

# ESL Newsletter

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# ESL NEWSLETTER

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## My Journey to Happiness

By: Pradeep Rai

Can you imagine how your life would be if you were living in a refugee camp? Millions of refugees around the world live in such camps.



The reasons that forced them to live as refugees are wars between nations, civil wars, and political issues. People who fall into these situations have no choice but to leave their

places and find safety for their families. There are lots of people suffering from such situations. As a result, they become homeless and orphans. In the same way, our country, Bhutan, has banished the people who lived in the southern part of the country and has created the highest number of refugees in the world, compared to the population of the country. Those who were driven out from Bhutan have spent their lives in refugee camps as illegal immigrants in Nepal. I am one of them.

Here is my short story about living in a refugee camp; my name is Pradeep Rai. On October 9, 1993, my family began our fifteen and a half year journey as refugees. I never imagined that our fortune would lead us on such a bad road in our lives. But finally, we managed our lives in the refugee camp, where we at least saw a hope of living. I spent most of my teenage life in a refugee camp in Nepal. I'm the youngest son in the family. I



have one older brother, one older sister and just a mom. When I was eight years old, my small family had to forcefully leave our country, Bhutan. That was the biggest trauma of our lives and brought drastic changes

in our lives and in our living standards. For a while (two and half years), we didn't get a chance to continue our education because we didn't know our destination. Besides this, our mother was the only person who could make the decision about our family. My mother said we didn't have enough money to settle somewhere else outside the country and pay for our education.

Nearly 106,000 Bhutanese refugees lived in Jhapa, Nepal, including my family. In the refugee camps, the maximum facilities and



supplements were provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) such as food and rations, health services, and non-food

items. There were several non-governmental organizations which also helped refugees: the World Food Program (WFP), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA) and the Nepal Red Cross. In addition, Caritas provided a free education system in the camp. Teachers were hired from within the camp and helped the younger children. These teachers were provided with an incentive salary of 750 rupees (\$10) per month. Children were able to study up to grade ten in the camp. After that, if a family was able to provide for their children's education, they could send their children outside the camp. OXFAM provided an adult education program in the camp.



Later on, some funds and aid were slowly cut. So, we all needed to depend more on ourselves. People in the camp used firewood,

kerosene, and coal for cooking. Refugees and local Nepalese fought over firewood. Although we were free to go around the villages, we were not allowed to go into the forest area to get firewood. We had to buy it from villagers who charged a lot of money for a few pieces of wood. Usually, people in the camp didn't have enough money to buy firewood. Therefore, despite the rules and regulations, refugees went to the forest without local people knowing it.

Life was so challenging in the refugee camp, especially dealing with financial problems. Although many organizations provided many supplies to Bhutanese Refugees, those supplies were not adequate. In order to fulfill some other basic needs, people used to work. In most families, men used to go for jobs and earned the money for their families. Regardless of their education and experience, they took any work in order to get money for their families. In addition, there wasn't any bright future for the young generation. No jobs. No citizenship. People just had to spend their lives fighting for rights – "The Right to go Home."

I didn't know how my mother maintained everything at home because we didn't have any person who could go outside and earn money for the family.



Our family's lives depended on what we got in the camp. My mother had no husband, who

could go to work outside camp for one month, six months or even for a year depending on how far he needed to go for work.

In the camps, the living environment was not very good. Houses were built so closely together that even the roofs of the houses were attached to each other and were all the same in height and length. The houses were made in line with each other and were grouped separately,

called Sector A, Sector B, Sector C and so on up to Sector I. These sectors were also subdivided into four groups called Sector A-I, Sector A-II, Sector A-III and Sector A-IV. It would continue in the same way B, C, D and so on. In one sub-sector, 80 to 130 families used to live.



The main adversity of living in this kind of camp was contagious diseases, which could easily be spread to all.

The rules in our camp weren't strict, like in other refugee camps around the world. My friend, Shwe, from Burma, said that he was not allowed to go outside of the refugee camp. If anyone was found, he/she could be punished by beating or suspending his/her rations.

Although we lived for such a long time in our refugee camp, we never accepted it as our permanent home. We got an education, but we lived like beggars. So we all started protesting to go back to our motherland. Every effort that we made was unsuccessful, but we kept on trying. Again, no positive signs surfaced. Finally, people started to appeal for resettlement to the UNHCR. Therefore, in 2007, UNHCR and the International



Organization for Immigration (IOM) started working on resettlement of Bhutanese

refugees to seven different countries in the world: USA, Canada, Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, the Netherlands and Norway.

After living fifteen and half years in the refugee camp, my family and I finally made a journey to the United States. My brother and I came here on July 17, 2009, and my mother and sister came on August, 2009. Now we are so happy to be here in the USA.



## Poverty in Africa – How Long?

*By: Jean Baptiste Agbeto*

Africa, my homeland, is one of the richest continents in the world. It possesses all the natural resources necessary for a strong economy: oil, diamonds, gold, iron, uranium, bauxite, silver, and petroleum. Additionally, Africa has abundant trees and tropical fruits it can use to feed its entire population. Yet, despite all these riches, Africa still struggles to rid itself of unnecessary suffering. Nowhere is this struggle clearer than in Somalia.

When I completed some interviews with my Writing II classmates concerning the causes

of poverty in Africa, Deisy from Mexico pointed out that this is due to the lack of jobs, and most people don't get paid enough money. For her part, Marie from Rwanda added that poverty is caused by wars, the lack of land that can feed population, overpopulation, and bad leadership that leads to bad economy. In view of all the foregoing, poverty results from political issues, wars, and poor planning of agriculture.



First of all, political issues such as corruption, diversion of funds, embezzlement, and hegemony cause much of Somalia's poverty. Corruption and diversion of funds are factors which lead to destruction of public property. Unfortunately, corruption and diversion of funds are common among African leaders. This fact is accentuated heavily in Somalia and causes much waste. Additionally, the diversion of funds, especially by some members of the government, has destroyed the economy of this country. For example, a Somali minister once expressly required the contractor to shorten the width of the highway a few inches in order to build another house for himself.

Furthermore, according to Ntamahungiro, author of the book *Build the Fraternities*, the Observatory for the Fight against Corruption and Economic Embezzlement (OFCEE), an association approved in December 2002, has already processed 7,219 cases of corruption and embezzlement so far.

Lastly, the hegemony of rich countries also remains a factor that affects Somalia's wealth. The terms of trade, set by rich countries, often tend to exploit Somalia by giving unfairly low prices for their commodity exports such as sugar cane, frankincense, bananas and others. In addition, foreign companies operating in Somalia also don't help the local economy as much as they could.

Furthermore, the rich countries loot gray matter (the brain) of Somalia by supporting dictatorships even though they talk day after day about defending human rights. As a consequence, these dictatorships force the best minds to leave the country, in order to flee death, prison, and misery in hopes of finding freedom and fulfillment elsewhere.

Although political problems are still the most important cause of poverty, they are not the only triggers of this scourge. Another cause of Somalia's poverty is warfare. Somalia's civil war began a long time ago and continues today. This warfare plunged the country into chaos. The proportion of hungry people continues to increase day after day. Torn by long civil wars, the Somali government has had limited effectiveness, which makes it very difficult to obtain supplies or build the necessary infrastructure. Furthermore, this situation obliged many political refugees to flee persecution and move to another country. Somalia is destroyed by murders, shootings, and suicide bombers, which escalate every day and force Somalia into a high level poverty.

Finally, poor planning of agriculture production impoverishes Somalia. The land is a major problem in Somalia. Although Somalia has a total area of 632,657 square kilometers, much of which is rich, arable land remains unused. Additionally, irrigation is unknown. Even though Somalia is surrounded by water, farmers have no water on their land or need education to lay the foundations of irrigation.



Moreover, diseases and insects are factors of crop destruction and remain a challenge to overcome in the system of agriculture in Somalia. Additionally, many farmers need agricultural infrastructure such as roads, warehouses and means of irrigation. This results in high transport costs, lack of storage facilities



and unreliable water supplies. All these factors conspire to limit agricultural incomes and access to food. As well in many provinces of Somalia, such as Alto Giuba and Burao,

the agricultural means used are rustic and the harvest is very low compared to the needs of the inhabitants. In summary, the poor are hungry and their hunger keeps them in the trap of poverty.

To sum up, these examples show that Somalia's poverty which is due to political

issues, wars, and poor planning of agriculture could be easily solved if the government started proper planning of agriculture and established peace and justice. Many countries are affected by these crises, but few are capable of coping with them. No one wants to see his country destroyed by poverty. In the future, Africa will become aware of her situation and find appropriate measures to overcome poverty, but now, I can only look on and hope that a solution will be found quickly.



## Refugee's Life Poses Many Challenges

By: Marie Uwimana

I was born in Rwanda. Due to the war, I left my country in 1994, and I settled in the neighboring country for almost four years. A few years later, I moved to Zambia, where I lived in a refugee camp for ten years. In 2008, I resettled and have resided in the Quad-Cities since then. Now that I have been living in the Quad Cities for three years, I know that living here is not easy, especially when one is a refugee. Since the first day I arrived in the U.S., I have known the difficulties and benefits of this new life. Indeed, getting a new home, getting a new job and finding a school, and fitting in and building community are the challenges.



