

# *The Mirror of the World*

*2017 - 2018*

*Acceptance*

*Education*

*Dedication*

*Understanding*

*Gratitude*

## *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 formatting and designing the submissions entered into this year's edition!

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*Great Wall of China picture compliments of Ryan Sethre*

Cover Design by Linda Nechrony

# **"I AM" POEM**

**By Minkyung Kim ESL-033**

**I AM A HARD WORKER AND A CARING MOTHER**

**I wonder about my son's life in college**

**I hear the roar of trains**

**I see a beautiful mountain**

**I want to go to Italy with my son**



**I AM A HARD WORKER AND A CARING MOTHER**

**I pretend that I am calm in events of chaos**

**I feel the love from my son**

**I touch the warmth of my blanket**

**I worry about my son's health**

**I cry when pets are abandoned by their owners**



**I AM A HARD WORKER AND A CARING MOTHER**

**I understand that life is unpredictable**

**I say that what's going to happen will happen**

**I dream that I will be able to go to London to learn  
floral decorating**

**I try to be a fluent English speaker**

**I hope that my English gets better soon**

**I AM a hard worker and a caring mother.**





## ***A Change of My Life***

**U.S.A.**

By Sandrine Uwimana ESL - 054

Coming to America was the most blessing and amazing thing that has ever happened in my life. Before I came here, I lived in Ethiopia for seven years as a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Life in Ethiopia wasn't easy because of being refugees. We left our country with nothing, no clothes, and no documents; the worst part was, I lost my parents, some family members, friends, and my neighbors. We couldn't continue our education. Basically, we were left with unforgettable memories.

During the war, I only escaped with my aunt and my two cousins. I had one brother, and we were separated throughout the war. I left my normal life to an awful life that you cannot imagine. Since then my life changed. After one year living in Ethiopia, The United Nations sent us to a refugee camp, where we thought we could begin our lives, but life became harder.

The camp looked like a forest. No one human could have lived there except the animals. Houses were a disaster and were built with bamboo and mud. The roofs had branches and bamboo. There were no windows or doors, we had to create them. Life was so deplorable.

I remember when we got there, there were about three-hundreds families. We cried, we begged the UN that we didn't choose to be refugees, but it was too late, the decision had been made. This happened in 2006, when we were told that the reason why they were sending us to the camp is because the economics of the United States was collapsing, and no other country would give us resettlements.

In that forest, a place where I was supposed to call my new home, there were very large snakes that were about seven fit long. It was a dangerous place. Some of people died, not because they were sick, but there was something else that we couldn't explain. Doctors would check but never found anything. I think there were some bad spirits that were killing people.

Worst yet to come, there was no water or electricity. We had to walk about 15 to 20 miles to go fetch water. Food that the UNITED NATIONS provided was horrible: corn, beans, and oat grains. Day to day, month to month, no meat, and no fish. If you wanted vegetables, you would go scavenge for them in the field.

After having all these experiences, I began to accept that life and prayed that somewhere, or someone, would appear and come to rescue us. I prayed for a miracle to happen. Finally, we received a letter from the U.S.A. Embassy that we were accepted to come here. Since then my life changed for good. Now that I have been given a second chance to live, I am attending school. I am working hard to use this opportunity to achieve what I thought I had lost, and for my dream to come true. What doesn't kill you, makes you strong.





## My Visit to Confucius Institute Day

By Mykhaylo Usenko ESL-054

My visit to the Confucius Institute Day, where I saw and learned a lot about the culture of China, left an unforgettable impression in my memory.

CCD's Confucius Institute Day was held on Saturday, September 30, at the King Center Concert Hall in honor of the 10<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of the Confucius Institute at CCD. There was a big program, the basis of which was the performance of singers and dancers, and after this performance, there were traditional Chinese dishes. Before the concert, there were organized painting and calligraphy demonstrations, crafts, games, language lessons, and Chinese art. Then I played a game, where I had to get M&M candies out of a bowl with the help of wooden chopsticks. I got it bad, and I only got a little candy. Then they helped me write my name Mykhaylo in Chinese characters on a piece of paper, and I copied them with a brush and paint. It turned out quite well. At the Chinese art exhibit, I dressed in a Chinese national costume and took this picture. Later I showed this photo at my work. They said that the suit suits me very much and everybody liked it.

