

Mirror of the World 2018-19

Celebrates Diversity



COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER

## *Acknowledgements*

The *Mirror of the World* is a student/tutor project of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at the Community College of Denver, Center for Arts and Humanities. All of the contents are written by current or former ESL students in various classes. Submissions are selected by the editorial team of tutors in the ESL Tutoring Center. Thank you to Linda Nechrony for her countless hours spent editing, formatting, and designing the submissions entered into this year's edition!

Many thanks also go out to Ruthanne Orihuela, Dean of the Center for Arts and Humanities, for her support of this valuable project, and to Roberta Ware, ESL Department Chair, for her encouragement, advice, and direction. We would like to also offer gratitude to the ESL faculty who submitted their students' work to the *Mirror of the World*. A big "thanks" also goes out to Ann McCalley, director of the EXCEL! Knowledge Zone, for all of her support in publishing and producing the *Mirror of the World*. And finally, most importantly, we thank all of the students who took part in this project, whether their work was selected or not. As a tutoring staff, we always enjoy seeing the hard work our students do and want to continue to encourage them to submit their amazing writing, art work, photography...really anything they can think of...to the *Mirror of the World*! We hope you enjoy the 2018-19 edition of the *Mirror of the World*!!

## **Farewell and Thank You!**

The ESL tutoring staff from Community College of Denver would like to extend a special "thank you" to Gretchen Hack, who is retiring from her position as an ESL instructor and former ESL tutor, following the 2019 spring semester. She has been an integral part of the history of the *Mirror of the World*, first with helping to initially get it started so many years ago, and annually getting submissions from her students to be included in the publication itself. Her dedication at CCD has gone beyond just the 28 years she spent here. We can easily say she is leaving the CCD ESL department better than it was when she first came to us, and will be sorely missed moving forward. The ESL tutors thank you, Gretchen, but so do the countless students you have impacted along the way!



# TROPICAL BREEZE – ART 121 “BUDDY”





## *An Emergency & What I did!*

*By: Fawzi Abbas ESL 053*

*Did you ever hear about a tracheostomy? This procedure is done to save someone who suffers a breathing obstruction. It can be done by any sharp metal in your hand because it's an emergency.*

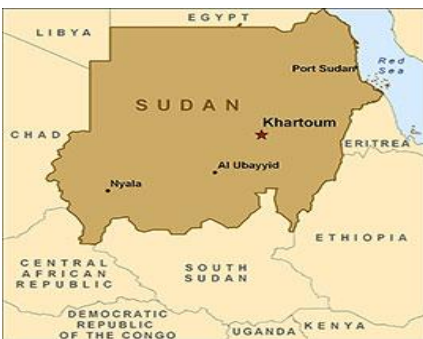
*This is a real story that happened to me when I was practicing medicine in a rural hospital in the north of Sudan as a new graduate working for the Ministry of Health. Every day there were many patients in my clinic. Some of them were very sick and needed help, while others complained of flu or abdominal pain. I was the only doctor in the hospital, assisting me were about 15 nurses. The population of that rural village was 15,000; the hospital was very old and not equipped properly. The nearby referral hospital was around 200 miles away. I was the manager of the hospital and I had to see around 100 patients every day. I also had to do emergency surgical operations.*

*Always after the end of the clinic, I would make my way to have lunch with the Head of the Village. After that, we had a cup of tea while chatting with other people. I worked in that village for five years without vacations. Although it was a hard life, I was happy among those people even though I was 500 miles from my home, family, and friends.*

*One day, while I was in my clinic busy with some patients, I heard screaming outside. When I got outside to see what was happening, I saw*

some women screaming while they hurried with a young girl towards my clinic. I ordered them to lay her on the couch. When I examined her, she was breathing heavily, and her face was blue. Immediately, I took a brief history from her mother which told me that her daughter inhaled some food while she was eating, then she stopped breathing. As fast as possible, I took a small sharp knife from my table, made an incision in the middle of her neck, and inserted a tube that I kept for emergency cases. The girl immediately resumed her breathing. I prayed because I gave the girl a new life, then told her family to kindly transport her to the hospital where I would take care of her for some time.

