though it’s now over, at least I have a story to tell. It was a life time experience!! And I thank every single person who made that possible.

The Journey to the US
By: Meemee Zhang
From: Burma

In July 2009, I decided to come to the U.S for further study after taking GCE exam. All my friends were studying for the SAT, for scholarships, and applying to universities. That was the reason why I wanted to come to the U.S because I could earn lots of scholarships and choose from many places to study.

In Highline Community College there are plenty of majors we can choose from but my major is engineering. When I arrived in the U.S., I was shocked by the differences in culture and lifestyle. Here, there is a lot of freedom. I can do whatever I want, but in my country there are limits to what we can do around our community and society. But despite my initial culture shock, I am so glad to be here and want to thank my parents for supporting me so I need to prove to them that I have done everything I can. So what is my future? Future is the time we need to prove to ourselves and to others that we have succeeded and achieved our goals, but the present is the time we need to work towards our goal. That’s the reason why I chose to study abroad, which means having diverse experiences, facing hardships, and learning to encourage myself.

Going abroad is one of the best ways to acknowledge ourselves and to contribute our status of education. “Experience” is very beneficial in our life because experience expresses how we have faced difficulties and overcome them. After studying 5 or 6 years I think I will gain more experience in becoming an environmental engineer because I really want to help my country. In my country there are numerous pollution problems occurring; the pollution damages the environment from rivers and wildlife, to roads and buildings. What worried me was the buildings. Some of the buildings in our country are very old and still people are living there, but according to the environmental research these building should be reconstructed for the people's safety. The techniques studied to overcome these problems in US colleges are so advanced that I realized that I needed to learn and take in knowledge to help my beloved people live happier and safer. Considering the global facts, there are so many countries that have formed an organization against the people using plastic and rubber because it will cause hazards to the environment.

In conclusion, I would like to mention, “Anybody can read, depending on how much effort they put,” which was said by Ban Ki Mon. “With the great power comes great responsibility,” said in the movie Spider-man. And lastly, “Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration,” by Thomas Edison. All these quotes are about taking responsibility, being creative and even acknowledging people. Studying abroad means doing just that, and I know by gaining experience, making many friends and learning about myself. I’ll be better prepared to go back to my country to make a difference.
Volunteer Work
By: Yuuki Tajima
From: Japan

When I was 6 years old, I dreamed of going to America in the future. I studied hard when I was a high school student, and now I am here. In my first quarter at Highline, I joined some events, which were organized by the ILSC team, and I am going to tell you about my experiences as a Halloween volunteer and planting volunteer.

Kuala Lumpur
By: Amanda Gloria
From: Indonesia

I worked for three years in a travel agency before I came to the United States and every year I always go traveling. One year I asked my sister to go with me outside the country. I asked her to go to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It was close to Indonesia, so it was still “safe.” The primary reason was because actually I found a promotion ticket to Kuala Lumpur using a budget airline called “Air Asia.” The ticket price was only around $36 for a round trip. So, on March 2009 we went to Kuala Lumpur for 3 days.

Because I worked in a travel agency, I had benefits in finding hotels. We stayed in “Alpha Genesis Hotel” around Bukit Bintang area. I also looked for places that I wanted to visit, and I organized my own “tour” while I was in Kuala Lumpur.

The first place that we visited were the malls around Bukit Bintang because it is famous in Kuala Lumpur. We took a monorail to go to Hard Rock café from the Bukit Bintang area. This was the first time I was outside of my country, Indonesia, and it was also the first time I used a monorail. From Hard Rock café, we wanted to go to Petronas Twin Tower. According to the map, it was not so far and we could see the twin tower from the Hard Rock café. So we decided to walk because we also wanted to stop at the Malaysian Tourist Center and Cocoa Boutique (a chocolate store). Apparently, the map was lying, or the scale was too big, or I was just too stupid because we didn’t arrive at the towers until 30 minutes later. It was funny actually because we thought it was close.

We were only there for a couple of minutes, and then we decided to go to our next destination, which was Chinatown. To get there, we used the subway (again, for our first time). Then we went back to the hotel using the monorail.

The next day, we went to Genting Highlands. It was quite cold, foggy and rainy, similar to Seattle. We spent the whole day at the theme park and we also went to the snow world, then went back to our hotel at night. The next day we went back to Jakarta, Indonesia, on the evening flight.