Then the concert began at which singers, musicians, and dance groups performed. They performed national Chinese songs and dances of other ethnic peoples who live in China. I liked the good voices of singers and the performing skills of dancers, but I especially liked the Kung Fu performance (Martial Arts) by Denver Shaolin Kung Fu Academy. Combat music combined with high performing skills of Kung Fu gave energy and made an impression. After the concert, I approached the performers, thanked them for the dance, and asked how many ranks are there in Kung Fu and what grade they have. They replied that there are 16 bits in total, and they have a 6th. The 16th grade has only one person in the monastery of Shao Lin. Then we were treated to dishes of national Chinese cuisine. First, I tried the moon cake, which I really liked. It includes dates, red beans, and lotus pasta. I do not remember the name of all the dishes, but they were all delicious.

Attending the Confucius Institute Day has left a very pleasant impression, it will be remembered for a long time, and it further raised my interest in history, art, architecture, and other aspects of the Chinese culture.



# **The Lord of the Rings**

**Movie review**

**By Gerardo Pacheco ESL 023**

In this exciting trilogy, two hobbits go through the journey of their life, Frodo and Samwise take off to a land they don't know. The mission: Destroy the ring!

On their way, they find themselves being chased by a strange creature named Gollum, who obsesses with owning the ring and pretends to be friends with the adventurous couple of friends. AT some point, Sam discovers that Gollum is not a friend.

Frodo and Samwise walk for miles with little to eat and drink. With not much time to make it to Mount Doom and destroy the ring, Frodo and Sam don't get much rest. Suddenly the two little hobbits stand by the volcano that has the power to destroy the evil ring. Gollum jumps behind Sam and tries to grab the ring one last time, he then slips and falls into the lava with his "precious" ring.

# Danger

## Escape from Death

By Afrah Faisal ESL 052




**It is difficult to avoid life situations that are burdensome or frightening. A person's life may move from natural, day to day life, and swiftly turn into a threat of death.**

**In 2005, I married a good-hearted man, and I loved him so much. We dreamed together that we would be a big family with many children. We would visit many places and dream of a future that was possible but didn't happen. I was very happy with my husband, and we laughed a lot even about the smallest things. After six months of marriage, there was a big and joyous event for the world, but it was a frightening day for me, so **I became a pessimist after March 2006.** I will never forget this day. There was a solar eclipse in the Middle East, including Iraq. That day, I waited for my husband to return from work for lunch as usual. I was excited as all the people to see the eclipse of the sun. I didn't know that later there would be a bigger eclipse that would destroy my life. After we ate, we went out to the yard to watch the event. We were surprised to see that a paper had been placed in the garage of our house. I picked it up and opened it. I was shocked and nearly dropped to the ground. My husband shouted at me, "What's wrong with you?" What 's happening? ***I could not speak. I was crying, and my body trembled with fear.*****

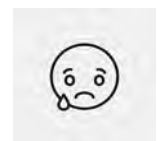


**My husband took the paper and read it out loud. "You are a criminal and a spy. If you don't quit working with the Americans, we will cut off your head because you are a traitor and work with the enemies". I remember the shape of the paper and the stamp that was stamped on it was typing on the computer. Immediately, my husband said to get out of the house quickly. We knew about people who hadn't worried about such threats and messages, and gunmen had come to their homes and killed them immediately in front of their children. They killed the whole family. I tried to shout, but I couldn't scream. It was locked in my chest. The gunmen were probably waiting behind the door. We had no chance to escape. At that moment, my memories began to pass in my mind through my tearful eyes. I could only imagine those moments when I had lived in love and joy. I remembered my wedding party. I remembered my childhood, my school and the years of my life passed like a movie. *Are we going to be killed? Yes. It was a death warning.* Certainly, the circumstances of the war in Iraq, the insecurity, and instability were the main reason behind the departure of many families to different places. Others had been killed at home and hadn't had a chance to survive. There was no one to help us and save our lives. Because of the absence of the power, the law and the government, people were killed in the streets. I had heard about these people and suffered grief for them. Now came the day that put me in their place. I felt a sense of**

**extraordinary fear and grief. It was a different feeling than I had ever known. The feeling of coming to death and ending life.**