Usually everybody eats and laughs at the same time and nothing happens. Not that day. After the girl was discharged from the hospital, her family gave a big party and invited me. That day I appreciated what a great job I had done, and I felt a great feeling because I saved a human life. These moments I will never forget in my life.





## *Sometimes "Old" is Better Than "New"*

*By: Xue Zhang ESL 175*

A special day changed my mind. It was a very fresh sunny day, and everything was cleaned by yesterday's snow. The sky was very blue, and the sunshine was very sharp. We were driving to a shelter to adopt a kitten. I was very excited and kept talking about it, because it would be my first pet. After driving for 13 minutes, we got there.

I jumped out of the car and ran to the shelter's door as quickly as I could. I really couldn't wait to see their kittens. When I got there, I walked straight toward the front desk. A very nice lady introduced a kitten to us, but he was a wild cat scared of people, and they were still training him. It would be a very big challenge for us to adopt him, and we were told that it was the only available kitten. My husband and I didn't want to adopt an adult cat, so we decided to get him.

The lady led us into a bright room with white furniture, colorful toys and some high shelves, but we didn't see the kitten. She told us he might be hiding under the shelves. We laid down on the floor and found it sleeping and huddling in the corner by the wall. What a lovely baby. It was very fluffy and tiny and looked like a bowl of fresh milk with pieces of Oreo cookies. I was willing to face a big challenge! With excitement, I pushed a bell ball to him, but he ran away. My husband grabbed a feathered toy and shook it in front of him, but he escaped to another shelf. Next, he put food next to the shelf and called it, but the kitten ignored it and stayed under the shelf. We tried all the toys and all the skills we had, but kitty seemed like a guard defending his castle. After 30 minutes, we were defeated and gave up. I felt very disappointed and sad and really wanted him to be my friend. The nice lady suggested that we could adopt another cat that needed extra care and time. My husband and I had no experience taking care of a wild kitten, but she was right that we should adopt another cat.

We walked around the shelter and saw that there were a lot of old cats. Some were sleeping, some were walking along the wall, and some were cleaning their hair. At the corner, was a small glass room that was very different. There were a lot of cats inside either sleepy or sneezing. I didn't want a sick cat, but my husband stopped and pointed at one cat that was totally dark gray. It was sleeping in its bed, and I wasn't interested in it. I was still thinking about the little wild cat. It was a whole dark gray sick cat and was nothing special. My husband walked inside of the tiny room and touched it gently, and the cat turned its head around with a pair of sleepy eyes. I knew it was not what I wanted! My husband let me touch it, but I didn't want to touch a strange sick cat; in fact, I was scared to touch dogs and cats. I had been bitten by dogs before so that was why I wanted a kitten. He told me it was very gentle, so I got up the courage to touch her. While I was petting her, I changed my mind. She was different. Her fur was very soft, and she was very gentle. She used her head to touch my hand, and I found that she was not completely gray. Her tiny chin and neck were white. She was pretty, even though she was sick. I wanted her to be my first pet and believed she would be my good friend.



After we paid for everything, I couldn't wait to show her our home. We walked out of the shelter. What a great day! The bright crescent was already hanging in the dark sky and looked like a big smile. Our new cat's neck was white and looked like the bright crescent, so I decided to call her Luna. She is a real good cat, very gentle, and I love her very much. I do believe in fate and I think she was waiting for us in the shelter. We met at the right time, and she is my best gift!



## **THE DAY I WILL NEVER FORGET**

**By: Tram Pham ESL 175**

**I would have had a fun and exciting trip if I had not faced such extreme danger. Right now, sitting in a comfortable chair, recalling what happened to me and my friends on the trip to Ba Ho waterfalls last summer, I still feel creepy. It has become a vivid experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.**

**I remember clearly that it was a beautiful, sun-filled day with a bright blue sky. My friends and I rode a long way from a hotel in the center of Nha Trang city to the outskirts area. Riding bikes along the stunning coastline was so amazing. We enjoyed the spectacular sights, listened to the waves crashing on the shore, and breathed the freshest ocean air. When we reached the rain forest, we stopped to take some photos, and drank iced sugarcane juice. The juice was not only delicious, but made me feel like a drought area receiving a heavy rain, and helped hydrate my body after an hour of sun exposure. Before getting to the falls, we did not forget to treat ourselves to a hearty meal and made sure we had enough energy for an intense hike.**