It was a very nice experience for me to go outside Indonesia and explore new things. Even though sometimes you get lost, that is also one of the fun parts of a vacation. So, before your next vacation, prepare to get lost. Get a map while you’re in a new city that you’ve never visited before. Do some research before you go to the city, and enjoy your trip!
Splendid Ha Long Bay
By: Chris Dao
From: Vietnam

Do you have a headache because you’re thinking so much about an ideal place for your family for your holidays? Are you stressed because of tons of works? Welcome to Vietnam! Welcome to a beautiful country where life is fascinatingly animated, where the landscapes are breathtakingly attractive, where the histories are greatly everlasting, and where the people are warmheartedly friendly! Come here and forget all your stresses! Vietnam, an Asian dragon, is waiting for you to be discovered! Vietnam is blessed with a lot of stunning attractions that can charm every person’s heart. From fanciful mountainous regions to enchanted coastlines, from lively cities filled with millions of motorbikes to peaceful fields in which peasant women do their daily farming works with their unique conical-hats, Vietnam appeals to travellers with such attractions that they cannot resist! In this article, I am going to introduce a place which is supposed to be “a real heaven”: HA LONG BAY (Descending Dragon Bay).

Once upon a time, when invaders came, the Jade Emperor sent the Mother Dragon with her children down to the Earth to help Viet people. While the enemy’s boats were moving im petuously towards the shore, the dragons landed. The dragons instantaneously spit ted out its jewels and jades which quickly changed into thousands of small islands like great citadels preventing enemy’s advance. Uncontrol lably, those boats crashed into these islands and were broken to pieces. The location in which the Mother dragon landed is Ha Long Bay while the place where her children landed is called Bai Tu Long. The dragons’ tails waving the water created Long Vi (present Tra Co peninsula) and formed a fine sand beach over ten kilometers long,” according to Ha Long Bay’s fancy legend.

Ha Long Bay (Vịnh Hạ Long) is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a popular travel destination, located in Quang Ninh province, North Vietnam. Marvelous and mysterious, Ha Long Bay is an entranced bridge leading to the heaven’s world. Over 3000 limestone monolithic islands rising spectacularly from the pure ocean, Ha Long appears to be magically majestic. Those tiny islands are dotted with beaches and caves which were created scrupulously by our nature’s mother millions years ago.

While cruising through the bay underneath the sunshine with a gentle breeze, your imagination will be stimulated by those island’s shapes which are very gorgeous. There are “The kissing rocks,” which looks like a lovely couple giving each other romantic kisses. Similarly, there are the “Man’s Head Islands” which makes us imagine a man looking towards the land. Also, you can go diving and swim freely in the freshly emerald water of Ha Long. If you do not want to dive, you can stay on the boat with your family or lover since rejoicing in the incredible view is not a bad idea!

Nairobi in Kenya
Martin Sande
From: Kenya

Kenya is a country located in Eastern part of Africa, and the capital city is Nairobi. This is the only country in the world with a National Park located within the city. The moment you arrive at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, which happens to be the biggest Airport in Kenya, you’re most likely see animals like giraffes, zebras, a warthog, and gazelles gaz ing across the fence because Nairobi National Park is next to the airport.

While in Nairobi, you can do much without travelling; Nairobi National Park has animals such as cheetahs, lions, rhinoceroses, buffalos, monkeys, and different bird species. Within the Nairobi National Park, there is an Animal Orphan age, where animals have been put in cages and you can see them at a very close range, and at times you can touch them and take pictures with animals like leopard. There is also a natural and beautiful nature walk area and picnic place where one can take it easy while listening to the birds singing. The Carnivore Restaurant, which is also located within the park, is famous for carnivores’ meat. If you’re dreaming of tasting crocodile meat while in Kenya, this is the place to be.

“Bomas of Kenya,” which means Kenya’s Homesteads, is a cultural center with 42 cultural huts built in one compound represent ing the 42 tribes of Kenya. Here one gets to learn how each tribe has its own diverse culture. At Bomas, every afternoon, there are traditional dances from the 42 tribes of Kenya performed in the main conference hall and visitors are always welcome to join in and enjoy the rhythm. “Mamba Village,” in English means crocodile farm, and this is where crocodiles are reared. It’s one of my favorite places, and is a unique and interesting place to visit when you want to learn and see how crocodiles are fed. In the same area there is an elephant orphanage known as Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage, where crocodiles and elephants are reared and after they mature are taken to the national parks or national reserves within Kenya. Besides wildlife, Kenya enjoys tropical weather, no extremes, no snow, no freezing and not too much heat from the sun; the beaches along the Coast of Indian Ocean are also warm and sandy. These are some of the things you can do while in Nairobi. The peaceful, loving and welcoming people of Kenya are waiting to share with you experiences of your lifetime. Karibu Sana – You are Welcome.
Sulawesi Island
By: Ahmad Alisyahbana
From: Indonesia

Sulawesi Island is located in Central Indonesia and it is known for its nature and unique culture, which make it a “heaven” for the travelers.

