

ESL Newsletter

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ESL NEWSLETTER

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Evala Wrestling or the Annual Feast of Muscles

By: Dossou Kowou

Like other African countries, the country of Togo has many people or ethnic groups. Ewe, Guin, Mina, Losso, Kabye, and others are the main groups of Togolese people. Each ethnic group has its own cultural and traditional ceremony that marks the new year or the



transition from boy to man. Ekpe-Ekpe for the Guin; D'Pont for the Bassar; Ovazu for Akposso-Akebou; Evala for Kabye, and so on. We will focus on the last ceremony cited to know how it is organized and what meaning it has for the Kabye people.

Kabye is the name for both language and people of the northern plains of Togo. The Kabye are known for farming and cultivating of the land of the Kara Valley area of Togo. They are also famous hunters. To face the danger of nature and animals, the Kabye young boy needs endurance, courage, and power. Therefore, the Kabye ancestors instituted this wrestling as a cultural and traditional ceremony.

This ceremony happens each year in July, the month which corresponds to the agricultural vacation in the area. Evala is a form of traditional wrestling



practice. The competitors meet every year at a festival following a retreat marking the initiation of young men into adulthood. Evala is the second element of this traditional rite during

which young men are separated from their families for one week.

The first element of this tradition happens at the age of eighteen. At this age, the young boy without informing his parents is taken by his uncle. Then, the uncle gives a massage to his nephew with the oil of the dog. After this time, he is brought into special and sacred huts called "Poudo", where he will find other young boys undergoing the same rite. They are now fed and subjected to mental training. This happens on a pilgrimage which involves climbing mountains. During the journey, they kill and eat dogs; all those things happen in the morning.

The second element of the tradition which happens in the afternoon is the wrestling strictly speaking. During the ceremony, two teams of neighborhood villages meet on a playground. The teams combat each other with the songs and the encouragement of their



supporters. The crowd goes wild and roars like the thunder when one wrestler is thrown on the floor. The supporters have some slogans to encourage their teams. We can hear: "Our wrestlers are brave men, courageous combatants who can strike down their opponents." Evala is not a war, but mental and physical wrestling. Through this manifestation, the young men of this region measure their ages and their physical capacities. It is their civilization, and they are proud of it.

Boys continue to journey into the mountains and wrestle for three years. Then, the initiation finishes with another ceremony called "Kondona." Now they are allowed to get married.

In the past, this kind of wrestling allowed people in the grip of wars to find young men

able to protect their villages. Also, these wrestling virtues were necessary to fight against the European colonization.

Today, Evala wrestling is known over the world. The development of the communication ways like radios, televisions, and internet allow other people to know about Evala. At this time, many tourists come from other countries to attend the ceremony. Evala has become a social-economical activity where people sell and buy African statues and traditional artifacts. With the multiplication of religions and churches, some Kabye young men refuse to participate in this ceremony. For them, the



world has evolved, and there is no need to do such an archaic thing. In fact, Evala wrestling has changed through

the ages. Modernization and European civilization have contributed to this change.

However, many Kabye people are still practicing the rites of passage and religion that their ancestors left them. They are respectful about their tradition and culture which gives them an identity. The elders of this community preserve this identity, and they are not ready to let it disappear. The question is for how long is this tradition going to exist? Will this tradition die one day? The future will give the answers.



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AT BLACK HAWK COLLEGE

By: Donga Soulemana



Black Hawk College is one of the most frequented colleges in the Quad Cities, and it is a community college that embraces students of all nationalities. It offers a good

education and helps students succeed in their academic goals. Black Hawk College, in caring for its students, has set up clubs and organizations that are working to get students involved for well- balanced academic and social lives.

There are so many clubs and organizations at Black Hawk College which are ways that students can get involved. To help students become involved in clubs and organizations, the College has an office called

“Student Life” and the office has a Coordinator of Student Engagement named Tiffany Hamilton who has just been hired. She is a sweet lady (as sweet as sweet potatoes); she is originally from Iowa, but later moved to North Carolina to attend school. She went to Marshall College in North Carolina and actually was part of an organization called the “Student Athletic Scholar” and the “Ladies of Distinction,” which was an organization of women of many nationalities. She also attended Western Carolina University, from where she earned her master’s in higher education. She worked for 4 years at UNC Asheville. She has been married for three years and has an 8-month-old baby boy.



As a coordinator, Tiffany Hamilton said that she loves her role in the College. An important part of her job is to increase membership in the clubs and organizations because she is convinced that students need to balance their academic lives and their social lives which are full of diverse activities. Also, she advises the different organizations and clubs. To do so, she explained to me that she sends out flyers, uses internet services, and posts to the College website.

She also mentioned that clubs and organizations help students learn organizational skills like how to plan for events and for meeting and learning how to stay within the budget. She emphasizes the importance of the social aspect, meaning “students meeting other students.”

Although there are many clubs and organizations to get involved in, she said that not all of them are actually active. The ones that are active are the following: ALAS: Association of Latin American Students; BOC: Brotherhood On Campus ; CDA : College Democrat; ISA: International Student Association ; SOC: Sisterhood On Campus ; SGA: Student Government Association; the Veterans Clubs; PSI Beta and Phi Theta Kappa honor societies. Each year, clubs and organizations organize their own activities, and she supports them as a coordinator with the student life budget money.



Students are important at BHC. That is the reason why the school has established clubs and organizations to allow them to learn in both their academic and social lives. Students that are already taking part in these clubs and organizations have demonstrated that it a good idea to have a Student Life Office and the Coordinator.



Youth in Africa Are Among the Most Affected By HIV/AIDS

By: *Barhame Zinhindura*

HIV/AIDS remains an incurable disease despite the efforts of experts trying to invent new technologies to help the people infected with this deadly disease. Africa is the continent concerned mostly with HIV/AIDS issues. The case being discussed here is the DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo). The disease is found mainly in young people rather than in any other age range in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The young people who are infected with HIV/AIDS have few opportunities in education; they feel left out of their element, and their lives are in jeopardy since they have to be sick for the rest of their lives.



Abstinence and condoms are the two foremost ways suggested to eliminate the spread of HIV; however, the government is trying to raise awareness about this HIV/AIDS epidemic through educational campaigns to let people know how to use condoms when having sex and how to use sterilized needles when injecting drugs. In rural areas, access to retroviral therapy is still a problem for young people living with HIV/AIDS since most of them cannot afford the expense of treatment due to poverty. As a result, the life expectancy for people with HIV is between 25-35 years; however, some of them may die prior to this time due to the reasons mentioned above.



When young people are HIV positive, they have difficulty attending school and keeping up with what the class is doing. They are worried about death, so they are consumed with thoughts of dying while they are still young. They may spend most of

their time blaming their parents or themselves for the fact that they are infected. Whenever they look at themselves and see that they are different from others, they become disturbed and can no longer concentrate on what the teacher is telling them.

Usually HIV/AIDS patients also become infected with other diseases which take advantage of their weak bodies since their immune systems are already susceptible to other infections because of the HIV/AIDS. Due to these reasons, they have to spend more time collecting medicine at the hospital, so their school attendance is trimmed down. Sometimes they are ill and cannot make it to class; therefore, they have to stay home for the whole day. Some of these vulnerable individuals live by themselves while some have other responsibilities; despite this, life has to go on for both parties. They may have to be absent from school in order to find food. If they have families who rely on them, they have to get up and find the provisions for the day.