**We left the house quickly and didn't notice that we were wearing pajamas**  
 **and didn't think of carrying anything with us except our personal identities. I left the happy life that I had lived in that house. We quickly took a taxi and went to the house of a big family. We were afraid because it was possible that there would be those who would follow us and know where we were hiding, and they would kill us. We only stayed for two days and traveled to northern Iraq because there were safer areas than the center and the south. We continued to move from one place to another and hide for long days until the day we felt safe.**

***My dreams turned into nightmares when I fell victim to tragic circumstances.*** The war still surrounds me from every side. I was looking for a way to escape from a bitter reality to an unknown life, here in the U.S. leaving behind dreams and hopes. Death is the hardest thing I have faced in my life. Sometimes I can't imagine life without the loved ones I lo lost. At the same time, I know that death is a fact that I can't escape; therefore, I should always be ready to face it.



# "I AM" POEM

By Uyen Nguyen ESL-033

*I am imaginative and gentle*

*I wonder what my life will be without love*

*I hear children's laughter*

*I see tears when people are happy*

*I want a rainbow in my life*

*I am imaginative and gentle*

*I pretend I am Wonder Woman*

*I feel the wind when I fly*

*I touch the stars in the night sky*

*I worry when the sky is only gray*

*I cry if I stand on the mountain top alone*

*I am imaginative and gentle*

*I understand that dreams are not true*

*I say I can be good*

*I dream I will be a super mum in my daughter's eyes*

*I try to believe in myself*

*I hope to have a better life if I do right*

*I am imaginative and gentle.*



# Koa Wood Cross

By Yong Kwon ESL 042



*Eight years ago, I bought an ugly fixer-upper house and had to do a total makeover in order to move in. Unfortunately, this was not part of my plan other than a simple paint job. If I knew what I was getting into, I would not have purchased this home. It was definitely more than what I had bargained for. Eventually, after all the hectic and crazy experiences, I finally finished the project in three and a half months. Endless hard labor of remodeling the house was the fruit of transformation. Needless to say, when I finally completed the project I felt a sense of relief and surprise. Although this was not an easy task, I experienced gratitude and accomplishment that I had never dreamed about in my life. As a result, I decided to dedicate my house to God who not only inspired me, but also strengthened me through this process. On that day, I was very excited to celebrate with my family and friends about this special occasion and had a housewarming party. I received many wonderful gifts and kind words at this party. One of the housewarming gifts was the Koa wood cross from my oldest brother David in Hawaii. He is a gentle and good listener, especially during my difficult remodeling project. I was frustrated and discouraged, but thankfully he always encouraged me with empathetic words. David is generous in giving and sharing the love of God to everyone. He was very proud of his baby sister who could finish this kind of task. He too was excited about how God touched my heart through this process. When I received the package from Hawaii, I could not open the box fast enough to see what was inside. As my brother*

*promised, the fourteen by nine-inch Koa wood cross laid in bubble wrap had a beautiful brown smooth finish. It was a unique gift because Koa wood comes from a popular local tree grown in Hawaii. I immediately knew where I wanted to hang it in my new home. My orange accent wall in the hallway was a perfect place for it to be seen from every direction in the house. Particularly, the sunlight tube overhead made a better display all day. Although I was not a religious or spiritual person, this was a good reminder that I survived. Likewise, I not only changed my house but was transformed by this difficult process. I am very thankful for how it turned out, though I did not realize how exhausting and complicated remodeling would be.*

*Through this process, I also discovered my talent and ability to remodel. My vision of the design came naturally, and I did not know that I had it. Of course, the conflicts between the contractor and myself were not enjoyable experiences, but I patiently endured. The amazing outcome is that I am able to believe in myself, can do more than what I have been told, and it's time to step out of my doubts. Sometimes life takes you to many interesting detours through unexpected situations to great opportunities. I am walking right into this unknown path to become an interior decorator and architectural designer. I am no longer afraid to take a chance on me. This Koa wood cross reminds me every day to focus on today; therefore, I would not exchange this lesson from my life for anything. The Koa wood cross is not just a symbol but deeply reminds me of a new discovery in hope and strength. David's thoughtful gift is very precious and personal because it celebrates a turning point in my life!*

# Chinese Culture

By Julie Samba ESL-023

I was invited by my teacher to the Chinese Festival where they showed Chinese culture. I brought my kids and two moms with me. My kids got to wear Chinese clothes and I took a picture of them. My teacher taught me how to say a few things in Chinese: Hello – “Ni hao”! and Thank you – “Xiexie!” There were a lot of people, even the Secretary of State was there. What I loved the most was the performance of kid’s dancing and karate. The Chinese culture is different from the American culture. They have more respect when they talk and seem to keep their children connected to their culture. That is something I admire. Even though their kids don’t get to go to China, they will still learn and practice their culture. In my opinion, all people from different countries, that immigrate to the United States, should keep and teach their children their culture.