To start with, when refugees come to the Quad Cities, most of them do not bring anything with them because they have left behind everything they owned such as homes, cars, furniture, in short, the needs for their entire lives. When I first came here to the Quad Cities, I had nothing except some clothes, but the caseworkers from World Relief Agency came to welcome me at the airport. They took me to an apartment in which I found, beds, seating, food, cooking and eating utensils. The following day, one of the caseworkers took me to the Illinois Department of Human Services to apply for food stamps and a medical card. Not only that, they also showed me how to ride the bus, where the stores were, and how to register in school. Based on the help I got when I came

here, I can testify that refugees who reside in the Quad Cities get as much help as possible.

Although refugees get help when they get here, they also face a lot of problems such as getting a new job and finding a school. First of all, many refugees do not speak or understand English; as a result, it is really hard to find a job; this happened to me when I was looking for a job. Finding a new job became tough for me because I was not able to understand or speak English well; however, Marley Smith, a caseworker from World Relief, helped me. In fact, she tried very hard by taking me to different places where companies were hiring, but many companies could not hire me because I was not able to speak English as well they wanted. Later, I got a job at Seaford Clothing Factory, where I worked as a seamstress.

Secondly, finding a school is important so that refugees can improve communication skills; in this way, refugees take English as a Second Language classes so that they should be able to communicate with other people; for that reason, Theresa, a caseworker from World Relief, took me to register in school where I started learning E S L. In short, getting a new job in the Quad-Cities is not easy, especially for refugees who do not speak or understand English; therefore, school is the key to getting a better job for the future life.



Besides getting a new home, getting a new job and finding a school, fitting in and building community is another goal that refugees have to achieve. With a new home, a new job, and a new school, life can be great. In fact, in gratitude, refugees want to give back to their adopted country. Our Quad-Cities refugee community is an example; refugees, who reside in the Quad-Cities, have built a big community that has ethnic celebrations and ceremonies which are shared with the local population. For example, Guhekesha Amwana, a Rwandan celebration, is the ceremony that takes place seven days after a baby is born; the family of a new born invites friends and neighbors in order to celebrate; moreover, elderly women show the mother of the new born how to carry the baby on the back. In addition, Kwerekana Abana is another ceremony in which parents take their

children to grandparents so that children would know them. In both ceremonies all Africans, Americans, and other neighbors are invited. In short, I can testify that refugees share their lives with their neighbors in the Quad Cities.

In conclusion, I was born in Rwanda, but now I am a fully-integrated member of the Quad-Cities living, working, studying, and raising my family.



## Naming in Burundi

By: *Joyeuse, Uwingabire*

My name is Joyeuse Uwingabire. If you



look at my name, you will not be able to tell anything about my family. Unlike the U.S., in my country, Burundi, we don't carry the last name of our family. We receive names

according to the bad or good situations we are facing, according to Christian tradition and according to the relationship with our neighbors. Within weeks after children are born, they are given names that have meaning and significance for their future. Later, when children are baptized, they are also given Christian names, usually in French.

Some Burundians name their children because of the bad situation they are facing. For instance,



during the war in 1993, parents who gave birth at that time, named their children "Ntambara" (War), "Nyrabuhungiro" (fled), "Ndikunzira" (I am in way). In addition, some parents named their children "Nzikobanyanka," which means "I know they hate us." Other people were christened with names reflecting weariness with Burundi's long war. These children were given the names "Tugiramahoro", which means "Let's have

peace", and "Nduwimana," which means "I'm in God's hands." But when the war stopped, many parents named their children names that showed that they were peaceful; therefore, such names are "Furaha," which means happiness, "Mahoro" (peace), and "Hirwa" (Be happy).

Secondly, Burundians name their children according to their relationship with their friends and neighbors. My mom is a good example. When my mom was in high school, she had a friend called Joyeuse, who was very close to her. They were in the same class. Even when they had a test at school, one of them used to be the first one and the other one used to be the second. If they were at home, they used to be together, doing the housework for



each other. After a couple of years, my mom's friend died because of a car accident. So, when I was born, Mom decided to name me "Joyeuse," which is my Christian name, to keep her best friend's image in her mind.



In addition, some Burundians give names to their children because of how badly they live with their neighbors. If some Burundians live with their neighbors and those neighbors have been mean to them, parents could name their children "Ntahombaye," which means, "I live nowhere." However, Burundians could even name them "Ndekatubane," which means, "Let us live together" to show their neighbor that they are aware of the sentiments they have, and they invite them to change.

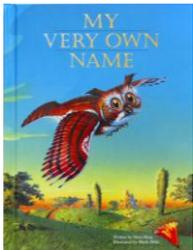
Finally, Christians in Burundi name their



children based on how they believe in God. Even though my mom named me Joyeuse because of her best friend, she also named me Uwingabire, which means "The Gift from God." After Mom had her first child, she wasn't able to conceive a second baby for a long time. So when I was born, my parents praised God for what He had done for them. They asked each other, "Which nice name could we give this baby?" My mom ended up by saying: "We have to thank God for what

he done for us, so in that case, we have to name this baby Uwingabire (the gift from God)." In the same way, the missionaries who brought Christianity gave names like "Nahimana" (Whatever happens is up to God), "Uwimana" (I'm child of God), "Nivyose" (God is everything).

In conclusion, Americans could never imagine that each country has its own system to name its children; therefore, there are some countries like Burundi that don't use the parents' last names. If someone wants to figure out who my parents are or who my sisters and brothers are, he or she is not going to look at my last name because in my whole family, each one of us has his/her own special last name. In a few words, in my country, we give names according to the situations that we are facing, Christian's beliefs and relationships with our neighbors.



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**My Wedding Day**

*By: Weam Alhajri*

"Will you marry me?" All girls dream of the day that a handsome "prince" will ask them this question, and I am one of them. American girls can accept a proposal immediately, but in Saudi Arabia, girls have to go through a complicated process. The tradition in Saudi Arabia is that if a man wants to get married, he must meet the girl's father first and ask him for his daughter's hand. Then the father asks the community about the man's character. After that, he gives the report to the mother, and the mother tells her daughter. Before she says "yes" or "no", she talks to the intended in her home with her parents. We called that day "Alnadrah Alshreyah". Then, if the girl says "yes," the couple starts their engagement time, which is two to five years. Then the couple decides to marry. On July 21, 2011, my husband and I decided to get married, so as any Saudi couple, we planned for three days: Hana Day, Jlawat Day, and the Wedding Day.

First of all, my Hana Day was the most beautiful day in my marriage. On this day, I went to the best salon to have my body waxed. Then, I styled my hair and put on my makeup. As soon as I finished, I wore a colorful dress called "Sari",



which came from India. The hand-made dress had a long scarf. Because I was wearing this kind of traditional dress, I planned to braid my hair. My makeup was simple; I used a mixture of green and orange color. We usually put on simple make-up on this day because the bride should sleep that day in the hall

because she cannot move until the hana dries. After that, I went to the hall that was decorated with traditional artifacts. For example, we use palms, Mobker (kind of traditional perfume), and lanterns. Most of the decorations were green because this color means blessings in Saudi culture. When I sat on the stage, all the women sat around me to make me the center of the circle. Finally, they spent the whole night between dancing and singing while the person was drawing hana on my hands and feet. This hana comes from a flowering plant used since antiquity to dye skin, hair, fingernails, leather and wool; it also called mignonette tree. Most importantly, during this night, the bride and groom shouldn't see each other. The Saudis believe that the couple should miss each other to have a great wedding day, and that is what my husband and I did.

On the other hand, on this day, the men visited my husband in his new home, and they wished a great life for us, the couple. They spent that night between chatting and laughing.



On the second night, I made the Jlawat Day. On this night, I wore a really beautiful dress called "Jalabia," which is long and colorful, and I wore beautiful antique gold jewelry. Family and friends came to wish me a happy life. They ate the traditional foods like: smbosa, warg enab, and falfel. Even though my family tried to make me dance a little, I didn't. In fact, I was worried that I would be tired. I needed to have some rest for the next day. In addition, people were singing until mid-night. The most interesting part in this night is that the married people told their funny stories about

their wedding day to me to make me relax. I heard so many funny stories.

On the other hand, on that night my husband went to the best salon in his city to cut his hair and change his style. Then, all the men went with my husband to a special swimming pool for grooms. Some friends enjoyed swimming and splashing each other, and others were splashing my husband, and it is the funniest part in that night.



The last day, the wedding day is when my husband and I finally met each other. The wedding started separately: one hall for women and another one for men. In the women's hall, I wore my fancy white dress while I was in a private room, and hairdressers came to do my hair and makeup. I did my hair in a simple style; I just left my long hair on my shoulders with a few white flowers on the right side, but I put on pink makeup to be different from the other days. My Russian style dress was long and white. It had a big white flower on my chest, and a long scarf. Some friends went to the stage and made a show of Eastern dance, which is a kind of traditional dance. Then, they turned off the light, and I entered the hall with beautiful lights around me. Some young girls were carrying my scarf when others carried some flowers to scatter on the floor while I was walking. When I started to walk slowly on the stage, the women started making a joyful sound until I sat. Then, the girls started dancing without me for a while until I joined them. I started dancing in the center of a circle of the girls, and I danced with each one in this circle for some minutes. After that, we stopped dancing, and my husband came. He started to walk slowly, and he was holding flowers that he gave to me in the end. When he finally was standing next me, he raised my scarf and gave me a lovely kiss. In this way, the long marriage day ended.