The youth living with HIV/AIDS are highly disregarded by the society; hence, they feel less respected and end up having no confidence in what they do. When I was in high school, I personally witnessed a case like this involving a couple of students living with HIV/AIDS. Whenever they tried to do something, they thought that people were laughing at them; they felt like all eyes were on them! Even when they were given a chance to show their talent during a class presentation, they were reluctant to perform because they feared that they would be embarrassed by their peers. These victims were always in a lonely mood, and we could not find the best



way to comfort them since their lives would be cut very short due to lack of proper medication. They would always say, "Leave us alone and let us die because we are no longer part of you." Normally, in most of the communities in Democratic Republic of Congo, infected youth would feel as they were alone with no one around to comfort them. Even when they had families, their minds were still not stable because they thought of their dreadful future and eventually had regret for misbehaving in the first place. Young people infected with AIDS have few plans for their future. Infected youths have no regard for today since they may not see tomorrow. Since they have no

hope for the future, they seem irresponsible, and their plans are limited to less thinking because all they think about is a sudden death.

As their immune systems are broken down, their bodies are no longer able to fight against any disease. Other diseases are ready to invade without being interfered; therefore, the patients will need to receive antiretroviral drugs which in essence cause some side effects. Since an affected immune system is susceptible to different diseases, their lives are in danger because they are likely to get infected with many other diseases. However, some drugs are dispensed for free, while not every good quality drug is received by all individuals. Some drugs have to be taken on a daily basis, and these drugs contribute to the weakening of their bodies.

Besides, some infected youth are afraid to get the antiretroviral medications; therefore, reducing the days they could live a little healthier. This fear may be a result of ignorance or the fear of being seen by the public as they go to collect these antiretroviral



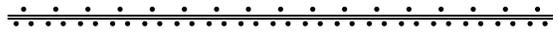
drugs (ARV's.) Some other youth fear getting tested for HIV/AIDS because they are scared of the doctors revealing their positive status. Due to lack of early detection,

some individuals die prematurely because they haven't received enhanced treatment at a right time. Also, the lack of AIDS awareness contribute to individuals dying earlier because some individuals do not recognize that they are infected, therefore, not giving themselves the proper diet and medication. The problem of young people living with HIV/AIDS remains unsolved because they have little awareness of HIV/AIDS. Therefore, they still get infected since they can't afford daily duties they are assigned for and collecting medicines for their disease. They are unable to attend school or do well in school due to their lack of concentration. Participating in the community is difficult for them because they are always hoping to die in order to end the pain and suffering they're going through.



However, the government should work hand in hand with the parents/guardians to establish anti-AIDS clubs where youth could convene and debate issues regarding HIV awareness, prevention measures, and treatment options. The

government and other non-governmental organizations should support youth affected by HIV/AIDS by providing funds to help them get some basic needs. Otherwise, these young people will most likely become targets of abusers who manipulate them by taking advantage of their financial and medical problems.



Life in a Refugee Camp

By: Laxmi Khanal



Refugees are those who are forced to leave their own country and stay in a different country. It is very painful to live as a refugee because refugees are not allowed to live as they wish. It is very difficult for the refugees to think about their own future.

I am originally from Bhutan, but I lived 18 years as a refugee in Nepal. I was only five years old when I became a refugee. When I was in Bhutan, it was a monarchical country, so there weren't any human rights. As I heard from my parents, the Bhutanese government didn't allow us to live our life as we wished. Since my parents are Hindu, they are vegetarian, but they were forced to eat meat. People fought for democracy and human rights, but the Bhutanese government didn't like that, and they become crueler. They didn't allow us to go to school, and they treated the young boys and girls very badly. They caught young boys and took them to jail for no reason, and they took young girls to their homes and did whatever they wanted to them. Therefore, it was very difficult for us to live there, and we were forced to become refugees.

As a refugee, I experienced many things. I started school when I was seven and did a lot of work in our house after school. Since I had to fetch water from the tap, wash clothes, collect firewood from the jungle, and clean the house, I didn't have enough time to do my school assignments. Oftentimes, I used to try to do my assignments at night which was very difficult because we didn't have electricity, so I used to use a lamp. It was very difficult for me to get good grades, and I



struggled a lot to get through high school while in refugee camp.

There were many associations helping us in different fields. For example, Caritas Nepal provided education; UNHER (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) provided



food, and many other associations provided clothing, shelter, medication, and safety. Although associations provided many resources, they provided resources in

a limited quantity which was not enough to live on. Therefore, my parents had to work to fulfill our needs. My father was a farmer, so he worked in the local farm for wages. He used to work very hard, but local people didn't provide enough wages because he was a refugee. They didn't treat him very well either. If refugees tried to bargain about wages, they wouldn't provide work, so refugees had to work for low wages.

When I was small, I couldn't do anything that I wanted because of our economic problems. For example, I was very interested in dancing, but I didn't get chance to join a dance class because my parents couldn't pay for the class. It was very difficult for refugees to get jobs, so we had to hide our identity to get any kind of job. When I graduated from higher secondary school, I taught in a primary school outside the refugee camp for two years. However, when the principal found out that I was a refugee, he fired me even though students were happy with me. I tried to convince him to help me, but he said that he would decrease my salary. Therefore, I left the job. Being a refugee left me very depressed and unhappy at that time. After that, I went to the refugee camp, and I helped in the camp school.



There were many strict rules in the refugee camp. Nobody was allowed to do any kind of work or to visit anyone after eight in the evening in the camp. If the cops found out, they would catch the person and take the person to the police



office. When I was in seventh grade, I went to my friend's house to pick up school notes from him at 8:30 p.m. The police found me and took

me to the police office where I had to stay the whole night until they released me the next morning. The police also didn't allow us to visit our relatives in other places. When I was small, I asked my parents about people treating us



cruelly, and my parents used to say that we are not our country; we are here as refugees.

Refugees shouldn't be treated like animals because nobody chooses to be a refugee. Due to circumstances beyond their control, they are forced to become refugees. Life in the refugee camp is miserable, so all people should think about the painful life individuals lead in the refugee camp and try to help refugees. The government should provide necessary resources to refugees. They should have the same rights as other people in the country, so they can work according to their qualifications.



THE MACHETE OF WAR

By: *Gnonkou Djekpo*

During the last four decades, some poor countries in Africa haven't yet buried "the machete of war." Countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Angola, Ethiopia and Eritrea are suffering many dramatic consequences of war. Rebellious groups continuously attack the population that has no defense. Many atrocities like loss of life, rape, starvation, and corruption are committed upon the population.

Talking about consequences, one is inevitable in every war. Year after year, many people lose their lives. The statistics show that Angola lost half a million lives from 1975 to 2002, and the Democratic Republic of Congo has lost 5 million lives since 1998 when the war started. The genocide of Rwanda killed millions and millions of

Hutu and Tutsi. The presence of rebels groups like FDRL, MAI MAI, the EX-FAR and the INTERAHAMWE, has been a great fright for the population and the government of Congo and Rwanda. Without pity, those rebels killed anyone who stood in their way. For instance, in Kishonja (Congo) in 2003, the FDRL forced their way into a home and shot and killed a



five-year-old and six-year-old boy in front of their mother. Between last January and September of 2009, the FDRL deliberately killed at least 701 civilians in North Kivu (Congo).

Next, many women and children are raped by the rebel groups. These actions explain the increase of the rate of HIV on the Africa continent. For example, the rate of HIV in Congo increased. It went from 3.9% to 4.2% during the period of war. That rate is twice the rate of Madagascar which is not at war. With their machetes, the rebels cut people's arms. They treat the population poorly. They capture



many hostages and sexually abuse them. For instance, more than 8,000 women were raped in Congo last year. Among

these hostages, many children were trained to fire guns. They subsequently became "child soldiers." They became addicted to drugs and alcohol. These children, instead of being in school, live in the forest, and no one knows the outcome of their future life. Subsequently, the African continent will lack qualified human resources that will work for its development. The "child soldiers" from Sierra Leon killed 2000 people during the war. They were trained by the rebel chief, Fodesanko.