The following Chinese Culture photographs are compliments of Ryan Sethre.





Semnan, Iran

## **A Horrible Car Accident**

By Mina Hajyaghahi ESL-054



Shahmirzad, Iran

One warm sunny day in the summer, our friends, a couple called Ali and Jila with their little girl, my son, and I were going to our host villa near the city they were living in.

Many years ago, in the summertime, we had guests - a couple with their little girl. They had planned to visit us in our city, Shahrood, and then go to Tehran the capital of Iran. We were living in a city where they could visit us, then continue their route. After a few days and spending wonderful times together, we decided to go together to see other friends in the city Semnan which is between our town and Tehran. My parents and our host went there a few hours before us. It was the worst drive I had ever had.

This city where our friends' family were living was one of the hottest cities in the summer, so most people have an extra house in a cool place called Shahmirzad near the mountain by the suburb of Semnan. A day after we arrived in that city, our host invited us to go to their villa in Shahmirzad. We managed to go there, but our guests wanted to see this city that has many ancient places and an old bazaar. My little son and I stayed with them because I knew the city and gave them a short city tour. My parents and our host went to their villa, where we should go to join them for lunch.

Our sightseeing to Semnan took until 2pm, and then we drove to the route of the villa. We were talking and listening to the music. In the middle of the way one of cars that was driving on the opposite side of us suddenly slipped because of high speed driving in the dangerous part of the route and crashed into the middle of our car.





When I woke up after being unconsciousness, I saw my son; the little girl and I were sitting on the ceiling of the car that had tumbled! The children were crying, I felt dizzy, and I saw our friends, the driver and his pregnant wife, who were worried and ran around the car to take us out. After a quick look, I understood we were in danger because gasoline was running on the rear window and I remembered just before the accident that Ali was smoking. What should I do? I told my son and the little girl to move quickly like a cat toward the front door, which Ali and Jila had gone out of. Then I started moving backward to go to the front window, and all the time I was very worried about the explosion of running gasoline. When I came out from the car, I shouted, "Run away from the car!" but the strong sunlight made everything rotate around my head.

During this time my parents, that were in the villa, worried about our delay. Meanwhile, our host's son and their son-in-law arrived at the villa. They told the host and my parents, "We saw a disastrous accident in our way", and told them they thought passengers might be injured badly. They were amazed by that accident. My father asked them, "What color was the car?" "Red" they answered. "Oh my god!" he said.

I was very weak and just looking at my little son, when I heard the very worried voice of my dad that was asking what happened to us. I jumped fast and ran to him, and I said, "We are ok, don't worry." I tried to diminish his stress as I was the only one wounded and had a small wound on my left temple. Next, we went back to the town to see a doctor to stitch my wound.

This horrible accident always makes me afraid of driving fast because that was the cause of the accident. In my opinion, all drivers are responsible for themselves, their passengers, the other cars which are in the route, and must keep the speed limit. Fortunately, we were very lucky in that disastrous accident. God blessed us and kept us healthy.



## *Starting from Zero*

By Baynat Adnan Alani ESL 054-003

Many years ago, we were living in Baghdad, the capital of Iraq.

The life wasn't comfortable and not safe because of the war that was in 2003, which was between a combined force of troops from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland against Saddam Hussein `s government. Our country was struggling to be saved again. The people didn't have work because of many economic problems that we had. The unemployment rate at that time was huge. My husband was looking for a job, but he didn't find any. After a long time, he got a good job with the US Army in Iraq as an engineer, and because of that our lives began to change.