In conclusion, my wedding was really long and tiring, but it is the most beautiful day that I have had. It was three days of wedding, and each day is really special in my life. I was really happy on each day. The Hana Day made me

laugh from the funny stories that I heard on that day; Jlawat Day made me happy when I saw a lot of people that they wished the best for me, and Wedding Day made me happy because it was the first day of my happiest life as a married woman.



## Meal Times, Family Times

By: *Mariama Diallo*

I remember one dinner in Guinea; we were all waiting for my mother's homemade food to eat together as a family. My mother cooked all different kinds of food that day. We were all happy to eat together sharing stories and jokes. When I lived in Guinea with my family, this was a typical scene for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

First of all, in Guinea, I would have a homemade breakfast every morning. At 6:00 am, my mother would wake up and prepare breakfast for my family. We would usually meet at the kitchen table to eat our breakfast. My mother's job was to serve everyone. She served the children "kinkeliba," which were leaves we



would pick from our garden then dry for two days so that they'd be ready to boil for breakfast. When we drank "kinkelaba" or coco, we would add sugar and milk. In addition to "kinkeliba," we would have bread and

butter, and sometimes we would eat bread with beans called "togue." Even though I drank "kinkeliba," my parents would choose either coffee or tea. However, my uncle didn't like either; so instead, my mother would prepare "gosi" and an oat-meal like food for him. When it came to breakfast, we had a lot of choices. Because breakfast was mandatory in my family, we were happy to have many choices cooked by my mother every morning.

Secondly, just like breakfast, my family had several choices for lunch. The most common food we would eat was sauce placed over a staple such as rice or millet. The sauce and staples differ according to region, season and the wealth of the household. Rice, sorghum,



millet and cassava were the most common foods we would eat in my family. Sauces were made with groundnut, okra, and tomatoes; we added fresh or smoked fish, meat or poultry. Also, we would eat chicken soup, peanut butter soup, fish soup, meat ball soup etc...

In addition, the whole extended family would join together. Men would eat from one bowl and the women from another because of our traditions. For example, in my family, everyone had to come back home at noon for lunch. My mother would prepare the food and serve it in two bowls, one for my father and brothers and the other one for my mother and the girls. She would wait for us until we came back from school. My family would eat according to our culture's tradition. The children would sit on the floor while the adults could chose to sit either on the floor or the benches. In addition, throughout the meal, the children would use their hands to eat while the adults could choose their hands, spoon or fork.

After the meal, the children would drink water, or juice, and sometimes my parents would drink a special tea that they called "ataya," which was made at the end of each meal. For dessert, we would eat mangoes, oranges, bananas, apples and other fruits. After we ate, we would pray to God and thank our parents for the food. After the meal, we would converse for more than an hour, and then everyone would return to their duties. Lunch was important to us because it brought us together as a family.

Thirdly, we would eat several types of food



for dinner. In my family, we would start cooking at six p.m. My sister and I would either help my mother prepare dinner or would just follow her instructions and

prepare dinner ourselves. We would usually prepare "akieke," which is like couscous. We would eat "akieke" with fried fish, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions and plantains. In addition to "akieke," we would eat chicken with French fries, beans with meat, meat with salads or spaghetti.

My family would usually start eating after the 8:00 p.m. prayer. The children were not allowed to look everywhere while they were eating. In my family, we would put drinks next to

us, but we would not drink while were eating our meals unless we were choking. However, after the meal, we could drink if we wanted. My sister and I would help my mother to do dishes and clean the place where we ate. Then, we would talk and sometimes our parents would tell us stories about their day.



In conclusion, eating together as a family is common in Guinea. When we eat together as one family, we share stories and jokes. The eating times help bind our family together and give us a way to face the problems of the day. Hopefully, people will think eating as a family is important because they have learned about my family.



## The Real Baghdad

*By: Ahmad Aldulaimy*

TVs, radio, newspapers, and even the Internet have always shown an unacceptable image of Baghdad and the destruction due to war. In fact, it has faced a lot of foreign invasions and internal revolutions for many centuries; however, it has always stayed lofty, shiny, and proud about its values and deep history. Baghdad is the capital of Republic of Iraq and the administrative center of it as well. It is the city where I spent twenty-four years of my life, from childhood all the way until my graduation from the university.

The population of Baghdad as of 2011 is approximately 7,216,040, making it the largest city in Iraq, the second largest city in the Arab Homeland, and the second largest city in Western Asia. It is also considered the center of Iraq for economy, education, and administration. It was built by Al-Mansur in 762-764 in the sixth decade of the eightieth century.



One of Baghdad's Neighborhood

An aerial view shows that Baghdad is almost a round shaped territory. Physically, it is located, as you can see on the map, in the

middle of Iraq. Most of its suburbs are like rural areas planted with different kinds of palm and oak trees. Those trees around both sides are like a chain of audience standing for a marathon. Through the north and the west side, all the way down to the south, the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run like two snakes slithering in the woods. The Tigris divides Baghdad into two sides: Rusafa and Karkh.



*Bridges along with the Tigris*

In Baghdad, the huge system of transportation network carries people everywhere. The transportation network of highways and roads in Baghdad is one of the reasons that Baghdad receives international visitors. My nicer moments were spent walking in Baghdad. The streets in Baghdad are a game of puzzles. Roads are wide and straight, so city dwellers and visitors can easily reach wherever they want to go.

My personal life in Baghdad was joyful and fun. I spent my whole life living on the Rusafa side, which mostly consists of governmental ministries and departments. Thus, I could easily take care of all my paperwork. Also, many famous schools were built there back in 1920s like Al-Markazia and Al-Gharbiya, where I finished my middle and high school.

Most of Baghdad's neighborhoods have special histories and stories. Bab Al-Sharqi is one of my favorite neighborhoods, which is considered the center of Baghdad. It has many ministries and departments that belong to government or private companies. Also, theaters, work shops, malls, mosques, transportation units, restaurants, and even recreation parks are located there. Therefore, you can imagine how crowded Baghdad is by the thousands of people who visit it daily.



*Bab Al-Sharqi*

For pleasurable and beautiful views, visitors can stroll along that amazing river shore of the Tigris River. On both sides, visitors can enjoy restaurants, parks, and river trips. During the summers, I used to spend many hours walking on that shore enjoying the views of the water, which were like murals painted by a professional. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers supply all the water needs, and they reduce the risk of flooding.

On the other hand, besides all this natural wealth, Baghdad is one of the important centers for knowledge and the appropriate place for meeting intellectual people such as scientists and poets. Baghdad has always been known for its centers which created poets, writers, artists, and authors. For example, Bab Al-Moa'dhm is an important district that has historical schools and ancient centers. Both my schools of learning were located there, so I was surrounded by huge places that were built a very long time ago. Accordingly, Baghdad is considered at the forefront of the cultural movement, which makes Baghdad one of the significant cities in the Arab Homeland.



*Martyr Monument*

Sticking with history, Baghdad has many museums and holy places. My favorite museum that I visited many times is the National Museum of Iraq. It has collections of unique and valuable antiquities. These collections include art and artifacts from ancient Sumerian, Babylonian, Akkadian, Assyrian, and Chaldean civilizations. The museum also has galleries devoted to collections of both pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabian art and artifacts. In addition, Baghdad has numerous holy shrines and mosques, like Al-Kadhimain Shrine, which are used for religious ceremonies and anniversaries. Those places are visited by over a million people every week, including my friends and I.

In addition to being the intellectual city, Baghdad is also the economic center in Iraq. It has plenty of factories and companies. Furthermore, since it is located on the trade route through Turkey, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia,

and other countries, all shipments have to go through Baghdad.



*Al-Kadhimain Shrine*

Another important reason that makes Baghdad special and unique is the diversity of the population. Baghdad has always been known for the variety of its people. In Baghdad, Muslim people have always composed the majority of the population although other minorities like Christians and Jews have always lived there. Everyone has the same rights for living and working. Also, people of all faiths have very strong connections and relationships; they usually meet during the time of ceremonies and anniversaries. During my whole life in that amazing society, I was very involved and engaged with social life. People always enjoyed sharing nice moments with others like marriage, parties, and ceremonies. I was always the first one to gather people to go out or do some traditional activities.

In conclusion, we see what hard times Baghdad has faced all through history, and we see how the media has pictured Baghdad bathed in blood. Nevertheless, Baghdad has always stood proud. Baghdad's people will keep the real image of Baghdad, which is enriched by natural and man-made beauty and populated by a dynamic population, close to their hearts.



## Heroes

*By: Yarong Chen*

An old saying in China states: "One who fails to reach the Great Wall is not a hero." Visiting the Great Wall near Beijing has been many Chinese people's dreams, including mine. I dreamed of visiting the Great Wall since I was a little girl. I knew that I would visit the Great Wall some day in my life, but I did not realize it could happen so soon. It happened on May, 2008, only two years after I graduated from college and became a junior high school teacher. This fantastic trip changed my life, and

it has become one of the most memorable times in my life.