In that chaos, many political leaders seized the occasion to rob the wealth of the country. Some presidents with the ambition to destroy their



neighbor's countries, sell guns to the rebels of the country in war. They make great profit in those transactions. It is known that the president of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, worked behind the scenes to support the rebels in Congo by selling guns to them. The main cause of the war in Africa is about natural resources. The control of the commercial transaction of those resources has been a conflict in Angola. To rearm his soldiers, the rebels group UNITA sold its diamonds on the unofficial "outside" market. UNITA found willing buyers within the diamond industry. Political leaders and rebels profit from this situation to fill their private bank accounts in Europe or Asia.

Finally, the population is left to starve. Many people live with less than \$1 per day. The population suffers malnutrition while the leaders are living a life of abundance. A recent

research by Tom Budervoet (University of Brussels) shows that after 5 years of civil war in Burundi, the incidence of poverty is 71.5% in the rural area and 35.5% in Bujumbura the capital city. 64% of the population doesn't have access to improved sanitation. According to the Governor of Basasso (Somalia), between 4,000 and 5,500 children live on the street in his city. Somalia is considered 75% food insecure, the highest in sub Saharan Africa.



In sum, poverty and war are the components of the vicious cycle of Africa. Many are those who have lost the faith in the prosperity of Africa. The lists of the dramatic events that are happening justify their skeptical view. Since the United Nations has failed to end those wars, the future of those countries in war is falling toward the darkness.



Strange American Customs

By: Larbi Mamouch

What do you know about American customs? How do they differ from your own country? Are they strange to you? What do you like about American customs? What do you not like about them? Is it easy for you to become familiar with this culture? As an immigrant, it is very important to recognize and understand American customs.



In the United States, if a person offers his or her hand, you should shake it; however, shaking hands is not a necessity. American people shake hands when they first meet or when they meet again. Kissing, as a greeting, can be seen sometimes between a man and a woman who know each other well or between close family members. An American man rarely kisses on both cheeks



or embraces another. Also, it is customary for a man to shake a woman's hand if she offers her hand first. In my country, (Morocco) men shake hands, kiss on both cheeks, and embrace one another as a way of greeting. Also, kissing, as a way of greeting, is very common between women in Morocco.

There is another custom that is strange to me. Americans often ask, "How are you?" but they rarely wait for the answer. To illustrate, when I go to the store and meet with some American people, they often say, "How are you?" I always reply to them, but they never listen to my answer. Sometimes I say, "I do not feel well today." They reply, "That is nice," because they do not pay attention to what I am saying. But, in my country when people ask, "How are you?" they always wait for the answer. They want to know exactly how you are doing.

Another custom which is different from my own country is when an American invites someone to a restaurant, it does not mean that he or she will pay. One of my friends told me



that an American invited him to a restaurant, and when they finished eating, the bill came. The American person started to divide it into

half and he said, "This is my part, and this is your part." My friend was shocked because in our country, the person who invites someone to a restaurant will pay. Also, when Americans do not finish their meals in a restaurant, they may ask for a doggie bag. They take the food home and eat it later. I find it strange that even people who do not have dogs ask for a doggie bag. However, in my country, it is embarrassing to take the food with you outside of the restaurant.

The final strange custom for me is that American people treat their pets as a member of their family. I have an American friend who has a dog, and he always carries the picture of his pet in his wallet. He sometimes calls his dog on the telephone when he is not home, and he talks to him into the answering machine. Also, he sleeps in the bed with him. When the dog is sick, he always takes him to an animal clinic. In my country, most people do not have pets at home. They respect them, but they do not treat them as family members.



I have learned many things about American customs. When I do not understand something, I always ask some American people about them. Now, I am getting used to the life here in the United States. I sometimes

participate in some of American customs; however, I will never forget about those of my own country.



Report on the U.S Economic Crisis and its Consequences

By: Apenouga K Adanlehoussi

Home owners' debts, foreclosure, subprime mortgage crisis, bankruptcy, NYSE, Dow and NASDAQ down, London FTSE 100, Paris CAC 40: those are the expressions we could hear at the end of 2007 and beginning of 2008. The whole world has been shaken by an economic crisis this decade, but the U.S has been particularly affected. Two other important countries have been consistently linked to this crisis: United Kingdom and China. Unfortunately, this crisis was not caused by a lack of profits in the economy. In fact, profits have been made through production but realized through circulation and exchange. How did the crisis begin? How did it



internationalize? What are its consequences? What are its effects on a country like Togo and its emigrants in the U.S?

The financial crisis also involved the accumulation of debt, with household debt getting higher and higher. Then, foreclosures started rising especially for subprime borrowers. The United States, which always has a low savings rate and needs to borrow from high-savings-rate countries such as China in order to finance its federal budget deficit, couldn't get that money because of a lack of confidence.



Number of U.S. residential properties subject to foreclosure actions by quarter (2007-2009).

The week of September 14, 2008 was chaotic on the U.S financial market with the Lehman Brothers (Investment Bank), which filed for bankruptcy. This situation spread overseas immediately and many countries--Britain, Ireland, and Iceland--experienced the crisis. A year before, it was in U.K, whose economy is historically vulnerable to the crisis, that a signal of a financial crisis had been sent: customers were queuing outside of a Northern Rock Bank

branch in Birmingham in order to withdraw their savings.

The current crisis which started with bankers has expanded

to the rest of the economy. Then, families saw their debts increase; many businesses cut thousands of jobs resulting in an increase of the number of unemployed people. Some big automakers almost went into bankruptcy before President Bush bailout plan helped them keep their business.

Another aspect of this situation is the U.S exports which have been decreasing for years, something that China contributed to. Indeed, the US manufacturers complain about China's undervalued currency which subsidizes Chinese exports and inflates the price of foreign goods in China's market.

For that matter, Senator Charles Grassley, an Iowa Republican said: "President Obama has the opportunity to change course. His administration can label China a currency manipulator in its upcoming biannual report.



Maybe that will finally get China's attention and lead to a more level playing field for U.S. exporters."

(Reported by Doug Palmer on Feb 3, 2010 Reuters)

The most important consequence of this crisis concerning the U.S exchanges with foreign countries is the value of the U.S currency, the "dollar". It has decreased during the last few years, and this doesn't help immigrants and their families who live in their home country. For example, immigrants from Togo who send a monthly set amount of "Francs CFA" (Togo's currency) to their families have to increase the amount they transfer since the dollar exchange rate went down.



Togo, which doesn't have a particular relationship with the United States due to the dictatorship in power in the country, saw its volume of trade decrease. Moreover, as a consequence of the dollar's value compared to the Yuan of China, people are obliged to consume China's products which are cheaper



People queuing outside a [Northern Rock](#) bank branch in [Birmingham, United Kingdom](#) on September 15, 2007, to [withdraw their savings](#) because of the [subprime crisis](#).

because the U.S manufactured goods are not easily accessible for them.

The financial crisis has been felt throughout the U.S before expanding to the rest of the world especially the U.K, Ireland, etc. Its consequences have been disastrous for many businesses and countries, but China has certainly gained from this crisis. Immigrants have especially felt it in regard to the dollar's attitudes on the financial market. President Obama and his administration are fighting to get the situation fixed even if things are not so easy. These consequences show the bad aspects of the free market system, but the U.S economy is probably going to be stronger after this crisis.



Finding My New Voice

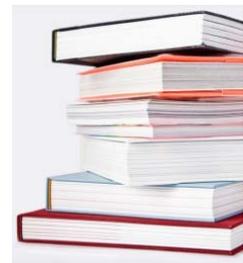
By: *Dodo Soglohun*

My name is Dodo Soglohun, and I came from Togo, West Africa. Because I won the visa lottery, I came to the US, where I have been living for eight years. As many people know, living in the US means you need to be able to



speak, read, and write English. My goal is to work as a nurse, so I need an academic level of English to reach my goal. The ESL program is a program which helps people who need to learn academic English, so it is very important to take classes in this program.