He started to work, but the extremist people considered him as a spy. The area where he was working was dangerous, so he was likely to be killed. His friends encouraged him to apply to immigrate to the USA because our lives were being threatened. We did all the paperwork that the US Embassy asked us to do, and we got a number for our case that the Embassy gives to the people who want to immigrate to the USA. After six months, my husband could not continue the trek to his job because it was far, so he resigned. We almost forgot about our case because it took a long time, and we didn't have an update. We thought our case had been canceled.

One day, after four years, we were sitting together and drinking Arabic coffee: I still remember the smell of it and the cardamom coming from the pot. We were talking about our plans. We decided to buy a house because my husband and I had gotten good jobs, so our lives seemed perfect. Suddenly, we got an email. My husband called me "Baynat come and read this email." The mail was from the American Embassy. It said, "You got the visa. Get ready to fly to the USA." I read it, but I felt it was a nightmare. I felt like the ceiling had collapsed on my head

because of this shocking news. It would turn my life upside down. At that moment, I thought I had lost my life. Everything started to disappear in front of my eyes, and I began crying all day because I was afraid of starting in a new place. I thought we might not survive in America, but my husband was sure everything would be fine. He encouraged me to be strong.

We had to be brave to start again from the beginning and make the decision. It was the hardest decision we had ever made. Then we began to get ready. We resigned from our jobs. After that, we flew to Denver, where my husband's friends live. At the airport, the world looked different to me; the people, the language, the lifestyle, even the weather. I thought I was deaf because I didn't understand any words, and no one could understand me.

We had made this decision, so we had to get involved in the community and develop our skills and improve our language. I started work as a volunteer in different organizations. My husband started working for a big construction company. We began to engage the new life and get used to everything.

Finally, we made it! I have been studying ESL at the Community College of Denver, and my husband has been doing his master degree in construction management, and he has a good job. We have a saying; "Hope is born in the womb of suffering." I wish my story will inspire people who have the same fears of starting from the beginning. We can conquer our fears by working hard and starting again even though it is starting from scratch. My amazing experience has made me strong and taught me a lot of things, so I believe anyone can start anywhere and anytime if the person decides to. **FEAR of the Unknown** *HOPE* **Culture Shock!**

*I don't understand anyone & they can't understand me.*

**Assimilation!**

**You can do it too!**



## **The Most Important Trip of Life**

By Alireza Sadrearhami ESL 054



**Have you ever gone on a journey**

**that has completely changed your life? For me, it was the end of 2015. I was scheduled for an interview at the US embassy in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. I had never been so worried. It was something amazing for me. I had mixed feelings of excitement and apprehension. Until the plane landed at Dubai airport, I was thinking and constantly wondering, “Are you prepared for such a big change in your life?”**

**It was early in winter, but the weather was warm and so pleasant, even at night. Dubai was a fascinating city that I had never seen before. The tall towers and business centers, as well as excellent location, gave rise to this modern city that attracted everyone’s attention. I completed the medical tests first and collected all the documents that I needed. Once I had all the documents, I was ready to go to the embassy.**

**My country didn’t have a US embassy, so I had to travel to the capital of another country. Even though, it was more expensive for me, it was a fun trip too that I enjoyed. When I entered the embassy, I was very anxious because everything was new for me. Step by step my heart rate was increasing and I could feel it. I had an interview with a very nice and young officer. He asked me some questions and I answered all of them with more details. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, my visa application was accepted. I couldn’t say anything, even a word when the smiling officer said, “your visa will be ready in a few more days.**

**When I left the embassy, I was very happy but a bit dizzy. I went back to Dubai to visit some exciting places there. At the time, I was thinking about immigration and many questions about my future were racing around in my head. I had a dream to**

come to the United States and continue my education here. I wanted to become a pharmacist, but I had a big question. “Was I ready now to start this challenge in my life?” My parents always supported me in this way, which reduced my concern a lot. I had to come back to the embassy to pick up my passport with a blue visa attached to it.



When I arrived at the embassy, I was greeted with the embassy’s employee indignation, as she said, “Your visa is not ready to pick up.” She was so angry and shouted, “Who told you to come today?” Because I was shocked and my mouth was so dry, I could barely answer her. I requested to see the officer again. Finally, after waiting two hours, my visa was prepared. I reserved a ticket to return back home to Iran that night, but because of delays and heavy traffic in Dubai, I missed my flight and had to take another one. I think my immigration difficulties started that night!