**We were so delighted when we got to the Ba Ho falls entrance because we had been waiting for this moment for three months. After 15 minutes of walking through the foliage, we saw the first pool with crystal clear water. We quickly took off our shoes and put our feet into the chilly water. It was so restful to sit there and look at the dense forest around the pool; however, the trail to the second and third pools became more challenging as it headed into the rock stream. We had to pay attention to every step and scramble over the large boulders that required a lot of effort and strength. With support from my friends, finally I stood on the peak and enjoyed the mountain top**



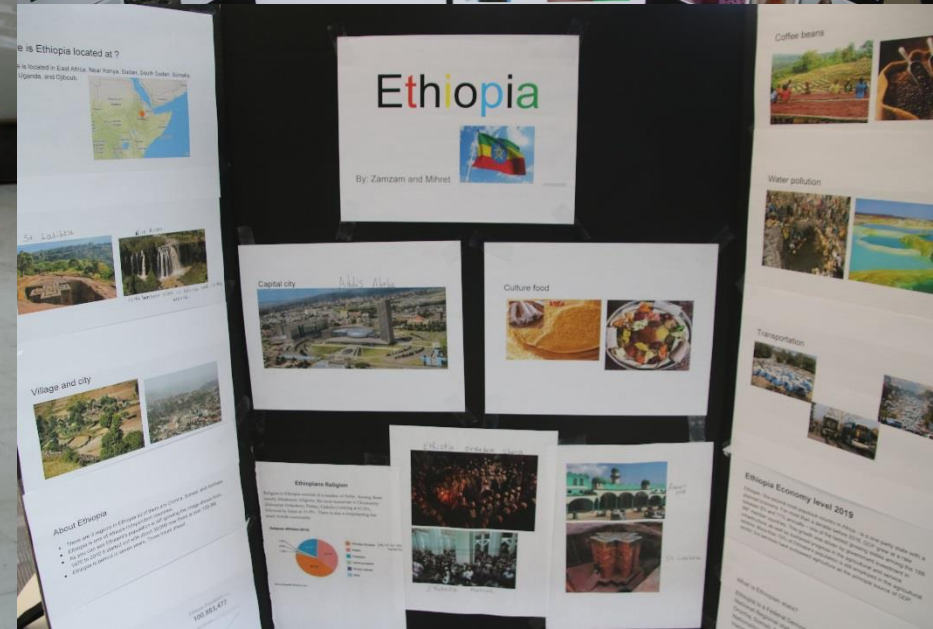
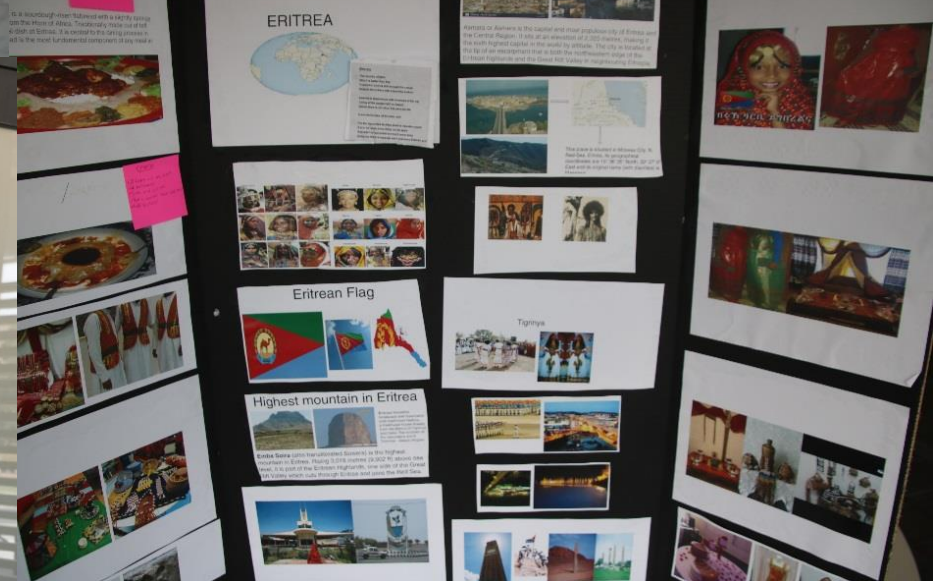
experience. Although my whole body was full of sweat and my heart beat so fast that it felt like it wanted to jump out of my chest, it was a really great reward. The view was so impressive that I could not believe my eyes. It was the first time I saw the combination of cascades and water falls pouring from the sky. While we were moving around to discover this cascade and capture the beautiful scenery, I stepped on a slippery rock and fell into the waterfall. The tragedy had just begun.