I lived in the southern China city of Ningbo, located two hours from Shanghai by car. My boyfriend, Bill, traveled between the U.S. and China all the time. On one of his business trips from the



U.S. to China in May 2008, he had to fly to Beijing, on a weekend, arriving Saturday morning. He asked me to meet him in Beijing and visit the Great Wall together. I happily accepted his invitation because I had heard and read a lot about Beijing and the Great Wall. Beijing is the capital of China, and it is the country's political, cultural, and educational center. It has been the center of China's history for centuries. Many old buildings in Beijing have national historical significance. The city is renowned for many historical places, such as the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, and the Great Wall and so on. Now Beijing is China's second largest city after Shanghai. I had been longing for a chance to go there, so I was very excited to finally have the chance.

Although Beijing in northern China is far



away from Ningbo, I decided to go to Beijing by train instead of by air because I wanted to see the landscape along the way. China

has one of the biggest and busiest rail networks in the world, and trains link almost every town and city. In general, taking a train is a safe, comfortable and an inexpensive way to travel around China. I bought a train ticket for 280RMB, about 35USD. The trains in China were not very fast in those days, so it took me thirty-eight hours to get to Beijing early Saturday morning. Bill arrived even earlier and was waiting for me at the train station. We went to the Great Wall after we checked into International Youth Hostel and left our luggage there. It took a little more than an hour to get from the hotel to the Great Wall. We booked a taxi for the round trip and negotiated a good price at 600 RMB (about eighty-five dollars). If we had chosen to take a bus to the Great Wall, it

would have been much cheaper, but it would also have taken much more time to get there.

There were many tourists on the Great Wall already when we got there on this beautiful mild, sunny day. The sight of the Great Wall endlessly winding up and down the mountain ridges was breathtaking. The Great Wall is a series of fortifications running in general east to west through the entire northern part of China. It is made of stone, brick, tamped earth, wood, and other materials, built originally in part to protect the northern borders of the China against nomad intruders in ancient time. When I stood on the Great Wall, I began to really feel its massiveness. It was hard to imagine how many people and how much work it took to build such a gigantic structure without the modern construction equipment! We walked along the Great Wall for a long time, up and down the mountains, and we enjoyed the beautiful view of



mountains from the Great Wall. We could see mountain peaks near and far. However, we knew we could not walk all the Great Wall because when we looked, we could not see the end. We were

happy that we walked a couple of hours. We told ourselves we were on the Great Wall, so we were heroes. We cherish the many pictures we took there. Those pictures inspired us that our relationship was like walking on the Great Wall. It would be a long, long way with many tough climbs leading to the happy ending; in the meantime, we would see the most beautiful view when we walked together, hand in hand, and heart to heart.

We hung out on the Great Wall for over three hours before we returned to the city of Beijing. We

visited two neighboring attractions, Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City, in the afternoon and evening.



Many emperors in Chinese history ruled China from here. We went through the historical buildings and courts of the Forbidden City. We

imagined ourselves sitting in the emperor's throne facing the kneeling subordinates or standing on top the Gate of Heavenly Peace reviewing thousands of generals and soldiers in Tiananmen Square.

We had the famous Beijing duck dinner after visiting Tiananmen Square. Because we were in love, everything tasted better on this day. This dinner put a period on a perfect day. We were engaged soon after our trip to Beijing. My life was totally changed because of this wonderful trip.



## The Rock

*By: Keshab Acharya*

Sari M. Acharya, my grandmother, is a very important person in my life and always has been. My grandmother is the most genuinely generous and kindhearted person I've ever met. She is eighty-two years old. She was born in the Himalayan country, Bhutan.

My grandmother exudes good-naturedness. She has bright brown eyes that twinkle when her gigantic smile emerges, which is most of the time. She has a laugh that can elevate even the darkest mood. She has always just been there for me, and everyone else that is in our family. She is "the rock" of our family. She keeps us all up in our times of hardship and makes us all laugh when we have an amazing day. She tells me that she loves me all the time even if I do something she doesn't like. Her only goal in life has been to keep her family happy. She is an all-around great person. My grandmother faced hard times that occurred in three different stages of her life.

As my grandmother was born in Bhutan in the Himalayan region. She had very tough time to survive due to the lack of basic needs. According to her, there was no transportation and electricity in her village. She used to work long hours in the small family farm. She used to wake up early in the morning at 6:00 AM and go to the farm with all of her traditional equipment such as axes, little knives, and other ploughing



materials. She ploughed the land with oxen. After a long strenuous day, she returned home at 6:00 PM in the evening. She had to cook food for all the family. According to her, she gave birth to her children under the tree when she was working. At that time, she had nobody there to help. Since her husband worked outside, he



wasn't able to share in the work on the farm. He rarely came home to visit her. So, all of her children were born alone without the help of anyone. Can you imagine this situation?

In this way, she raised her family with a lot of difficulties in her life. Later when her kids were grown up, the government told her to leave the country. Otherwise, they announced that they would kill her.

Secondly, suffering all this, she left her native land in 1992 with four children to settle in Nepal, leaving only one of her married daughters back in Bhutan. She became a refugee for the first time. My grandmother rented a truck for 500 rupees (\$7.00) and loaded up her kids and grandkids and whatever clothing she could. My grandmother drove via India and finally reached to the eastern part of Nepal.

Once again she and my grandfather had a really hard time to manage everything at the beginning to settle in the refugee camp. In that critical situation, she stretched her hands to many people to ask for food to feed her kids.

Later on, UNHCR provided her with food. So, she had to face a lot of difficulties with a different lifestyle and community. In this way, she spent twenty years of her life in a refugee camp.



Thirdly, taking all this into consideration, she decided to come to the U.S. in 2008 as a refugee with all of her five kids and twenty-six grand kids. Then she started her paperwork and medical procedures, through IOM (International Organization for Migration). As a result, she left

to the third stage of her life. She arrived in the United States with most of her family. When she arrived here, she didn't really feel comfortable because she couldn't speak English at all. She had no response to anyone



who came to meet her. As such, she started feeling frustrated remembering her past days that she was able to solve all kinds of problems that she faced. So, now she feels like she is a person who cannot talk but just see. However, she also feels that she has a good living in peace with her kids and grandkids around her. Despite her frustration, she encourages her kids and grand kids to do better to get success.

To conclude, my grandmother continues to be the rock in our family. She is very important to me and our family as a source of inspiration and live role model for every one of us. We always respect her with full dignity and honor. She completed her life through three drastic changes that have defined her life as a true drama.



## The Man Who Ate Everyone

*By: Guljahan Arazmammedova*

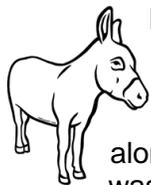
This story, "Boven Chishik," which teaches people to communicate and be polite toward others, is known by young and adult people in my country, Turkmenistan. In Turkmenistan, this story is told to all children in the day care and in schools. When I was just five years old, I heard this story from my grandmother and at the beginning I was scared, but later I understood what this story means and wants us to learn. Later, I started to spread this story around the world telling it to my international friends and classmates.



Once upon a time, in the village "Korpejik," there was an ordinary man, Boven Chishik, who always shared with people and was nice to them, but he was heavy-built. One beautiful day in the morning, he was giving children candies and cookies until one of his neighbors came and abused him calling him "Kirli Chishik"—"Messy fatty." After being bullied, he became the aggressor, and he began to relate to people differently, specifically, in a rude and impolite way. He started shouting at everyone even at children and students when he saw them coming home from school. Later, people began kicking him, and Boven became very angry and could not control himself. Finally, he started to

eat everything that he found on his way including humans and animals.

While he was walking around the village, he would eat a lot of people and some animals because of his anger. His first meal was one old man with a donkey, Boven Fatty told him: "Dak-dak etdim dalak iydim, sen nira baryan Garry



Baba?" Seni iyman kimi iyeyin?! Lak-luk edyar"—"Where are you going old papa? I'll not let you go. I will eat you up!" then he ate him up along with his donkey. The next victim was a shepherd with his five sheep.

Boven Chishik repeated what he said to the old man with the donkey, and he ate the shepherd with his five sheep, too. Later, Boven met fifty-



ladies who were taking water from the river. Boven first talked to them then he told them: "I ate up old man with his donkey, a shepherd with five sheep, and where are you going ladies without me?!" Then suddenly he ate all them up. After the fifty ladies, Boven Chishik met twenty unlucky guys that were coming from school. When they saw Boven's huge stomach, they were scared to death and tried to escape from him, but it was too late. Then, Boven Chishik was going toward the one old and small house when the old crow, which was sitting on the tree, croaked just once. Boven suddenly grabbed him from the tree and ate him up.

Finally, while walking along, Boven caught an appetizing smell of freshly baked bread, and he followed the smell. The smell of bread led him to the old lady's house where she was baking bread.



The old lady was afraid of him, but suddenly a thought popped into her mind. The old lady

tricked him by saying: "Boven Chishik garash men hazir sana chorek getirip bereyin"—"Boven wait a minute here, I'll bring you some bread to eat." The old lady took a big fork instead of the bread; while she was coming, Boven fell asleep. The old lady stuck the fork into his enormous stomach while he was sleeping. The old man with his donkey, shepherd



with his five sheep, fifty-ladies with vases, twenty guys, and the old crow that was sitting on the tree burst from his stomach. The old lady released those people whom Boven ate up with

anger. All of the people that were released asked and received forgiveness.