In my hometown, when I was in college, I was taking an English class, but not to speak English, just to take a quiz and get a good grade. At that time, I couldn't speak or understand when people talked. My job was to read and take a quiz. In class, there were thirty five to forty students, and we had three or four hours of English per week. Usually all the English teachers were francophone. We learned British English which is different from U.S. English, so the pronunciation was different. Some teachers couldn't speak English fluently. We learned grammar, reading, and



some techniques of writing, but no listening skills. At this level, we had a lack of opportunity to practice this language.

In contrast, I came to US, where I have to speak English because it is mandatory. I had to start learning English again from Level I up until Level 7, where I am now. Simply, it is very important to take classes in the ESL program because it helps in many ways. I started to speak English after taking Listening and Speaking I and II. Also, I know how to read and communicate grammatically in the American system. ESL helped me also to know how to live with American people. In class, we were never over fifteen students and that allows the teacher to keep an eye on each student. Being in ESL has prepared me for my



academic classes. Now, Writing II is helping me improve my writing skills in English. Before ESL, anywhere I went, I needed a translator, but now I can go anywhere without a translator. For example, I am nursing assistant, and I work with American people. I am not totally good in English, but I feel better. Sometimes I ask myself, without ESL, what would I become? Maybe I would have already gone back to my country.

From my own experience, I advise those who want to skip the program to take it because it will help them, above all, when they take academic classes. It is very important to take the ESL program.

It is like somebody who learns to drive a car without his driver's license. He can have an accident easily. For those who want to take ESL, it is a good choice and a good thing; I encourage them to do it. It is the best way to succeed.



To summarize, the ESL program has helped me learn how to write a good essay following the rules, how to avoid plagiarism, how to read, and how to speak good English using good grammar, and finally, prepared me to take academic classes next semester. In short, I have found my new voice.



UNIVERSITIES IN TOGO

By: *Koffi Agbenyo Sessenou*

In this terrible economy, people all over the world are worried about their lifestyles. In particular, life at a college campus is very



difficult for young university students in my country, Togo. The expenses are too high; it is difficult to succeed, and it is almost impossible to find a job after graduation.

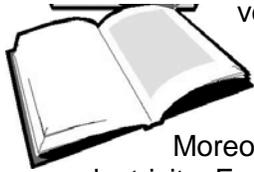
First of all, the Togolese must leave their small villages for their education after high school; it is a big deal for a young student. For example, many students have to move far from their homes to attend the university because my country has only two universities. Togo has one university in the capital, Lome, and the second is located in Kara, North of Togo. The school fees are always rising. For example, a student has to pay \$100 for one year of school fees, which is very high for the average Togolese. Besides the fees, he has to buy the books and pay his rent and food. For example, a young boy, who was from my home, had to go and study at the University of Lome. His parents were farmers, and they did not have more money to send him to continue his school. The young man did his best to make money and then went to Lome to study. For example, to make money, young students help farmers clean their farmland; we call that "by-day".



Students in Farm Doing "By-day"

During school breaks, young students leave their academic lives and do "by-day". To make extra money, the young students work with the farmers during break time from school. At the end of the day, the young receive 500 Francs CFA (F.FCA), equal to \$1, and sometimes the farmer is incapable of paying the student. In the capital, Lome, where there are no farms, students used to be able to find a job in a company as an hourly hand laborer. They received \$1 for 10 hours a day. Other young students could find a job in a construction company. They also worked 10 hours a day for \$1. For the week, a student earned as much as \$5, which means 2500F.CFA. With this amount, he could pay for his ride depending on distance from his home to work, and his food every day at work. So, he could

save about \$2 a week. At the end of school break time, the young student could make about \$16-18 for his studies. For example, the son of my uncle, Nyadji Agbenohevi, who saved \$17 during three months of school breaks for his studies, did not finish the semester. After one semester he came back home because the life at the university was



very difficult for him. For example, he had to pay for everything such as food, water, and rent.

Moreover, he had to pay electricity. Facing this situation, he decided to give up on his education.

Furthermore, in my country, Togo, everybody is required to attend the university, but the system is an obstacle for young people. Getting accepted into a university, whether in Togo or abroad, they must face many obstacles. The young students don't have financial aid from the government. Every student has to pay the school fees one month before the beginning of the semester.

The system limits people by courses and grades. As one more obstacle to a student's admittance, the office analyzes all his courses and average of points. The average is 10.00. If the student has more than 10.00 average, he/she will be allowed to take the class that he/she chooses. If the average is less than 10.00, a student must choose another class. For example, a student who wants to study medicine must have over a 12 point average in science, and a student will have to be 21 years old. In addition to average point and age, a student must take more than seven courses in one semester. In one level, a student has to study many courses, even if the course is not his major. Universities of my country don't have a big bookstore for the students. The

Only One Class In University Of Lome (Emphi 600)



bookstore that universities have contains only the old editions of the books. Students have problems finding information necessary for their homework. In

addition, increasing populations of students is also a problem for the university. Very often, there are too many students for classes, and students have to stand up or sit on the floor to take notes. One of my cousins, who studied history at the university, had to travel to school at 4 a.m. to find a seat when the class

eventually started at 7 a.m. In addition to these conditions, my country has a job problem; the majority of people don't have jobs, and without a job, life is very hard to live. After finishing university in my country and studying a particular field, a student cannot find a job in that field, and he has to go and live at home and take another job such as night security, or a moto taxi driver, which we call "Zemedjan". Both of these jobs are very dangerous because people lose their lives. Often a young student, who gives

up on university becomes a taxi moto driver. He usually doesn't have a driver's license. He does not have



knowledge of driving. More specifically, the young don't know the way around the capital. In addition, he doesn't respect the road speed and traffic signs. Consequently, accidents happen and finally he dies. Besides accidents, the criminals and thieves kill young students who drive moto taxis and steal them. The youngest of my uncle, Elolo Yaovi, who had a degree in science, did not find a job, and he drove a taxi moto. He made three thousand F.CFA a day, equal to \$7. One day in 2004, when he went to the job, he did not come back home because he hit a truck with his moto, and he died. In addition, women graduates are in the same situation. According to the ladies, they make money by selling things such as shoes, towels, water, earrings, bread, and clothes in the open markets besides the roads or bus stations. They make 400 F. CFA which means \$1 a day.

In conclusion, among the difficult lives of

Lady who graduated from accounting



the young Togolese, many of them have chosen to leave the country to find jobs. Hardships of getting into the university, additional expenses of university, situations with their majors and classroom situations, and then what

happens when they get out of college and a search for a job are the facts of the difficult lives of the young Togolese.



Poverty in Zimbabwe

By: *Abo K Mawuwoe*

Poverty! Poverty! Africa, the second biggest continent after Asia, is the picture of poverty as we know it. Actually, many African countries are facing problems of poverty, and Zimbabwe is one of those countries.



Zimbabwe is one of the African countries which has good mineral resources yet is still

experiencing poverty. There are many reasons why Zimbabwe's citizens are suffering from extreme poverty.

Originally, Zimbabwe was one of the African countries that had the best rating in the health sector. However, everything started to get worse when president, Robert Mugabe, began to manage the country badly. The Zimbabwean population is in a very critical state; this crisis struck the population into one unbelievable situation. Recently, in 2009, the cholera epidemic took over the country and many people became victims of this illness.

The hospital was full of people, and there was no place for others to go to get treated. It showed that the lack of



clean water and poor sanitation were the main causes of cholera. The government played a big role in this tragedy which caused many deaths in this country. The U.S. advised the government of this country to review the treatment of the water and encouraged the community members to drink clean water, wash their hands after using the toilet, and store their water properly. The percentage of people educated on this issue is very low and decreases every year.