My head hit on a rock, and then my body immersed deeply into the water. Everything happened in the twinkling of an eye. I tried to swim, but my legs were stuck in a cramp. One of my friends immediately jumped into the pool to rescue me; unfortunately, he forgot to take off his backpack that got trapped in a fallen tree. He was not able to reach me, so I was swept away by the fast water current. I thought that my life might end there. My body numbed and lost consciousness which is why I did not know all that had happened. When I opened my eyes, I saw the blue sky and my friends again. That moment, I knew I was still alive. My friends told me there were two tour guides who had saved my life; however, they had already left before I recovered because they had to lead travelers to the next stop.

From the bottom of my heart, I was thankful to my friends and the two tour guides for giving me a chance to live again. By surviving that near fatal incident, I have learned how precious my life is and to treasure every moment that I spend with my family and friends. Life can be hard and tough, but it is also very beautiful because, as Nisha Pradhan says, “The world is full of kind people” who are willing to help you unconditionally.

# 2019 CCD WORLD CULTURE FAIR



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## ARMENIA



Armenian Alphabet

Tatev Monastery Complex

Armenian Traditional Costumes

Armenian Cuisine



## ARMENIA



Republic of Armenia



## China



Capital: Beijing

Population: 1,386 million

Ethnic Groups (56 in total)

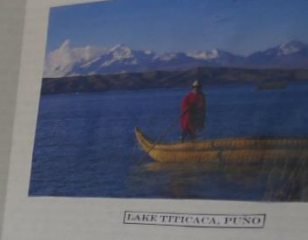


- Han - 91.9% of the total population.
- Zhuang - 18 million
- Hui - 10 million
- Uyghur - 11.3 million
- Mongols - 5.8 million
- Korhans - 2.5 million

Religion in China

- Some kind of Chinese folk religion & Taoism - 80%
- Buddhism - 10-16%
- Christians - 3-4%
- Muslims - 1-2%



## PERÚ




LAKE TITICACA, PUNO







HUANCAYO, CUZCO, HUARAN

### JUNGLE



MACHU PICCHU



## SYRIA



Kebab



Kibba



Stoeha



Bab Lova



The way to work the sweets of the Syrian citadel



## UKRAINE

### TRADITIONAL CLOTHING



Traditional Clothing

### UKRAINIAN FLAG



### COAT OF ARMS



### GOPAK DANCE



Gopak Dance

### UKRAINIAN INSTRUMENTS



Ukrainian Instruments

### FOOD IN UKRAINE



Food in Ukraine



## AFGHANISTAN



### History

Early Afghanistan was known as Aryana starting in 4th BC. Later on became as Kushan which finally changed to Afghanistan. Afghanistan's capital was Kandahar, then the capital of Afghanistan (Shahjahan in Kabul) was one of the major regions in Afghanistan during pre Islamic era.

### Afghanistan's History

- Afghanistan has a very rough, war-filled history.
- First invaded by Asians about 1500 B.C.
- Alexander the Great, making the Persians, conquered most of Afghanistan sometime around 330 B.C.
- In the 1870s, the Soviet Union tried to invade, but it wasn't long before the local (Pashtun) rebelled because they were angry at the communists.
- The Soviets were bad better soldiers but the local warriors were armed by the United States.
- In 1988, the Soviet troops began retreating from Afghanistan.
- The mujahideen ended up overthrowing the government.
- A few different coalitions tried to govern the country.
- Several different coalitions began governing the country but they fought amongst themselves to bring were never stable.
- ("History of Afghanistan")