To sum up, the story about Boven Chishik details how he was taunted, how he became angry, and how he was scared. From this story, children learn how to communicate, to be polite, and to share with friends. Teachers tell this story to children who attend day care and elementary school. Also, this story gives a good explanation and teaches skills when it comes to being nice to one another.



## American Dream (or Not)?

By: *Marine Vidalenche*

French TV like "TF1" or French newspapers like Le Monde show us images of the U.S. culture. From these sources, the French create stereotypes of the U.S. These kinds of stereotypes are created by people who think in two different ways: people who think about the American Dream, and others who think about the personality of Americans.

Firstly, when I ask my French friends about the U.S.A, they talk about the American dream. A lot of French would like to live here because they see several opportunities in terms of jobs, more money, and fame that we can observe through TV shows and company success stories like Microsoft and Apple. Also, I remember before coming here, I had a friend, Sophie, who said to me, "You are lucky to go in the USA. I would like to live there." Every time I talk to this friend on the phone, she asks me how I live here, or what I do. She is very passionate about the U.S.A like most French people.



In contrast, some people think about the behavior of Americans, which is well-known in the world. For example, they think that Americans are extremely individualistic; therefore, they talk to nobody, and they do all their daily tasks alone. Also, the French think that Americans are cold-blooded people especially because they are independent. For instance, I remember my friend, Laurent, who hates the U.S.A, said to me, "Americans are not sensitive people; they don't care about others.

Americans care only about themselves.” This sentence sums up the idea the French have of Americans. Moreover, they think that Americans are hardworking, which is true. For instance, every day I see my teacher working very hard; she has a lot of papers to check, and she has to reply to several students. Also, she is at school starting at 7 a.m. to work.

Finally, I have lived here for six months, and I can say that stereotypes don't really define the Americans. Americans are extremely



friendly; for example, when I shop, every time that an employee sees me looking for something, he comes to me and asks me if I need help. This example shows that Americans are caring

people. Also, when I enter or leave a store, employees say “Hello” and “Goodbye” to me every time. Moreover, Americans are very hardworking; they are not afraid to work a lot of hours. For instance, most Americans have several jobs at the same time, like my friend Jane who works in the morning as a salesperson, and in the night as a janitor. Also, I can say that Americans are a little bit individualistic because they always want to be the best; for instance, when my boyfriend is in his school, he sees some Americans comparing their grades and saying “I am better than you.” They always want to be better than others.

In conclusion, stereotypes are present in each country and spread through the media, but they don't represent total reality. People have to create their own opinion of the country or inhabitants because the stereotypes are generally incorrect like in France when the French think that Americans are cool-blooded. Finally, living in the U.S. has helped me to see for myself how Americans are and what behavior they have.



### **A Memory Not To Be Erased**

*By: Yawa Eklou*

To get a better life, many people migrate to the U.S. As we all know, the USA is highly

developed economically and technologically, and it is a different world to most immigrants. Thus, immigrants face various challenges during the first and second year of their entrance into the USA. After I moved to the U.S. in July of 2009, I registered at Moline High School.



The first day of school, I was confused because I had different expectations. I had the hardest time in my life, but I persevered and it made me who I am today.

My first challenge was my lack of English proficiency. The language barrier was very difficult for me. I couldn't speak English and meet new friends. My English was so bad that I couldn't ask for help when I got lost. In the same way, I couldn't make friends because of my English; for this reason, I used to be alone. I used to think about how I was going to deal with all those problems. I had no answers.

The first idea that came into my mind was that I would go back to my home country, but I also thought about all the opportunities that I could have in this country; so I tried to persevere. Also, my English teacher and administrators were very helpful to me. They made me practice English by asking me questions, and I tried to answer them. The ESL teacher, Ms. Wendy Pillichowski, always said, “It is by practicing that we can make our English better.”

Second, when, I first entered Moline High School, I thought it couldn't be a high school because the school was so big with more than 1,500 of students. It looked like a university in my home country, Togo. The education system was so different; school started at 8:00 a.m. and ended at 3:00 p.m., which was very confusing to me because in my home country, school is from 7:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For instance, when the bell rang, I was so scared because in my home country, we didn't use those kinds of bells. Luckily, I entered my first class on time, but guess what? No one brought school bags into class. I was the only one, so everyone was looking at me. How ashamed I was that day!

Next, in the classroom, I was confused because school was different from all my expectations. At Moline High School, students change classes, and they have seven courses for the day. It was very hard for me because in

Togo, students have five courses, and they stay in the same classroom. Also, the first class activity was unusual for me. On first day of school, the teachers ask the foreigners to introduce themselves. I was so nervous because



I didn't know what I was supposed to say. When my turn arrived, I said my name, and I just smiled because I didn't know what to say. During the course, students used to answer and ask questions, but I couldn't. I was like a visitor in the

classroom. When I thought to myself, I used to say, "Yawa, don't worry. You will be fine."

Then, clothing was surprising for me. At Moline High School students used to wear any kind of clothes. I was so shocked because in my home country students had uniforms that we were supposed to wear.

Lunch time was also very hard for me. When the bell rang for lunch, students were happy. In contrast, I was nervous because I didn't know how to identify the food, and there were a lot of people in line. I was so lucky that they served chicken. For this reason, I used to eat chicken all the time. What a pity! Sometimes, I pointed to the food I wanted. After getting the food, I had a problem finding a place to sit because American students usually sat with friends in the cafeteria. I had to look for empty seats or look for people from Africa to sit with. Sometimes I couldn't even find an empty place, so I would just throw the food in the garbage and go back to class. As a consequence, I was so hungry that I ended up getting sick.

Finally, outside of school, I had problems doing my homework. I used to spend six hours in order to do my homework. Sometimes I used to cry because I didn't have any idea of what to do. I used to watch TV and to read books so that my English could be better, so that I could show my new teachers what a good and hardworking student I had been since my childhood.



To sum up, even though I had a very hard time at Moline High school, I learned to enjoy my experiences. It made me a better person. I improved my English and got my high school



diploma. Even more, I was part of the Honor Society Group of Moline High School. I think people all wish they could forget some bad memories in their lives; however, all of life's experiences, bad and good, make people who they are. Erasing any of life's experiences would be a great mistake in human life.



## A Strong Tool

*By: Imelda Martínez de Vega*

Tutors in the computer lab of the ESL program (English as a Second Language Program) are a strong tool for all non-native speakers. Without our tutors, Anne Ney, our morning tutor, and Tim Nichols, our evening tutor, many of the ESL students would have a hard time finishing their assignments, including myself.

Thanks to our tutors, who has not received a good grade? When we have an assignment that we have never seen before in our past classes, they become our only chance to get a



good grade. For example, when I was taking Writing I, my teacher gave me an assignment in which I had to find all the verbs, adjectives, adverbs, appositives, adverbs

clauses, and adjective clauses. This assignment was so difficult for me because I knew about verbs, adverbs, and adjectives, but not adjective and adverb clauses since I never learned this part of the grammar when I was in middle school in Mexico. However, thanks to Anne, I got a good grade.

I had the opportunity to interview both of our tutors, Anne and Tim, and I realized that they are patient and humane. First, they are patient because English is not our first language, and we have problems when we ask questions. However, since they have patience, they try to understand what we are trying to say or ask.



Second, they are humane because we not only have problems with the idiom but also with personal issues; some of us do not have other people to ask for advice other than our tutors. For example, Anne

said," Some students feel confident to come and tell me that they do not like how their teachers are." She continued, "They feel confident because they know that I will not say anything."

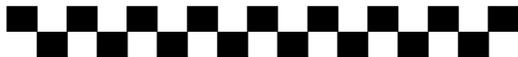
Anne loves her job because of the students themselves. She explained, "The students are motivated, very appreciative, and I enjoy working one-on-one also because I do not have to grade the students, and I do not have to keep attendance." Anne has many memories of students that she has helped, but she remembers Moussa, a special student that she always helps. When I talked to Moussa, he said, "Anne is very important person to me because sometimes I have hard time doing my homework, but Anne is always there to help me."



In the same way, Tim said, "I like my job because it is a challenge for me, and also it is good to see the development of the students." Tim has memories about students, too. For example, Tim said, "I remember when Olive Chung came to ask me for help." Ms. Chung was writing an essay about her grandmother, and she did not know where to start. When I asked Ms. Chung about how Tim helped her she said, "I did not how to write an essay, but Tim helped me to write the brainstorm, to write the outline, and to write the details." Furthermore, Olive said, "Tim helps me with the grammar when I am writing a paragraph; he helps me a lot." These are only a few examples of how these two important people help in the computer lab.



Having these two strong tools in our computer lab makes our assignments and personal issues less heavy, so we can keep going forward toward our goals without so many problems. So, next time you have an assignment that is giving you a hard time, do not hesitate to visit our tutors, and let them know how important their help is to you.

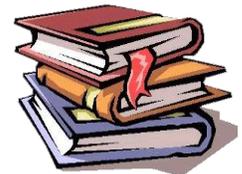


## Education, the Key to a Productive Life

By: *Adjovi Sedjro*

I am from Togo, a small country in West Africa, and I grew up in a well-to-do family where education is the concern of everyone, especially my parents. When I was four, they would tell me how important education was and how they became successful thanks to their determination as a result of their love for education. Today, all my siblings are successful due to their endeavor to make it in their educational field. Why am I interested in being educated? Why do people leave their countries to study abroad? Is education really the key to success as people commonly say?