Another health concern for Zimbabwe is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This illness is ravaging the population and puts the country in the state of hopelessness.



Annually, six hundred

teachers die, with more than 25 percent of teachers HIV positive. Almost one member of

each family has HIV or was a victim of AIDS. Lack of education, unemployment, and health care, as well as, a corrupt government, inequality/racism are the most likely causes of poverty. All these factors cause people to get into bad things such as prostitution and other crimes such as murder and theft. Today, prostitution is very frequent in Zimbabwe; many girls give their bodies to anyone who can find them something to eat. Often times, their partners aren't protected. Armed robbery often occurs; desperate people usually hold up the stores and banks. People also kidnap children and sell them in a neighboring country for money. This kind of commerce is very frequent in Zimbabwe because there are not any laws that protect children one hundred percent. When I was sixteen, one of my cousins was kidnapped from my country and taken to the neighboring country; luckily, the kidnappers were arrested at the border of Togo and Benin.

Honestly, I'm very concerned about the situation that is going on in this country right now. Above all,



the AIDS epidemic is going to reduce the country to crumbs, and I hope the

government does something very fast. The health minister of the country of Zimbabwe has a big responsibility concerning this issue; first of all, he or she has to choose some people and inform them about the issue of how to prevent HIV. Then, those people have to be sent all over the country to talk to the rest of the population about the illness. I know that it won't be easy at all to convince people to believe that this illness can really destroy the whole nation or an entire country because some people remain ignorant and believe that this illness doesn't exist. So, those people who are asked to do this job might use some



strategy to accomplish their goal of educating people. They have to go to school establishments to talk to the students about ways to prevent this disease such as abstinence, monogamy, and protection.



Interview With New BHC President, Dr. Richard Underbakke

By: Koffi ATTISSO (Hubert)

Dr. Richard Underbakke is the thirteenth president of Black Hawk College after the interim president Dr. R. Gene Gardner. He



took over his responsibilities in January 2010. Since I was interested in learning more about how Dr. Underbakke has implemented sustainable wind energy at other colleges as well as its social, economical, and environmental benefits, I

chose to interview President Underbakke for my newsletter article. I not only wanted to interview him to learn more about his plan to bring this alternative energy source to the college, but I wanted to learn more about his goals and plans for BHC.

Hubert: What are some of your goals for BHC? How are you going to accomplish those goals?

President Underbakke: I have important goals to reach during my presidency; some of my goals are to continue to organize financial assistance for each student who is qualified, to bring some alternative energy sources that will be helpful to the college, and to create successful strategies for the students. I think we have a good staff here, and I will work with them to reach these goals. I would also like to work with our students. Collaborating with my staff will help me accomplish those goals.



Hubert: What changes and improvements do you plan on implementing at the college?

President Underbakke: I don't know whether we need a big change.

Hubert: Do you plan to offer any new career, certificate or associate programs?

President Underbakke: Since I am working on sustainable wind energy projects, I plan on offering wind energy programs at the college. I hope it will be more



helpful for the college.

Hubert: Is it necessary for you to devote your entire life to your job as president?

President Underbakke: Yes, as I have many goals to reach in college, I would have to devote my entire life to accomplish these goals.

Hubert: How are you going to help your employees and students be successful?

President Underbakke: One of my goals is to see everybody be successful, so I would like to work together with my employees and students to achieve our goals.

Hubert: To achieve your goals every semester, is it important for you to have a budget for the semester?

President Underbakke: Sure, we need a budget for the semester, which will direct us to reach our goals.

Hubert: Thus far, what have been your biggest challenges?

President Underbakke: I didn't go to college until I had four children. I worked hard to take care of my children. My biggest challenge was going to college to make my dreams come true.

Anything can be possible if you just keep plugging away at it.



Hubert: Where do you see yourself at BHC in five years?

President Underbakke: In five years, I hope to have the same position at BHC.

Hubert: What do you enjoy the most about being president of BHC?

President Underbakke: I enjoy being president of BHC because I plan on moving forward on various projects to continue big success for the college.

Hubert: In your opinion, how can students, faculty, and staff make your job as president run smoothly?

President Underbakke: They have to focus on their duties and do them in the best ways. I would work with students and staff to plan together what to do to bring good changes to the college. The

students would work hard to achieve their goals. I would communicate with my staff, students, and faculty to accomplish



successful goals.

Hubert: Do presidents need to work in collaboration with their advisors? How do you go about doing this?

President Underbakke: Yes, I work with people a lot, so I need to work in the collaboration with my advisors. You will always see me on campus.

Hubert: You work with sustainable wind energy, what kinds of work have you done with it?

President Underbakke: Sustainable energy is a very important program, which will help not only the college but also the Quad Cities and the state. We invested more than 2.5 million dollars to support sustainable wind energy.

Hubert: As president of BHC, do you plan to bring any of those alternative energy sources to BHC?

President Underbakke: Sure, it is one of my biggest goals. I plan to bring alternative energy to BHC, which will be helpful for the college. I can assure you that wind energy will be installed in the college in the next two years.



Hubert: As a student at BHC, what advice would you give to me in order to be successful like you?

President Underbakke: Good question. At the campus, we have good instructors; they will help you a lot to be successful. For you, you need to follow your dream; do anything you can do to make your dream come true. You have to be confident without being egotistical, to be flexible and adapt to any change easily, and have a strong desire to succeed. You have to keep plugging away, and have the ability to keep trying until you get what you want.

In conclusion, I enjoyed my interview very much with our new president, who is a very nice person. He is planning new projects at the campus, which will help students be successful. He wants to increase financial assistance for BHC students, and to bring sustainable wind energy to BHC within the next two years. I can say that Dr. Underbakke is a good president for BHC because of his aims for the college. He had good achievements in



his previous college where he was president. I believe that he will do the same at Black Hawk College. I would like to invite every student, instructor, and staff member to work hard to help the president to achieve his goals, which are the keys to success for our college.



DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

By: Koffi Agbossou

In the early 1960's, Africa liberation leaders and founding fathers sought to justify the one-man one-party state and avoid multiparty democracy. They believed that since in Africa people think in a democrat way, they don't need to follow the democracy in Europe or in the USA. Therefore, the consequences for Africa were devastating. Thus, the Black Continent has had dark periods in its history. These dictators, come to power by killing and massacring their populations. That's the case of the Rwandan genocide in which half a million people were massacred. In D R Congo, the war and its consequences killed 5.4 million people, mostly from disease and starvation.

Fortunately, since the end of twentieth century, Africa has started on the road to democracy: a political system in which all the members of the society have an equal share of formal political power. The "one-man, one-party" has given way to multiparty democracy. However, in Africa, I can identify two categories of democracy.

In the first one, elections are free and transparent. All of the candidates have an opportunity to have their voice heard. All of the citizens of these countries are allowed to vote freely without intimidation. They can also protest against the government without fear of persecution. They also have freedom of the press. There is no violence after the elections and even if the president who is in power is defeated, he accepts his defeat and leaves power. To illustrate, Botswana, Benin, Ghana, South Africa, Mali, and Senegal are good examples of this kind of democracy. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela was the first South African president to be elected in a fully representative democratic election. During his presidency, he made efforts to refurbish South



Africa's devastated economy. According to South African History Online 2000, people with access to electricity increased from 32% in 1993 to 55% 1999 during his presidency. Social grants were awarded to 6.8 million people in 1999 compared to 4.5 million in 1993.