## VIET NAM



### NINH BINH



### HA NOI



### SAIGON



### SONDOONG



### DA NANG



### HUE



1 Pho



2 Banh Mi



3 Goi Cuon (Vietnamese Fresh Spring Rolls)

## MEXICO





## **My Dream Comes True**

**By: Assad Alkattan**

**CCR 092**



**When I finished college, my friend asked me, “What is your dream?” “My dream is to live in the United States of America (USA), so I can have more job opportunities, and provide for my future family. Donald Trump said, “As long as you are going to be thinking anyway, think big”, and I want to think about many important issues. On May 20, 2014, my dream came true; I became a USA resident. But, when I arrived in the USA, I faced many problems refugees face, because I was integrated into a new country.**

**Life is very different for new refugees that have families. For me, it was a new challenge, because I have responsibilities for my family: looking for a job, and buying a car enabled my children to get registered at school. My first job was at Denver International Airport as a driver, and to learn English I also attended Emily Griffith School with my wife. It was a new experience for us because we had a language barrier in the beginning. All the time, I was encouraging and supporting my wife to continue to learn English. She was homesick. My family went through new challenges with cold weather and snow that was very difficult because we lived in hot weather all the time in Iraq. We did not have a social life here because we did not have friends at the beginning. We stayed home all the time, and my wife was impatient because she could not find an Arabic TV show. However, there are many positive things I found in the US: liberty, democracy practices, an organized life, public transport, health care, exciting job opportunities, legal justice, and others. I got a new job with G4S as a security guard. My children started school, made new friends, and we were looking for a better apartment.**

Throughout my journey from Iraq to the USA, I wondered how my family might adapt to our new country. I hoped my son and daughter would receive a better education to have new job opportunities. Both graduated from US high schools; however, my oldest daughter is back home in Iraq, and this has had an impact on our lifestyle because we love and miss her a lot.

I asked my children what was their impression about living in the US and what were their biggest challenges? My son said, “When I first moved here I was 17. Life was difficult for me and I had problems socializing with people because of my different life style. I had no friends and had to start all over with everything. I was very impressed with the city; everything was organized. I had to face some challenges at the beginning, but after a while, I spoke English better and became more social. My next challenge was to learn how to dance in clubs and achieve that as well. I am living the American Dream and I love it!”

My daughter Amina replied, “The most challenging issue I faced was the language barrier at the beginning. Also, I had some problems with my first job as an associate in a retail store. I had to make my goal by selling to get more customers by communicating with them, and that was very challenging for me. But, by practicing and talking with my co-workers, I became better at my job. The best new realities for me were the organized streets and the development of technology everywhere. These made life easier, and I love the USA, especially Colorado.”

In order to be successful in our new life, we have to have patience. I hope that it will be easier for refugees’ families and others to adapt to their new life. This is the best country to make my dreams come true.

**English**

**Education**

**Patience**

**Legal Justice**

**Job Opportunities**

**Democracy!**



## Looking into the Eyes of Death

By F.N.M. ESL 054



How many times can I face death, and come out alive? I survived **fleeing out of Afghanistan** and lived through that **dark night of terrors** when we refugees were trying to cross the border between Iran and Turkey. We were suddenly being **fired upon with bullets** flying through the air around me. But, now I am about to take my very first airplane flight from Iran to Afghanistan, in order to obtain our needed official papers to get to America and join my dear father and little sister.

After rising early for our flight and passing peacefully through customs, my mother and my two sisters and I walked out onto the tarmac to climb the stairs to our sky mobile. I noticed mechanics were scurrying about with tools making repairs on the engine; this was all new to me. I observed that the plane was very old and worn with patches all over the outside. I was tense with **fear of going up in the sky with this rattletrap**, but nonetheless my sister and I joked about going to the playground to ride this “toy.” The flight attendant frowned at us; we Afghani refugees were somewhat “subhuman” to them. We three sisters got seated next to each other, and my mom had to sit by a man across the aisle from us. The plane took off.

As with most of the village folk on the plane, this was my very first plane ride. We didn’t realize that the sputtering of the engine and trembling of the plane signaled abnormalities. About an hour into the flight, I began to feel strange in my body and could no longer hear or breathe properly. My body felt very weird inside. My sisters began experiencing the same thing until my younger sister started complaining of a **severe headache**. With startled disbelief that this could actually be happening to us, I heard the pilot say we were having an **emergency** and pleaded with the passengers to remain calm and keep their cool. The crew also alerted us that we were turning around to return to the airport in Iran (near the border) that we started from. We were descending quickly; however, there are mountains between Iran and Afghanistan, tall ones! Our plane had to stay high enough to not crash into them.