In Togo, everyone's desire is to be educated because education makes him or her literate. Though people wish to be literate, in Togo, a lack of a reliable educational opportunities impedes their progress, which leads to poverty. People do not have the means to send their children to school even if they want to; as a result, the level of illiteracy increases. Illiterate people are just like uncultivated soils, for their minds may not possibly be capable of conceiving any great idea for the benefit of mankind. Fortunately, my parents are educated today due to my grandparents' sacrifice. They were sent to school and worked hard to succeed in their academic field. Consequently, they became successful and kept encouraging my siblings and me to focus on our education. My siblings, on the other hand, had a chance to study abroad. When they completed their programs, they came back to Togo, where they built many schools in order to help the poor and promote education. I am grateful to my parents because I can now read and write thanks to them. Through education, I have acquired knowledge, learned things that I would never have assimilated if I were uneducated. Obviously, education does not only make me literate but also makes my life better. In addition, education expands my chances of finding a better job in the future.



Finding a good job in the future is my dream. In Togo, people are not paid per hour as in the U.S. Employers fix a monthly salary that employees agree on. However, people with a college degree usually earn much more than

those who have just a high school degree. Since my dream is to become a translator, I need to further my education and have at least a master's degree in order to have a well-paying job in the future. But there is a problem when it comes to finding a good job in Togo. For instance, I know many literate people with good qualifications who are still unemployed due a lack of employment. But, I will definitely be presented with more job opportunities and benefits than illiterate people. My father has told me that if a literate person and an illiterate one go for a job interview, the employer will never give the job to the uneducated person, for there are certain requirements everyone must follow in order to find a job in every company; those requirements do not favor illiterate people. All the examples mentioned above show that anyone who makes progress in his education always finds his or her niche in life. Yet, becoming a successful person in the future is the last reason why education is important to me.



Through education, I can become very successful because “education is the key to success.” In my opinion, success means having a good job and being wealthy. In order to achieve that success, I need to work hard. Through education, I will be able to communicate my ideas more clearly because communication skills are essential in any job. No matter what career I choose, I need to learn the procedures and skills related to that job. For example, since I want to be a translator, I need to learn the basics of translation at school in order to be successful in that field. In addition, education will enable me to interact with other people and learn from their experiences. Education is important in every area of my life because I cannot become a translator and be wealthy without being educated.

The points mentioned above are the reasons why education is important to me. Education always generates literacy, job opportunities and success. I am very grateful to everyone who has supported and guided me and, more importantly, to my parents who never stop encouraging me throughout my educational



endeavors. Thanks to everyone for making me a better person.



## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

By: *Shwe Nay*

We fight obstacles every day in our lives; we strive to defeat them, and we also plan ahead for our future. Sometimes we feel twenty-four hours a day is very short. If we could have forty-eight hours a day, it would be better to manage our time for fighting all our obstacles. All the challenges and obstacles are different depending on our situation. In my case, I am new to the country; I don't know the language well, so it is difficult for me to find a better job. An entry-level job is always hard and pays less. However, I also plan ahead for my future, but managing my time when working, going to school and raising a family at the same time is difficult.

First of all, it is hard to manage my time when I have an entry-level job with an awful schedule. I consider that my job is hard because it is physically demanding. I always have to lift heavy items and walk very fast all the time. I work at Jumer's Casino and Hotel as a barback. I have to get all drinks from the warehouse to the Oculus Bar, poker room, Edje (Night Club) and Self Service Station.



For the Oculus Bar, I have to get, liquor, beer, juice, and pop. I usually carry more than fifty cases of beer a night. One case of beer contains two dozen bottles and one bottle contains 12.oz. Most of the pop cases weigh fifty pounds. Even though it is hard job, I do not receive a good salary. I work very hard using physical strength, but I don't earn enough to pay my bills.

Sometimes, I am not happy with my work schedule because it can change any time without any notice. Last month, I used to start working at 7:00 p.m. on Fridays, so I set up my appointment for the interview with Rock Island Housing Authority at 1:00 p.m., but my schedule changed from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m. without any notice. I got in trouble, so I talked to my supervisor. He told me



I could come late, but I would get late points. Working late and getting up early is hard for me.

Working is not the only hard part for my life, but going to school is also hard for me. I always come back from my job late. I finish my job at 3 o'clock in the morning, drive myself home, and eat breakfast, so I go to bed at 5 o'clock. To be ready for my school, I need to wake up at 8 o'clock. It is would be better for me if I only had two days of school, but



I also take gym class. According to my doctor, due to my poor health, I need to work out five hours a week, and lose ten pounds in three months, so I go to school every day.

Moreover, online class is difficult for me because I don't have internet at home. To complete all my online work, I need to go to school and do it in the ESL lab. I also don't have a printer at home, so I need to go early to print out my paper work for the online class, and Black Hawk College website sometime is down, so to finish online class on time is a real challenge for me.

Thirdly, raising my family well is important and difficult because I am the head of the household.



Therefore, I am responsible for everything in my family. It is really difficult to live in an English-speaking country without knowing English. Since my wife can't speak English, I have to be responsible for all

hospital appointments. Since I am not a healthy person, I have a lot of hospital appointments, too. In addition, I have a one-year-old son, and he has to have checkups with his doctor every three months; now he has more appointments to see the dentist. He is a little naughty because he always wakes up in the middle of the night and cries, so it makes me wake up, too. In the morning, after he wakes up, he wants me to hold him for at least one hour before he starts playing. I need more time to spend with my family.



In conclusion, having a full-time job, going to school and raising a family at the same times is really hard for me. Working means to solve

the current problems; going to school means planning ahead to defeat the obstacles in the future; taking care of a family means to build love and trust between family members. I am not the only one who has faced these challenges. I will be interested to see how my future will be after I defeat all my obstacles.



## The Bright Side

By: *Vignon Benedicte Dossougbedje*

When I was in Reading I, I read an article about enthusiasm called "The E-Factor" that I appreciated a lot. It was written by Mary C. Hickey. I was very impressed by this article because it talked about what positive thinking is and how being positive can help people live good lives.

In this article, the author explained that a positive person is someone who always takes the bright side no matter what happens. For example, a positive person considers that he has a good economical situation, and he is the luckiest person in the world even though objectively it may not be the case. He also added that thinking positively helps people to succeed and to be happy in their lives.



After reading this article, I started applying positive thinking to my life. For example, before coming in the U.S, I had already completed my studies and was working in my home country. So, I thought that I would continue with my career as soon as I got here. However, after I came here, I was disappointed because American English is different from British English, which I learned in my home country. For this reason, I had to take ESL classes to learn American English before registering for my major. Then, I started studying ESL classes to improve my language, but I was asking myself, "Will I be able to speak this language one day?" But when I remembered the article about enthusiasm, I told myself, "I can get ESL classes done, and I will not spend more than one year to get them done." After this decision, I took the Michigan Test and started ESL classes last summer. Last semester, I took three classes, and my friends told me that I couldn't get them done. But I did it because I told myself, "It's not

impossible.” Now I’m in my last semester of ESL, and I will start with academic classes next semester. I have met my goal to be finished in one year.



But I’m not the only positive person. Some of my Writing II classmates are also positive. For example, my classmate, Shwe, is an optimistic person who changes his self-talk to stay positive. He said, “When I feel overwhelmed, I say to myself, ‘Take it easy’ to change my thought in a positive way.”

Another positive person is my classmate, Marie Uwimana. She said, “I believe that everything can be possible for me. I do not consider the word impossibility.” Like Shwe and Marie, my husband is also a positive person, but he has a different way to stay positive. He said, “I look at people who are not doing as well as I do to consider that I’m better than someone else.”

Being positive is a powerful instrument. It can be compared to a road that takes people to the country of success. Being positive increases happiness. So, the right thing to do is to act positive because if you are always positive in your life, your confidence is really high. Take it from me and my classmates. We know what we are talking about.



## “Seeing is Believing”

*By: Deisy Puente Tapia*

Every kid has a dream in his/her life. When I was a little girl, I dreamed that I was going to be a nurse. When I went to the store, I always wanted to buy what a nurse would use like stethoscopes, masks, alcohol, and syringes. But now I’m not a child. Now that I am older, my dream is still to be a registered nurse. I have held those words in my heart since I was a little girl. However, I really wanted to be sure before I launched into the difficult nursing studies, so last August, I asked myself, “Do I really want to be a nurse?”



To answer that question I decided to do a job shadowing experience. Job shadowing is a very exciting way to find out if the career you want to take is right for you. Job shadowing involves spending a period of time with a

professional, which in this case was a nurse, observing everything she does in her daily routine. At BHC, this can be done with the help of Marcia Duham. She is the person to contact if you want to do a job shadow. Marcia can be found at the Career Services Center at Black Hawk College.