Households in formal housing increased to 63.8% in 2000 compared to 43.1% in 1993. His government was praised for its adherence to democratic principles and respect for human rights. He also abolished apartheid. In November 2009, the United Nations General Assembly announced that



Mandela's birthday, July 18th, would be known as 'Mandela Day' to mark his contribution to world freedom. In my country, Benin, the former president Soglo, the first president in Africa, left power after he organized and lost the election in 1996. This country is considered as the model of democracy in Africa. By providing and facilitating the flow of information, the media constitute an important component of the political process in democracies. In Ghana, the mass media have enabled large sections of Ghana's population to voice their feelings especially through letters to editors and interactive radio programs in local languages. When President Obama

President Obama in Ghana



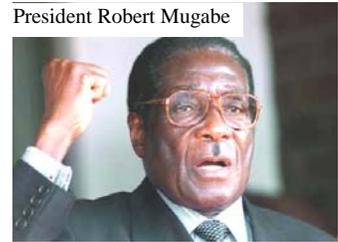
visited Ghana last year, he said: "Both our nations are diverse and vibrant democracies. Here in Ghana, many different ethnic

groups speak many languages but have found a way to live and work together in peace. People here can speak freely and worship freely. You have a robust civil society, fair elections and free press, a growing market economy and a sense of energy and optimism." In closing, he said that he had a chance to discuss not only the future of Ghana, but the future of Africa with Ghanaian president, John Atta Mills.

The second one is democracy by dictators. The rulers of these countries

proclaim that the elections will be free, and people can vote freely, without government interference. Then, on election day, any voter who votes against the ruler is beaten or killed. Finally, if the election results indicate that the current governments lost the election, those results are withheld, the real winner jailed. For example, Zimbabwe recently held elections for president and parliament. Results indicate that the opposition party won the most seats in the government. However, the current president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, has refused to release the results of the presidential contest. Instead, he recounted the votes of some areas that he claims were fraudulent and finally indicated that he won the election. In

President Robert Mugabe



Chad, more than 4 million voters were called to vote on April 2002 to elect all 155 members of parliament. But during the weekend of the elections, the leader of the opposition was killed. The president, Idriss Deby, proclaimed that he won the elections and obtained 112 of 155 seats. According to the site allafrica.com, Gabon held a presidential election in 2009 following the death of longtime president Bongo. The main candidates were Bongo's son, Ali, and opposition leader, Pierre Mamboundou. The election and the period preceding it were marked by violence. According to official results, Bongo's son won the election. Violence flared in the capital, Libreville, after the results were announced, and thousands, fled into neighboring countries.

During these two last decades, the Continent has improved its image of democracy. Some countries have started on the road to democracy by organizing free and transparent elections. However, certain dictators are still in power. In spite of all, it's fair to conclude that democracy is taking root in many countries in Africa.



The Making of Pho: A Vietnamese Tradition

By: *Uyen Nguyen*

Pho is one of the Vietnamese traditional soups, which everyone who lives in Vietnam loves to eat. People eat pho during many occasions such as when they are hungry, hanging out with friends and family, and especially when they are sick. However,



people love pho because the taste of pho is completely unique and different from Vietnam or other soups around the world. The Vietnamese

people value the time spent on the process of making pho, which becomes a very special treat to everyone.

Pho had stuck with the Vietnamese culture for quite a long time. The way people cook pho is influenced by the way Europeans have made stew since France invaded Vietnam in 1858. The originality of pho came from China because the Vietnamese took the idea of how the Chinese cook their noodles since they were the ones who first invented them. On other hand, the Vietnamese recreated a recipe, which contains their main sources such as rice and other spices. In fact, the culture affects the way people cook because the Vietnamese love to eat anything that has such a strong taste since it made them feel like they are eating the food instead of smelling it from far away. For this reason, the Vietnamese people eventually turned pho into their own traditional soup.

Pho is a very healthy soup because noodles of pho are made from white rice; thus, when people eat pho, they can substitute it as their main meal.

Since then, the way people make pho also depends on the generation they live in and the part of the



country where they are from. For example, people who come from South Vietnam eat pho with meatballs, eggs, and many different kinds of vegetable such as fennels and bean sprouts. In fact, the way the South Vietnamese people cook and eat pho is not necessarily the original way since those people who live in the South have a better chance of being influenced

by other cultures such as the Chinese, French, Thai, Korean, or even Italian style. On the other hand, people from the North enjoy pho in an original way by using soybean sauce and red meat that boil in their soup. However, after many generations, the taste and the way of eating pho has slightly changed. For example, when I was little, I used to have a raw egg yolk in my boiling soup, so I could sip it later when I finished my soup. But now, people are not doing that anymore on their menu because they'd rather substitute it for beef or chicken meat.

Although there are many ways people can eat pho, the original idea of pho still stays in form. Making pho requires a long process. First, people have to prepare many seasonings such as cinnamon sticks, cloves, coriander pods, cardamoms, and star anises; these entire seasonings are combined together to create its own special smell for pho. Moreover, the process of making pho usually takes about five hours; thus, the Vietnamese cannot abandon pho, even if they live far away from their home country. For instance, there are many Vietnamese restaurants that serve pho



located in the US. For example, I visited the "Pho Xe Tang" restaurant up in Chicago once. I remember when I was there, the restaurant reminded me of family meals when we gather together to enjoy pho. Because the scene looked familiar and the soup was great, I felt like I was back in the day when I was little.

For now, my mom only cooks pho once every few months. Most of the time, she has to wake up early in order to get everything ready such as preparing the seasoning, boiling the white rice noodles and the water, and frying the seasoning. In order to make pho, my mom has to do everything step by step. First of all, the water has to boil. Sometimes she also uses beef broth to substitute for the water. After that, she boils the bone marrow to make pho smell like meat. The next important step is that she has to measure the seasoning, put the seasoning in the filter, and dump it in the boiling pot; however, the time has to be limited. It cannot be too long or too short of time; otherwise, the soup will either be over seasoned or lack flavor. After that, she also has to prepare the meat. She slices out very

thin pieces of meat and places them on a plate to get them ready to serve with the soup later on. Vegetables (which always take a lot of time to select and clean) are also very important ingredients to go with the soup. Finally, the way people serve pho is the turning point of the meal after everything is done and prepared. Because making pho is complicated and hard, the way people are supposed to serve pho even requires some steps.



First, my mom always places the meat and vegetables on the table. Then, she goes back to the kitchen and pours the liquid soup in each individual bowl that already has white rice noodles in it. At this

point, we get to have our bowl of soup; depending on how we want to eat it, we can either draw the raw meat directly into the soup so we may have a raw flavor of beef, or we could cook the meat along with the soup in a separate pot. Finally, the vegetables are the last thing we include in our soup. Depending on each person, some put vegetables directly into their soup while others eat vegetables on the side.

As you can see, the process of making pho has changed through the generations. Because of this reason, pho has become one of the most delicate noodle soups in Vietnam. To me, I love pho so much because pho has been a big part of my childhood memories. When my family was in Vietnam, my mom didn't cook pho very often, except when we had a holiday. Thus, every time she did, the whole family got to gather together to enjoy the soup. I wasn't only excited for the soup, but I was also excited that pho could help our family build relationships between family members. For example, my uncle's and aunt's family live far away from us, but every time my mom cooked pho, we invited them over and then shared the food. It is a pleasure when everyone in the family sits together to enjoy the soup; they will think of the virtue and patience it takes to prepare the soup. By that, pho has created many

chances for people to enjoy and build up relationships between families and friends.

Pho is very important to the Vietnamese culture



because most people have grown up eating pho. The Vietnamese respect culture, as they pass their own family recipe of pho down to the next generation. Every time the family sits together to eat pho, they can enjoy the soup that they have created.



The First FIFA World Cup in Africa

By: Youchaou Kadri

The 2010 FIFA World Cup is approaching slowly but surely and will be the 19th edition. It is scheduled to take place from June 11th to July 11th in Africa, precisely in the Republic of South Africa, the nation of the pioneer of the Black rights fight, Nelson Mandela. In fact, the qualifications for the competition for the tournament were a series of tournaments organized by the six FIFA confederations: the AFC (Asia), the CAF (Africa), the CONCACAF (North America), the OFC (Oceania), and the UEFA (Europe). After all, thirty-two countries will be in competition with South Africa for the host of this competition, but South Africa will automatically receive this honor.