I glanced at my mother and saw the distinct signs of high blood pressure: puffy face and swollen, pink eyes. My heart pounded hard as I began to realize that we would all very possibly die soon. I began to pray as I felt the plane go sideways and then saw **heavy smoke** coming out of the wing. In my novice mind, I thought the pilots were purposefully releasing something out of the plane. The sharp mountains out the windows were so close. I felt I would be able to touch

them if I could stick my arm out the window. I could not scream. I was *frozen in fear* and shock, and kept praying, **BEGGING GOD** to forgive anything bad I had done in my life, and to please help us land safely. I tried to comfort my sister whose headache was unbearable; she began to scream and vomited with dry heaves. I clamped my hands around her head to try to create counter pressure. Other people may have begun screaming, but I don't remember. What I do remember is the plan landing ... *SAFELY*. There was instant relief and unspeakable joy and thankfulness to be alive, although we were all still suffering from the emotional and physical trauma of the depressurized cabin and the near-death experience. While we unloaded into the hall in the airport, I recounted the past three hours in my mind, and thought it seemed that I had been an actress in a three-dimensional movie which was twenty-four hours long! Oh, how grateful I am that the "movie" had a good ending, and *we are ALIVE!*

God be praised forever and ever!

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### The Lovely Place in My House

By Roya Ghaderinasrabad ESL 051



*My kitchen is my favorite place in my house. First, it has a table with four comfortable chairs that we use to enjoy meals that I make for my family. My oldest son likes home cooked meals, such as rice with stew or traditional Iranian dishes. On the other-hand my younger son likes modern food such as lasagna or pizza. It's a struggle to keep them both satisfied, but they both love my desserts. When I'm busy working in the kitchen, I usually listen to different genres of music from different parts of the world. I have a nice view of the outside world through my big window and can see tall pine trees that squirrels climb on. Sometimes I see rabbits playing in the snow or birds flying in groups in the sky. The mixture of music and an amazing view makes a memorable cooking experience for me that I can enjoy while sipping a cup of tea. All of these pleasant experiences make my kitchen the lovely place in my house where I enjoy spending time.*



## “Till Death Do Us Part”

By: Fatemeh Mohammadi ESL 054



Really? It's difficult to believe that married couples in the western world who have entered in self-selected marriages seriously take the marriage vow: "...to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part". The divorce rate is skyrocketing phenomenally high and has me puzzled. I see that perhaps the old custom where I grew up in Afghanistan, and Iran, and experienced in most of the Middle East, is indeed better. Arranged marriages are the status quo in my parent's generation and many generations before them. In the west, self-selected marriages, or love marriages as they also called, are the status quo; however, an arranged marriage and a love marriage are very different in many ways.

In an arranged marriage, traditionally when a son or daughter is approaching the age of marrying, the parents are on the lookout for an appropriate and worthy spouse for their beloved. Through a series of parties and large family get togethers, along with meetings at the mosque and other religious events, the parents become increasingly aware of the eligibility of a potential spouse for their son or daughter. There may be discussions between the parents on both sides who are interested in the qualities, skills, and moral character in these young people. At times matchmakers are employed to find a suitable match. Eventually, the parents of the groom visit the family of the bride with flowers, to inquire of the desire for their son to



marry this family's daughter. After this, the family of the daughter can make an investigation into the extended family of the groom, and their credentials, including health, habits, education, wealth, etc. After all investigations and discussions of the proposal are accepted, the groom pays a dowry to the bride, and sometimes a hefty "bride price" to the bride's parents. Then, an elaborate wedding ensues!

The times are changing, and now "love" or "self-selected marriages" are gaining ground in the Middle East, Asia, and Arab countries. Currently, it is usually a mixture of being arranged and self-selected by the bride and groom. In the Western World, like here in the United States, couples choose their spouse, sometimes leaving the parents totally unaware of the attraction that is taking place. Young people meet each other in places like college, their job, or even prevalent online dating sites. Young couples seem to care little about a background investigation, and often live together awhile before marriage. Occasionally, they also have children before the wedding. The divorce rate is definitely higher among these self-selected marriages and often ripples down to create disrupted and dysfunctional families where the children are plagued with mental, physical, and educational problems.