In conclusion, I finished this scary trip with a good result; I prepared myself for immigration. Life is full of challenges that affect people; but the winners are people who control their stress and fight through the challenges to overcome them. Many things that cause worries in our lives are not predictable and people should prepare themselves to adjust to them. I learned that time fixes everything, and I should tolerate and control my anxiety. At that time, I was ready to immigrate soon to start a new life and try hard to achieve my goals.





# Mosul Dam

By Besehi Alsih ESL - 054

Mosul Dam is located in the northern part of Iraq and is a five-hour drive from Bagdad. It is very close to Turkey. It is three hours from where my relatives live. Mosul Dam is one of the largest and most famous dams in my country and the fourth largest dam in the Middle East. Mosul Dam, or former Saddam Dam, is located on the Tigris River in the city of Ninewah about 50 KM north of Mosul.

This dam was built in 1984, is 3.2 Km long, and 131 meters high. It was built to protect the population from flooding because of heavy rainfall and melting snow in the mountains. The dam works to generate electricity and provide water for irrigation. It contains about 11.1 Km<sup>3</sup> of water and provides electricity to 1.7 million residents of Mosul.



## *"I AM" Poem*

*By Samar Farhan*



*I Am quiet and shy*

*I wonder if the universe is infinite?*

*I hear nature cry out from the mess of human beings*

*I see my mother's face in the sky*

*I want to graduate from college*

*I Am quiet and shy*

*I pretend I can solve the problems of this world*

*I feel the need to be something not real*

*I touch the sky*

*I worry about the future*

*I cry for the children who never really laugh*



*I Am quiet and shy*

*I understand I may not be able to do exactly what I want to do*

*I say every student must study hard for success*

*I dream of traveling away from earth*

*I try to do my best to get high marks*

*I hope my dreams will someday become truth*

*I Am quiet and shy.*





# Language Barrier

By Phuc Huynh Hong Pham ESL-054

Think about doing something that you think is going to be easy, but it becomes more complicated when you really experience it. I spent most of the time by myself on two airplanes traveling from Vietnam to Japan and from Japan to Seattle. It was hard saying goodbye to my lovely family, but I needed to go. I told myself that everything was going to be fine. No way is easy, sometimes it needs to be rugged. I started my trip with a lot of emotions.

I have never been to Seattle before, which is on the other side of the world from my country, so I felt a little bit excited. My heart was trembling when the airplane took off. Oh yeah! I was going to visit Seattle, in Washington, USA. This was my first time going to live far away from my family that took care of me. I felt not only excited but also nervous. I wondered “How could I communicate with the people that live there?” my English was not good at all. I felt sleepy because I only slept for three hours the night before my flight. Luckily, I woke up before the plane landed in Japan. I thought I could handle it, but it did not happen like what I had imagined.

I needed to check in again at Japan’s airport, but the airport was very big. I felt frustrated for a moment. I tried to follow both the directions and other people at the airport to get there. Because of the long-line to check-in, my breathing was unstable. I tried my best to ask people where I could buy food with my discreet English level. They did not understand me at all, which made me panic; I even used body language to demonstrate. Finally, they knew what I meant and explained to me how to get there easily. When I came to the store and pointed out what I wanted to buy with my money, their answer was like a slap in my face “We do not accept American dollars.” I did not know how to change money, so I just walked away. Everything was against me when I waited for the airplane from Japan to Seattle, and the smell of popcorn was distracting me. The next eleven hours were the most uncomfortable I felt during the whole trip.



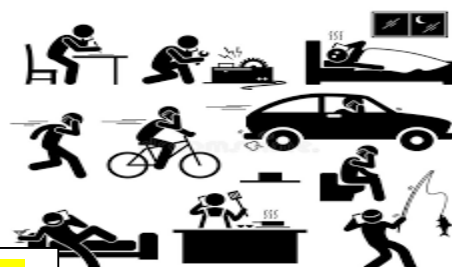
I could not put my heavy luggage in the bin inside the plane. The girl who sat next to me tried to help, which made me feel so grateful at that time. I sat in the middle of three chairs, and it was really inconvenient. I was afraid to drink water most of the time because I did not want to ask people to move out of their seat. I also realized that it was really cold inside the airplane because all I wore was a thin jacket. Every cold wind that came from the air conditioner blew into my little shivering body when I tried to get some sleep. After a long flight, I finally arrived in Seattle. I thought this was the end of my trip until I perceived that no one would pick me up at the Seattle International Airport.