Truly, the first international soccer tournament or World Cup has never been organized in Africa. In the past, this poor continent has been judged unable to cover the tournament because it involves a big budget for stadiums, hotels, roads, communications, security, etc. However, the Federation International Football (Soccer) Association (FIFA) has a new policy of fighting against discrimination and racism by deciding to choose the host country by rotating between the continents. M. Joseph S. Blatter, a Switzerland citizen, who actually leads the institution, has insisted on the tournament-taking place in Africa since it was held in Asia (South Korea) and Europe (Germany) in 2008.



During a press conference in Durban, South Africa on March 2nd, he said, "There are 100 days to go before the World Cup 2010 will take place in South Africa" (3w.fifa.com/world)

[cup/destination/news](#)). Nelson Mandela added, "Sports have the power to inspire and unite people. In Africa, soccer enjoys great popularity and has a particular place in the



hearts of people. This is why it is so important that the FIFA World Cup will, for the first time ever, be hosted on the African continent in 2010" ([3w.goal.com/en-u-s/news](#)).

Despite the fact that the organization of the World Cup in Africa has faced many critics, the authorities of South Africa continue to spend huge amounts of money on the construction of infrastructures like stadiums, hotels, roads, etc. South Africa has one of the largest sources of natural resources like gold, zinc, iron, etc.; therefore, South Africa has counted on its own budget to build the infrastructures needed. From former President, Tabo Mbeki, to the newest President, Jacob Zuma, the government hasn't hesitated to finance any projects in spite of the struggling economy of the world. Therefore, the country has experienced outstanding progress in construction. Actually, there are ten stadiums finished: Soccer City and Ellis Park in Johannesburg; Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria; the Royal Bafokeng stadium in Rustenburg; the

Free State stadium in Bloemfontein; and the Mbombela stadium in Mbombela.



The biggest issue is security. People continue to worry about the security problem in South Africa. To ensure people's safety, President Zuma said, "South Africa has stringent safety and security measures in place for the tournament." In fact, one thousand surveillance cameras will be used. Also, the police corps will be deployed, enforced by air and land army. However, the late edition of the African Cup of Nations held in Angola from the 11th to the 31st of January 2010 confirmed the insecurity of this zone of Africa. In fact, the Togo National Team was shot by a rebel organization in Cabinda where three people were killed and eleven received injuries. This violence occurred when the Togolese came from the Congo, where they finished their preparations, and traveled by bus to Cabinda where they were supposed to play successfully with Ghana, the Ivory Coast, and Burkina

Faso. The rebels have fought with Angola's government for the independence of Cabinda, which is rich in oil. For them, it was an opportunity to reiterate their demand: self-rule. However, the South African government ensured the soccer authorities and fans that they would reach a compromise with the rebel movement since the death of their leader, Jonas Savimbi, in order to be the host of the African tournament.

Could this violence happen again in South Africa? I believe the country of Mandela, who plays a pivotal role in securing the first-ever FIFA World Cup on African soil, has made great and wonderful efforts to cover the tournament. We just have to wait and watch the event in hopes that Africa will have unforgettable success.



The ESL Newsletter is written by the students in Writing II each semester. The newsletter would not come together, however, if it weren't for the support and guidance from Anne Bollati, ESL Coordinator, and the dedication and creativity of Sheryl Gragg, support staff for the Humanities, Languages, and Journalism Department. We would also like to thank Mike Winter, President Underbakke, and Tiffany Hamilton for their time and support as well. Much appreciation to you all!

--Jenni Wessel-Fields, Instructor

AUTHOR! AUTHOR! AUTHOR!

My name is **Dossou Kowou**. I was born in September of 1975 in Lagos, Nigeria in West Africa. I have seven siblings who live in Nigeria and Togo. I graduated with a degree in languages and philosophy. I had received a diploma as a printer. I was doing this job before I came to the United States in September of 2007.



I started my ESL classes in 2007, and I hope to finish them within the next two semesters. I like traveling, watching movies, and reading; I also enjoy practicing sports, which include soccer, basketball, and volleyball. I spoke French, a little English, and German when I was in Africa. Now in America, I am studying English at Black Hawk College. I left my family in my country. I miss them very much. My dream is to become a novelist and editorialist.

My name is **Donga Soulemana**. I was born on February 15, 1981 in Togo, a beautiful country in the western part of Africa. I am 29 years old now, and I have a twin sister named Naka. My mother is still living in Africa with my siblings. My



father passed away two years before I left my country. I moved to the United States on July 22, 2005 and lived in Chicago for three years before moving to Moline in 2008. I have been living in the USA for five years. I have nine siblings that I miss a lot because I haven't seen them for the past year and a half. I am single, but I have two children. I have been working since I came to the USA. Just recently, I began working as a CNA at a nursing home called Friendship Manor in Rock Island. I speak French, Ewe, Kabye, and Kotokoli. My major or area of academic interest is nursing; I hope one day to earn my Master's Degree in Nursing. I like listening to music, cooking, and cleaning my house. In my free time, I enjoy sleeping. My plans for the future are to finish school and get a job that will help me pay my bills and take care of my family. I would like to have a career in the medical field.

I am **Barhame Zinhindura**, and I am from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). I am 30 years old, the last born in a family of five (two boys and three girls). I came to the United States in December of 2008 through the



resettlement procedure. I am single and don't have children. I do speak French, English, Swahili, Lingala, Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, and Nyanja. My hobbies include reading and listening to gospel music. In my free time, I get involved in indoor activities or have a stroll with friends. I am a student at Black Hawk College and am in the ESL program. My goal in the future is to major in the nursing field.

My name is **Laxmi Khanal**. I am originally from Bhutan, but stayed in refugee camp in Nepal. I have been living in the United States since September of 2008 with my family. I speak Nepali, English, and little bit of Hindi. I like traveling to new places, watching movies, listening to music, chatting with friends, and playing volleyball. (Picture unavailable)

My name is **Gnonkou K. Djekpo**. I'm from Togo. I was born on July 14, 1982 in Aneho, which was the first capital city of my country. I have four siblings which include three sisters and one brother. I studied geography at the University of Lomé before coming to the U.S.A in May of 2008. My biggest dream



is to study political science and become a congress staff member down the road. I enjoy watching science fiction movies, playing soccer, and listening to gospel music. I speak French and English. However, I would like to add Spanish to the list of my spoken languages.

My name is **Larbi Mamouch**. I am from Morocco, which is located in the northern part of Africa. I have three brothers and three sisters. I am single, and I have been living in the United States for ten years. My favorite hobbies are playing soccer, watching soccer games, traveling, and going out with friends. My major was agriculture when I was in my country. However, I am plan on studying computer science when I finish the ESL program.



I am **Apenouga Kodjo Adanlehoussi**, and I am from Afanya-Gbletta, a small town located in the Southeast part of Togo. I was working as an assistant accountant in a consulting firm before moving to the U.S in March of 2008. I will be finishing my ESL classes next fall in order to continue with what I consider best for me in my professional career: accounting and management. I am the oldest son of a family of five that I miss very much since no one lives here with me. When I sit down in front of a computer, the first thing I do is check the latest news in soccer. I spend my free time watching soccer games, especially the English Premier League, on TV and online and listening to music.



My name is **Dodo Soglohun**, and I am from Togo, West Africa. I am married, and I have three kids: two boys and one girl. I have been living in the U.S. for eight years. I was a computer programmer in my hometown. Here, I am attending school to be an RN (nurse). Right now, I am a nursing assistant at Rosewood Care Center in Moline.