In my opinion, I believe that couples allowed some freedom of choice for their spouse, and who are guided by the wise counsel of their parents, will blossom and be blessed. They will have a successful future, and their children will be happy.

This is my hope for a better world.



# Scholarship Essay

By: Fadila Elbakri CCR 092



My name is Fadila Elbakri. I am a happy black Muslim girl and have a big smile on my face with a dimple on one side. I came to the USA in 2016 from Saudi Arabia; however, I am a Sudanese, who was born and raised in Saudi Arabia. Even though I lived there for 32 years, after I completed high school, foreigners were not allowed to go to a university or college. On top of that, I did not have a resident card, because Saudi Arabia did not allow foreigners to have one. It was my longtime dream to go to college, and I felt disappointed after finishing high school when all my friends went to college and I sat at home wishing to be lucky like my friends. Friends invited me to their graduation, and I shared their happiest moment when their dreams come true. Each time I went to a graduation, I felt emotional and sad because it was not possible for me. I started to work at the age of 16 years old to support my family. In 2014, I went to Egypt and took interior design courses. When I went back to Saudi Arabia, I applied for work; however, all employers were asking for a bachelor's degree. I could not travel again to complete a degree because study outside the country was expensive. As a result, I took some courses on line, my family told me, "Don't waste your time it doesn't work," but I have always wanted to be an educated person, and I never gave up.

In 2015, I met a young man from America named Yaya. After three months, we got engaged, and I joined him in U.S. Yaya came from the poorest country in the world, but now is an engineer with a master's degree. I asked him about school here and he said, "If you have a dream, nobody stops you." His words motivated me, and I started studying English and did my best. Every time I felt tired, sick of studying, or the weather was bad, I would see myself graduating, and studied harder. In addition, we now have a baby boy and want to be an example to him.

Now I am student at Community College of Denver. My dream has just begun. In my first semester, I took English and Advanced Academic Achievement, and got A's. Now I am taking college English, and I complete my assignments before they are due. I attend all my classes, go to the writing center, and meet with my professors.

I am working to achieve my goal to be a therapy assistant. I love to help people heal and bring their smile back. Your scholarship will help me realize my professional dream.



## Scholarship Essay

# DREAM

By: Isabella

AAA 109

Out of the corner of my eye, I see my peers taking selfies, fixing their hair, clothes, and makeup. I feel differently as I walk down the shiny hallways at CCD towards my first class ready to learn. I'm a Mexican-American woman growing up in a community that expects me to fail. I won't! I am currently a biology major.

When I was seven years old, I had appendix surgery. I remember when the doctor looked at my worried mom and told her that everything went very well. He told her to get something to eat, but she explained that the little money she had was not enough for my surgery or food. He was very kind to us, did not charge us anything for the surgery, and even gave my mom money for her meal. Ever since that realization, I had a new desire about being a doctor to help families with financial needs like my surgeon did for us.

My parents are from Mexico and did not have the opportunity to have a high school education. My dad works in a restaurant, and my mom takes care of the house. I am the first generation and the first child in a family of five to attend college. My greatest obstacle is my community that feels my dream will not come true.

People in my neighborhood don't seem to have expectations or hope and don't want others who have dreams to succeed. I choose to hear my own voice! I am going to make it, be an example to my community, and prove that their negative voices cannot destroy my dreams. No matter how hard they try to discourage me, there is hope. My family believes in me; I will make them proud to smile on my graduation day when I become a doctor.

Through volunteering, I have learned that what my community needs is people who care. I spent time helping clean and remodel the library at my school, and have assisted nurses at our local hospital. Helping them has made me think about the future generations. It has helped me find some hope and has given me the opportunity to meet positive people that are going to help me with my dreams, inspire me, and believe that I'm going to make it. My commitment is to help others in my community by being a role model. I hope to inspire them to think bigger, to realize that everything is possible if they believe in themselves, and work hard to achieve their dreams.

Receiving this scholarship will assist me in completing my associate degree at CCD. Then I will finish my bachelor's degree and pursue a medical degree to accomplish my dream of helping others and being a successful woman in my family and community. I will be a doctor and make a difference in many people's lives!

**DETERMINATION & SUCCESS!**

# Thanks to the ESL tutors for all of their amazing support!