After arranging my job shadowing in the Career Services Center, I met nurse, Jodi Lindstorm. I introduced myself, and she took me to get dressed in a nurse’s uniform. I felt like a real nurse. Later, I followed her to take care of a newborn. She did the procedure that is done for new babies. The baby was placed in a warmer. Then, she gently suctioned the baby’s mouth and nostrils. Also, she clamped the umbilical cord. She checked the baby’s weight, checked for any birth defects and checked the color of the baby’s skin. Then, she put a wristband on the mom, dad, and baby. Until that moment, everything was exciting, but just before I was about to leave, another baby was about to come into the world by C-section. Jodi, the nurse, asked me if I would like to stay and go in to the OR (Operating Room). Of course I said, “OR.” I was happy that I was going to watch a C-section in person for the first time. I put on a sterile gown and went into the OR. There were about six or seven people there. I saw everything from beginning to end. Finally, I went home with the experience of what is a regular routine of a nurse.

Do I still want to be a nurse? Now I know the answer, “Yes!” My experience was very helpful in confirming my decision. I have always wanted to have a career in which I could change lives and that would make my life interesting. I absolutely love to help people. I think that it is the most fulfilling way to live. In nursing, we will find endless job opportunities because nurses are in need all the time. I will keep this experience in my heart, and I will use it to motivate me to keep studying hard to make my dream come true.



To conclude, this experience will help me make my dream come true. I encourage you to

contact Marcia Duhm, and schedule an appointment so you can do a job shadow. This will help you decide if your chosen career is the right career for you before you start studying. **Marcia Duhm** is located in the Career Services Center at Black Hawk College, in Building 1, down the stairs from the library. I really recommend that you do a job shadow. This helped change my life. It will change yours!



## THE QUEST FOR STUDY IN USA

*By: Jouriace Yves Alain Acakpo*

Every year, many people around the world come to the USA for different purposes: business, holidays, family visits, and study. I am one of those who came to the USA for education under the F1 status. For being here as an international student, Adama Ouattara, Babanam Lequissim, I, and many other international students have to meet some requirements before we arrive here. Furthermore, our stay here is related to a very important term which is “keep status valid.” Finally, there are two options available after our studies in the USA.

The first step to obtain a student visa (F1-status) to study in U.S. for me was to find a school that met the standards of educational quality. I came across BHC, and I started to



exchange e-mail with **Juanita Zertuche**, advisor to the Office of International Students. She asked me to send a financial statement of my parents or sponsor and proof of my high school

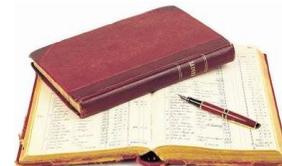
diploma. To understand the usefulness of these documents, I interviewed Juanita Zertuche.

AJ: What is the purpose of verification of financial statements for international students prior to admission?

ZJ: The most important aim of asking for financial statement is to make sure the students’ sponsors or whoever supports them has sufficient funds to cover the student tuition fees, and all the living expenses during his stay

AJ: Why is it so important to check for the availability of funds before the international student’s admission?

ZJ: It is one of the most critical requirements mandated by the Department of Homeland Security. It is very important because we focus so much on the quality of education that



we want every student to study in the best, stable, and appropriate conditions, so to focus on his/her purpose here, which is to study. In addition, to make sure the family of the student has the responsibility of supporting the cost of education.

AJ: Why do you request a high school diploma for international students?

ZJ: The high school diploma is a requirement to enter college, so as Americans do, international students also provide a proof of their background knowledge to make sure that once they will be accepted to study at BHC, they can handle the rhythm, and are well-skilled to face college life.

AJ: Do you have any other requirements that the international students have to fulfill before their admission?

ZJ: Another important requirement is the student’s English language ability. The Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) helps to gauge the student’s English ability. This exam gives the level of academic English to make sure the prospective student can easily succeed in the courses. If not, there is the requirement of the ESL program for the international students that are not proficient with English language.

Once these requirements are met, the international students still have some obligations related to their stay in USA: “Keep status valid.” In short, Adama Outtara, who has been living here for two years now, gives us in three main points the meaning of “keep status valid.” He explained that there are some responsibilities



related to the international student status to legally live in the USA. Every international student must be enrolled for at least twelve credit hours during fall and spring semesters. In addition, every international student must successfully pass

all classes, and ultimately notify the school about any address change. In short, the international student has to be law-abiding, and keep track of his purpose in the USA and focus on studies.

In addition, to the recommendations Adama gave, Babanam has some very good guidance to share with other international students. In fact, after her graduation with an associate's degree, she met the requirements mandated to apply for an Optional Practical Training, which is temporary employment authorization for international students after they graduate. She explained that the OPT was very useful to her because she had the chance to experience the workforce in the United States and gain some experience in her field of study. She worked for six months at Macy's in Boston as a sales associate. The second option that is available for every international student, and that she also took, is to go back to her country.



WESTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY  
Quad Cities

Indeed, she went back to Togo, where she worked for a bank for another six months. So, after a full year of experience in the U.S.A. and in her country, Togo, Babanam decided to come back to Moline and continue with her bachelor's degree. She is actually enrolled at Western Illinois University. She is a great model for many international students at Black Hawk College.

To conclude, the long quest of studying in the USA requires many preparations, starting from establishing a relationship with the college international advisor to the day of the trip for coming to the United States. Moreover, being respectful of the laws in order to keep international status valid during stay is one very important point that every international student should be aware of. The last, but not the least important stage of the international student quest is the "after studies." International students might keep in mind sharing the experiences and knowledge acquired during their stays with their home country either by innovating or forming partnerships with investors no matter their field of study or their country of origin.



## Interview with the President of BHC Dr. Thomas B. Baynum

By: Deisy Puente

Have you ever thought of being the president of your college? **Dr. Thomas Baynum** did and is now

president of Black Hawk College. He is formerly from Illinois, and he earned his bachelor of arts in English and French and his master's degree in English education from Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska. After several years in teaching, he moved to Texas, where he earned his doctorate in higher education administration from Baylor University. In the following interview, we will learn from his experience, and he will tell us what it takes to be the president of BHC.



### **What brought you to BHC?**

"BHC is probably one of the fastest college that has the ability to grow, I think, the fastest of any of the colleges that I have been associated with...I looked for this position when I was contacted by a company that was doing the search for the presidency, and they asked me if I would be interested in applying...so I started looking into BHC, really good college, and then I looked at the community, a lot of potential in this community and I thought this could be fun. So that is what gets me here."

### **What do you enjoy the most and least about being President of BHC?**

"The most I enjoy is being able to work with the students and talk with students. For example, when I was over at the literacy center, the adult center, I had a chance to meet with all the students in the GED program, the ESL program; I spent the day at the Illinois Worknet Center...I met with five different classes of ESL students...that is what I enjoy the most, being able to get out and work and talk with students...there is not much I don't like about it. There is a lot of paperwork that goes with being president...I have really good people who help me fill this paperwork; budget, for example, regulations from the state, those kinds of things, but I still have to understand what it means...so I have to go back and try to understand all the details then I can talk about it."

***I know that you worked with ESL students before. What did you think about this experience?***

“When I was with the class, what I loved about this experience was: all I had to do was introduce myself and say hello; then I asked one question, the question was ‘Tell me your story’ so my impression was that our students have amazing stories; they have amazing backgrounds...what is most impressive about our ESL classes, our students had to do...in fact, is how determined they are to be successful.”

***What plans do you have for BHC?***

“We are looking at expanding, as a matter of fact in facilities, buildings, we have a new building here at QC Campus, that is the



sustainable energy building; we have a new building at the East Campus in Kewanee...I think that you will hear in

the near future plans for possible new buildings on this campus in health science for nursing...looking into move in some other career programs like automotive technology...and there is a lot of enthusiasm in our area...”

***Why did you leave teaching to go into administration?***

“It was not, it was not; it was not an easy decision; it was not... I love teaching. It happened like a transition because when I first started in administration, my agreement with the dean that I was working with in Houston, TX, was that I would continue to teach...so it was in my head that I like doing administration, I like working with faculty as well as students and so I was able to do both...”

***How do you want the students, instructors and staff to remember you when you***

***complete your presidency?***

“Good question...as somebody who was part of the community, the inside community, the community with students...that I was part of it...I like to connect with faculty, students and



staff...I like being connected...”

***” Who is your favorite author? Why?***

I think my favorite author is...let me really think about that for a minute...I have favorite authors when I’m home relaxing and I read for fun... and I like books about murder mysteries. But my all-time author is a lady that I did my



master’s thesis on, a lady writer from Nebraska, her name is **Willa Cather**...I fell in love with the fact that writing could help me experience a new culture, so she wrote a series of books some of them *Oh! Pioneers, My Antonia*, and she also wrote about the history and culture from Nebraska.”

***If you could back in time, what era would you go to?***

“The era that I would go back to is Camelot...I would go back to King Arthur. I love Camelot... the whole idea that they thought that were creating a perfect society and it was just a really neat time and that anything was possible and they were moving into something what was better, a new life, a new society, I just love the whole idea of Camelot.”



To conclude, we can see from this interview that Dr. Baynum is happy with all he has done in life, and that he loves teaching. He has earned his degrees and has had many good experiences. He will enjoy his tenure as the President of Black Hawk College. Dr. Baynum will make sure that the college keeps growing. I enjoyed the time I spent during the interview, and I encourage you to learn more about him.