I carried my luggage outside and waited for my family, Naomi and her daughter- Kristine, who sponsored me to come to the US. I waited for about an hour and I became more and more *anxious* every minute. I borrowed a phone to call them, but they did not answer. After I calmed myself down, I suddenly remembered I did not tell them the time my airplane landed. At that time, I was frustrated and wondered if there was any other way I could connect with them. I texted my friend who also studied in Seattle, and asked if she could help me. After a while, she said everything was fine now, “your host is on the way to pick you up.” I exhaled and said, “Thank you for your help.”

Finally, I finished my trip in a safe way. It was the most challenging experience for a seventeen years old girl. I had a chance to go to the United States and was so happy because I could visit another country. I thought my trip would be easy, but it was not at all. My difficult challenge is understanding English. Studying a new language is necessary for everybody who is planning to visit other countries.



CONVERSATION



ary



# *My Grandfather*

By Tuyizere Alain

**“You guys, open your eyes  
See what you want for your  
child & your grandchild too.  
My Grandfather**

**My grandfather was a good man and hero for our family and other families in his community in Burundi in Eastern Africa. He helped a lot of people in that community by giving them food and built an elementary school for the community because he saw many people go far away for school. He helped all his brothers and sisters to have a good education and paid for all their education from infant school through college. Three brothers and two sisters finished college in Belgium, and then they came to Burundi to help the community; two of them worked at school, and the other three were doctors. My grandfather was thinking what he could do to help the population to have a good life, education, freedom to say what they want, and democracy. When he started to go into politics, he told the population to be free to say what they wanted the government to do for them. He always liked to say, “You guys, open your eyes. See what you want for your child and your grandchild too. You should tell the government and not be afraid because you pay taxes. After two years trying to open the eyes for population, the government saw and didn’t like what he said. They told him to stop what he was doing; “If you don’t stop, we will do something bad to you.” But, he didn’t stop, and they killed him: in many countries in Africa, if someone tries to do something good, he will not live long.**

**I heard about my grandfather from my father in Brazil where I was born. In 2014, I went to Burundi to see what my grandfather did, and many people told me the great history about him. I saw school he built in his name and some streets named for him in the city where he was born.**

*He was: Generous*

**Thoughtful**

**Wise**

**A HERO**

## "I Am" Poem

By Elmostafa Benlaghid ESL-033



I Am Kindness and helpfulness  
I wonder why there is hatred?  
I hear the singing of a bird  
I see the smile of a child  
I want happiness for all children



I Am kindness and helpfulness  
I pretend to explore the world  
I feel happy with my family  
I touch the leaves of flowers  
I worry about the children of the world  
I cry when I see injustice.



I Am kindness and hopefulness  
I understand I should learn more  
I say the parents should educate their children  
I dream for a better world  
I try to be honest  
I hope always to be healthy  
I Am kindness and hopefulness.



Back left: Ryan Sethre, Amy Deranick, Kebede Gellan, Sharon Hunt, Linda Nechrony Front left: Monterey Buchanan, Grace Wintemute, Paula Budzak, Anna Baldock, Monica O'Brien Wolfe, Michelle Stone Kraus

CCD's English Language faculty and staff are very fortunate to work with exceptional immigrants, refugees, and foreign students. Understanding English as a 2nd, or with many of our students, a 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup> language, is challenging indeed. They inspire us with their perseverance, positive spirit, drive, and more.

**CREATIVE**      *KIND*      *INNOVATIVE*      **appreciative**      **giving**  
**multi-cultural**      **BRAVE**      **discerning**      **courageous**  
**Inventive**      **thoughtful**      **fun**      **resolve**      **resilient**  
 endurance      **problem-solver**      **professional**  
**overcome obstacles**      **interesting**      **open-hearted**  
**curious**      *COMPASSIONATE*      **FOCUSED**  
*Thoughtful*      **Adaptable**      **DILIGENT**      **Hard-working**  
*Shy*      **embraces opportunity**      **thankful**      *adventuresome*  
**Educated**      **respectful**      **SUCCESSFUL!**      **DETERMINED!**

We are privileged to share their unique heart-felt stories & thoughts with you.