Few years ago, I travelled with my teacher and my classmates to visit some parts of Sulawesi Island. We visited Toraja land, which is located in the heart of Sulawesi Island. It is the home of the Toraja ethnic group people who live in the mountain area and still maintain the original Austronesia lifestyle. Torajans are well known with their funeral rite of burying the death people called Rambu Solo and their fascinating hanging cemetery. When someone dies, he is treated as a sick person and is still fed by his family. When Rambu Solo or the funeral ceremony is being carried out, he is eventually treated as a corpse. After the funeral ceremony the family brings the corpse to the hanging cemetery in the rocky cliff. They place it in a carved coffin and hang it in the slits of cliff. Next to the coffin, they carve a symbol called Tau-tau. It represents the performance of the corpse. Tau tau is made from jack fruit wood, which is considered the strongest wood. Traditional ceremonies of Torajan must be done to cut this timber, while the eyes of Tau-tau are made of bone and buffalo horn. For the baby corpse, the Torajans bury it in a big hole made in the trunk of the big trees. In Torajan society, the funeral ceremony ritual is such an expensive event that is held to say good-by to a dead person. The richer and more powerful someone is in the society, the more expensive the funeral. Only nobles have their right to have an extensive death feast which are held for weeks, months or even years, and are usually attended by thousands of people.

Another part of Sulawesi Island is Wakatobi undersea park. This undersea park is rich of corals since 90% species of corals in the world live there. Wakatobi undersea park is also considered one of the best undersea parks in the world by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The colorful corals and many kinds of fish are amazing views when you dive in the water. This attraction is most frequently visited by the divers or tourists who want to enjoy the beauty of the underwater scenery.

In the south of Sulawesi Island, we can still find “The last Dinosaur” that has survived on the Komodo Island. “The last Dinosaur,” a scarce animal, is commonly known as the “Komodo dragon.” It is the world’s largest monitor lizard. When it is fully grown it measures up to 4 feet in length and weighs anything up to 150 pounds. Nowadays, Komodo Island is nominated as one of the next 7 wonders of the unique lake named Kelimutu will enchant us with its three different colors of water, namely dark-brown, red-brown, and turquoise; each color has a respective crater.

That’s all about my lovely hometown. Its people will welcome you warmly if one day you have a chance to go there.

The Heart of Eastern Pearl
By: Leewan Li
From: Hong Kong

Up and down. The city lights are going up and downward in my eyes. The laser lights shooting from the top of the buildings creates a picture of movement on the sky along with the music. That is the show “A Symphony of Lights” that you can see in Victoria Harbor every night. On the old Star Ferry that has been using to cross the sea since Hong Kong was still in the fishing industry, you would feel like you are inside the heart of the city, the heart of all the stories from years ago until now. Floating in the deep dark South China Sea waters between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula, looking at all the purple, red, blue, green, white and yellow colors shining on buildings, it feels like a dream. Victoria Harbor, the one place that contains a lot of dreams and stories in Hong Kong.

Have you ever seen a picture of the night view of Hong Kong in Victoria Harbor? It is pure beauty. If you do, you may understand why Hong Kong has been called the “Pearl of Eastern.” Between the long harbors, the dark ocean water reflects thousands and thousands of lights from the buildings on the sides of the harbor. Those are the lights from commercials signs, lights from cars driving along the roads, and lights from every home. In Hong Kong, hundreds of families live in only one building, and we have thousands and thousands of buildings. Every little dot of light you see in Victoria Harbor is lighting up the whole family, and all the colors representing all kind of stories. That is how close we are in Hong Kong. I love Victoria Harbor; that is a place you can feel the power of people—we can light up the whole city.

All kind of people come here: tourists that are laughing hard and putting their hands next to Jacky Chan’s hand print on the Avenue of Stars, families that brings their kids to play, couples that are sitting on the chairs looking at the sea and holding each others’ hands, friends that holding a bottle of beers and talk until middnights… All kind of memories and stories sink into Victoria Harbor. It is a place for everyone. Standing besides the sea, letting the winds blow through, listening to the chatters, looking at the shining lights in the darkness… You can feel that you are so close with the people and we are so connected.

I really love Victoria Harbor; you will find so many awesome shopping malls, nice restaurants, great attractions, but the main reason for me to come here all the time, is that this is the BEST place to look at Hong Kong and to actually feel Hong Kong. You don’t want to miss out this place if you are visiting Hong Kong.
Mosaic Editors
Peter Hsieh
&
Ron Keller

Past Events Highlight

Food Bank Volunteers

Trip To Leavenworth

Rotating Restaurant

New Year’s Eve Party

Ice Skating Party

Des Moines Creek Restoration Project