Koffi Agbenyo Sessenou is my name, but most people call me by my last name, which is Sessenou. I am from Togo, a small country in West Africa. I was born in Adomi-Abra, a small village between mountains. I have four siblings. In 2000, I traveled to Switzerland to visit my best friend Franz Von Rotz and his wife Hilda. When I went back to Togo, my friend helped me create my computer business center. I taught people computers for five years. I also volunteered serving deaf people for five years. In 2005, by visa lotto, I left my country with my lovely wife, Ablavi, and came to the U.S. I was unable to speak English when I arrived in the U.S. I am married, and I have three kids. I started the ESL program early to improve my English, and I feel better now. Furthermore, I am a polyglot; I speak French, English, ASL (American Sign Language), Ewe, Mina, Akposso, and Ana. I work at Tyson Fresh Meats, Inc. I graduated in Warehousing in 2009, and I am member of PHI Theta Kappa at BHC. I am a powered industrial truck operator at Tyson, and I am also an ergonomic monitor at Tyson. My hobbies are computers, traveling, soccer, and music. I respect people; however, I hate people who lie. All in all, after finishing the ESL program, I plan on majoring in computer science and getting my master's degree. I trust BHC will help me reach my goals. I miss my daughter, Ida, and my friends Franz and Hilda Von Rotz who are important people in my life.



My name is **Abo K Mawuwoe**. I'm originally from Martinique, but I was born in Togo so I'm Martinico-Togolese. I came to the United States in 2005, and I live by myself. I have two sisters and two brothers. I'm not married yet but very soon. I work as an international butcher at Tyson; I speak Losso,



Kabye, Efon, Wathi, Ewe, and Mina. I'm very interested in a major in political science or cinema. My hobbies are volleyball and music, but I love music more. In my free time, I usually read books, listen to music, or play the guitar. I would like to become president of the USA, but unfortunately I'm not native of America. However, I plan on becoming the governor of a state one day. I don't really know what I'm going to become in the future; however, the rest is in the hands of my destiny.

My name is **Koffi ATTISSO**, but I am well known as Hubert. I am from Togo, which is located in West Africa. In my country, I attended school for eighteen years. I received a Master's Degree in Business Management in 2007 from the University of Lome (TOGO). When I was at the university, I



taught accounting in the high school for two years as my part-time job. In my county, I had been a probationer in different companies as an executive accountant. I had also been working at Ecobank-Togo as an audit assistant for almost a year before coming to the United States by visa lottery in May of 2009. I have been living in U.S. for almost ten months. My daughter, Laura, is my happiness. I have four siblings, which include two sisters and two brothers, and I am the eldest of them all. I am living here alone. I speak French, English, and Ewe, which is my mother language. My goal is to receive a doctorate in accounting. After the ESL program, I will continue my studies at Western Illinois University in Macomb in spring of 2011. I like watching soccer games and chatting with my friends on Facebook.

My name is **Koffi Agbossou**. I'm from Benin in West Africa. I was born in 1980 in a small town named Abomey. I grew up with my family in the town where I was born and started school at the age of six. In 2001, I received my high school diploma and left Abomey for the University in Cotonou, the biggest city in Benin, where I was enrolled in the geography department. After four years majoring in territory development, I received my Bachelor's Degree in Arts. In 2006, I started teaching geography in the high school. Toward the end of 2007, I left my country to come to the United States of America. I work at Tyson and go to Black Hawk College to improve my English and get a better job. My hobbies are listening to music, watching movies, and playing soccer. I would like to be a pharmacist or an engineer.



Hello, my name is **Uyen Nguyen**, and I am from Vietnam. I have lived in the US for almost five years. I dream of becoming an animator and working for Disney. Right now, my biggest challenge is English, my second language. Everyday, I practically speak two languages. At home, I have to speak Vietnamese with my parents; however, at school or out of the house, I have to speak English. Furthermore, I hope I can learn a lot from the ESL program and everyone around me.



My name is **Youchaou Kadri**. I am a native of Togo. I have been living in the United States since August of 2008. I live with my small family which includes one little daughter. I work at Tyson Fresh Meat. I am currently in the Information System Program at Western Illinois University. In my free time, I watch soccer games on cable, mostly the European Leagues.



ESL English as a Second Language Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The ESL program is a seven-level program designed for non-native speakers and international students who need English skills to participate in American society, to enroll in vocational or academic programs at the college level, to enter or advance in the workplace, or to earn citizenship. Students will attain and refine language and study skills as well as deepen their knowledge of U.S. culture through a series of specially designed courses that include sentence structure, reading, writing, speaking, listening, pronunciation, and conversation. Students have access to computer, video, and lab equipment through the Independent Learning Center. Individual and group tutoring is available for any student needing help. Students have access to all college services and may participate in college clubs and attend all extra-curricular activities

TESTING:

Before class registration, all first-time students will be given the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency. This test is composed of three segments:

1. Michigan Test of Aural Comprehension (listening)
2. Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (grammar, vocabulary, reading)
3. Writing Sample (short composition)

Placement Scores are as follows:

* Below 60	Levels 1—5 (Beginning)
60—69	Level 6 (Intermediate)
70—80	Level 7 (Advanced)

* If students receive a score below 60, they will be given the ESLOA/CELSA test and a short oral interview to refine placement

PROGRAM PROFILE:

New Arrivals – Level 4

Offered at various satellite locations:
Black Hawk College Outreach Center
Florescente Center (Moline)
First Lutheran Church (Moline)
(Other locations as determined)

Level 5

Offered at the Illinois Employment and Training Center, Moline

New Arrivals – Level 5 follow the schedule for Adult Education classes. Students have several opportunities to register. Call the Outreach Center for specific registration dates.

Levels 6 & 7: Offered at Black Hawk College

Levels 6 and 7 follow the academic schedule. Students enroll in classes for 16 weeks. Please refer to the college calendar for specific start dates.

INTERMEDIATE ESL:

Students who enter this level have decided to begin academic or vocational programs. All reading, writing, speaking, listening, and sentence structure activities are taught in the context of a variety of academic disciplines. Students study the simple sentence from a linguistic perspective, write paragraphs using all rhetorical modes, write college essays, give five-to-ten minute oral presentations, use library resources, listen to academic lectures and take notes.

All courses are web-enhanced. Students attend classes two days a week (1 hour 40 minutes per class) and also complete one credit hour of online instruction for each class*.

* All classes labeled "A" are the online component associated with the face-to-face class.

Courses

All of these courses are offered at Black Hawk College Quad-Cities Campus.

ESL 062/ESL 062A	Intermediate Grammar
ESL 064/ESL 064A	Intermediate Reading
ESL 066/ESL 066A	Intermediate Writing
ESL 067*	Listening/Speaking I
ESL 070/ESL 070A	Communication Skills

* This class is not web-enhanced and is offered only in the evening program and during the summer program.

ADVANCED ESL:

Students in this level advance their language skills and knowledge of the academic culture so that they can enter academic classes or vocational programs. They study complex sentence structure, write documented academic essays and research papers, read a variety of texts from many disciplines, read a novel, listen to lectures and take notes, and give ten-to-fifteen minute speeches. Students at the advanced level participate in a number of special projects. They create an ESL newsletter that is distributed campus-wide, listen to lectures given by Black Hawk College professors, and interview professionals in their chosen fields.

All courses are web-enhanced. Students attend classes two days a week (1 hour 40 minutes per class) and also complete one credit hour of online instruction for each class*.

* All classes labeled "A" are the online component associated with the face-to-face class.

Courses

All of these courses are offered at Black Hawk College, Quad-Cities Campus.

ESL 074/074A	Advanced Reading
ESL 076/076A	Advanced Writing
** COMM 105/ESL 072/ESL 072A	Advanced Grammar
** COMM 100/ESL 078/ESL 078A	Advanced Oral Skills

** Students receive 3 transferable credits for each of these courses.