# AUTHORS

My name is **Pradeep Rai**. I'm from Bhutan, but I was



a refugee for fifteen and a half years in Nepal. When I was eight years old, my family and I were exiled, which was an abhorrent situation that our family walked through. In such a situation, I grew up in the shadow of my mother's love, but our lives there were like

parasitic plants. After spending a long period in such an environment, my family, including me, got the opportunity to spend the rest of our lives here in the USA. I came here on June 17, 2009, carrying a big dream for my life. I want to become a computer engineer, so I'm knocking on the door of my dream through Black Hawk College. My hobbies are painting, dancing, listening to music, playing guitar, singing and traveling.

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My name is **Jean Baptiste Agbeto**, and I was born in Lomé, the capital of Togo.

I am married, and I have a beautiful girl whose name is Deborah. Christine, my sweet wife, whom I met in Mali, is from Burkina Faso. I mention Mali because I worked there as a senior auditor in a cabinet of accountancy expertise. I



have had the chance to travel in many countries of Africa due to my job. Fortunately, I had this chance to come to the US to learn English and to improve in my career. I like playing piano and worshipping God.

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I am **Marie Uwimana**. I am from Rwanda. I have been living here for three years. I am the second born in the family of five children. I have three brothers and one sister; I am married with one son. I like to interact with my family, friends, and other people. Since my childhood, I have been dreaming about being a nurse;

therefore, I am waiting for my dream to come true. I can testify that English as a Second Language is the key of learning well.

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My name is **Joyeuse Uwingabire**. I was born in



Rwanda, but raised in Tanzania. However, my parents are Burundians. For this reason, I am Burundian by nationality. I came to the U.S.A. in June, 2007; I've been here for almost 5 years. I have three brothers and three sisters, and I am the second child. Since I was a child, I always wished to help people; therefore, my dream is to

become a nurse one day so I can help others. I became a BHC student last year in the summer of 2011. I am so excited to have a writing class because it has helped me a lot in writing paragraphs and essays. Also, I love to be close to my family and my friends.

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My name is **Weam Alhajri**, and I am twenty-one years old. I am majoring in accounting. I dream one day to have a small family that I wish to take care of as well as I can. I would like to open a big company one day, so I hope to improve my ability in accounting. I really like to read and to write poems in Arabic, my first language.



My name is **Mariama Diallo**. I was born in June



1992. I am from Guinea, a country in West Africa. I have been living in the U.S. for 5 years. I have three siblings: one sister and two brothers. I speak four languages: Fulani, Wolof, French and English. This is my second semester at Back Hawk College in Moline. I haven't decided my major

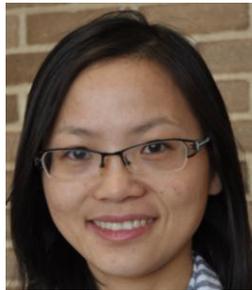
yet, but I think I will be an physical therapy assistant. I hope I will be able to find a job, so I will be able to help my family. My hobbies are: listening to music, shopping, going to the movies and spending time with my family.

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My name is **Ahmad Aldulaimy**. I am 29 years old, and I am from Baghdad, Iraq. I have been in the United States since May, 2009. I live in East Moline. I have a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering. My plan for the next two years is to get a master's degree in information technology. My favorite saying is: to be or not to be.



I'm **Yarong Chen** from Ningbo, China. Ningbo is two and half hour's drive south of Shanghai. My parents and my younger brother are still living in Ningbo. My mom is a successful business woman in the tea business. She is my role model. I graduated from Zhejiang Normal University with a major in psychology. I was a Chinese history teacher and a school counselor in a junior high school for four years before I moved to US last year. My dream now is to become a health educator in the US. The first step towards my dream is to quickly improve my English proficiency by taking English courses at Black Hawk College



My name is **Keshab Acharya**. I am originally from Bhutan. I came to this country as a Bhutanese refugee. Recently, I live in Rock Island. Now, I am a full-time student at Black Hawk College. I like to work with people. In other words, I care about my people, and I do care for all people.

My name is **Guljahan Arazmuhammedova**, and I was born in 1994, in Dashoguz, Turkmenistan. I am 17 years old. I have two lovely persons whom I love more than my life: my mom, Aliya, and my elder sister, Dunya. My mom is in Turkmenistan, and my sister is in St. Petersburg. I came to the United States on 12th of August in 2011, and I have been living in the US for seven months. I speak five languages: Turkmen, Russian, English, Uzbek, and Kazakh. I study at Black Hawk College in Moline. My major is business marketing and management. I want to become a business woman and manage my own company down the road, so I will be able to make my mom and my sister happy and give them whatever they want. I have lots of hobbies but here are the most common ones: dancing, listening to music, spending time with my family and friends, and walking in nature, especially during the winter and the summer. Also, my plans for the future are to open a company, to work hard in order to become rich, and to marry a wonderful prince and spend happy time with my family till the end of my life.



My name is **Marine Vidalenche**; I come from a small city in France called Carry le Rouet situated near Marseille. I have one brother. I have been living in the U.S.A. for almost one year now. My languages are French, English as a second language, and Spanish as a third. I came here to improve my English skills in order to enter an international school in France. Moreover, coming to a foreign country is essential to improve our skills, but also to be more mature and responsible. In the future, I would like to work in a big company and then open my own business. I like discovering new cultures and new countries, so since I am in the USA, I have visited Minneapolis, Saint Louis, Las Vegas, Grand Canyon, and for spring break, Miami.



My name is **Yawa Eklou**, and I am from Togo, West Africa. I am nineteen years old. I have three elder sisters and one younger sister. I have been living in the U.S. for two years and eight months with my family. I am single with no children; I don't work, and I am a full-time student. I speak three languages: Ewe, French, and English. I am going to Black Hawk College. My dream is to represent my country in



other countries around the world, and I hope I can realize this dream so that I can help my country and my family. My hobbies are singing, dancing, and shopping. I also enjoy doing volunteering work with my free time. I encourage people to have perseverance, determination, and to think positively in order to succeed in their academic and future lives.

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My name is **Imelda Martinez de Vega**; I am from Tepic, Nayarit, which is located on the western coast of Mexico. I have been living in the U.S.A. for the last sixteen years. I am married and have three children. I have a dream to become a physical therapist, and I would like to keep studying until I achieve my goal. I would like to let my children have a better future, and the only way to that is by getting a degree. When I have free time, I like to bake cookies, play board games, and watch funny movies with my children



My name is **Adjovi Sedjro**, and I am from Togo. I have been in the USA since August 2010 in order to improve my English skills, for my dream is to become a certified translator. I speak Ewe, French, English and a little bit of Portuguese. I have two wonderful brothers who live with our parents in Togo. Listening to music, swimming, and reading are some of my hobbies.



My name is **Shwe Nay**. I like to work with computers, so my dream is to become a computer networking specialist. I am originally from Burma (Myanmar). I have two sisters and one brother. Because of poverty, our family is apart. I have been living separately from them for twenty years. My mother and two sisters live in Burma, but my brother lives in Thailand. We miss each other, so sometimes we call each other on the phone, and I plan to visit them in year 2015.



My name is **Vignon Benedicte Dossougbedje**. I'm from Benin, a peaceful country in West Africa. I was born in 1986 and grew up with my family. I started school at four. In 2005, I got my high school diploma. I went to the biggest university of Benin, where I was enrolled in biology department. After four years, I received my bachelor's degree in natural sciences. In 2009, I started teaching biology at high school. I left my country toward the end of 2010 to live with my husband and to improve my English in the USA. My hobbies are listening to music and watching TV. I would like to be a nurse.



My name is **Deisy Puente**. I am from Guanajuato, Mexico. I am an only child. I came to USA in 1998. Before moving here in 2000, to Moline, I lived in California. I am married and have two girls, Camila and Isabela. I enjoy my free time playing with my girls, going shopping and painting. I will do my best in college to prepare to achieve my goal in becoming a Registered Nurse.



My name is **Jouriaace Yves Alain Acakpo**. I am the only child of a principled family; I am open-minded and very cultured. I am licensed in audit and management control in Benin, a West Africa Francophone country. So, I decided to continue my studies in the U.S.A., an English speaking country. This quest led me to enroll in the English as Second

Language (ESL Program) at BHC before I continue with my business major. One of my goals is to finish my studies here, build strong relationships in as many as fields possible, and return home to share the know-how of all those relationships I will have built because Benin is a great country overflowing with opportunities for investors.



The ESL Newsletter is written by our advanced writing class each semester. We would like to thank Anne Bollati, ESL Coordinator for assisting with the writing and editing process. We would also like to thank Andrew Ziegler for teaching our students the beauty of metaphor. A special thanks goes to Sheryl Gragg, support staff for the Humanities, Languages, and Journalism Department, for her time, effort and energy in editing and formatting this newsletter. Additionally, we want to express our gratitude to Mike Winter, who took our individual and group photos. Thanks to all.

# ESL

## English as a Second Language Program

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The ESL program is a multi-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:

* 50–59	Foundations
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*

### FOUNDATIONS:

**Foundations** Students in this level will build the foundations in listening, speaking, reading, writing and sentence structure in academic English so that they can advance to the Intermediate Level of the ESL Program. Students also begin to build the study skills necessary to be successful in academic and vocational programs.

*\*These classes are web-enhanced.*

#### Courses

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

ESL 051	Foundations 1
ESL 053	Foundations 2

### 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.*