

Customs, by Phimpisa Bwint

We show respect for our elders by behaving in certain ways. The following are common examples. Lower the head when greeting them. Lowering the body a little when talking to them or when walking past them. When sitting down, sit at a lower level or the same level as them. We welcome and care for them when they visit us and always talk to them in a polite way. When our elders are speaking, we must never interrupt and we listen to their suggestions.



Supporting our family members is very important. We have strong family connections. Members of the family, especially the oldest child or the one with the most savings, would help the others during difficult times. The help usually comes in the form of money to pay for a younger sister or brother's education, or parents' hospital bills or rent. If any family member needs help, we are to be ready to help him.

The main food is rice. Everyone eats rice from the time he is born. But we don't just eat rice by itself. We have many other delicious side dishes. We are famous for hot and spicy foods to go along with the rice.



In the December issue, we invited students to share their holiday memories. We include these as a farewell to winter....

Christmas Holiday, by Rosario Lugo

We celebrate Christmas Day with my family and friends. We decorate a Christmas tree and, when they come here, they put the presents around the Christmas tree. We cook a lot of food for Christmas Eve and the next day, we make tamales, beans, barbecue, buñuelos cake and poñiche. Before we eat dinner, we give thanks to God for the food and everything. We also make piñatas. In the piñatas we put some candies and some different fruits. Then we break it at 12:00 at night. The men make a fire outside and we sit around it. We talk and the children play. We wait for Christmas Day.

Christmas Time, by Angelia Contreras

At Christmas time all of my family are busy because of shopping and buying presents for Christmas. On December 24th all of my family cooked dinner together. At midnight everybody gave each other hugs and presents for Christmas. The children enjoy getting gifts and playing.

Christmas Time, by Beatriz Contreras

On Christmas all my family and I had a good time. We prayed first. Then everyone cooked something different. Later on, we gave the gifts for our Secret Santa. That was fun because we laughed a lot. The kids are first, then the adults. At midnight we gave each other hugs. My Christmas was blessed.

We salute our newest citizens and their tutors:

Htun Thein, and tutors Gloria Schraud and Michelle Morneau Phyan Racom and tutor Mary Spooner. *Mary has graciously shared a very proud picture of Phyan taken at the Oath Ceremony. We have posted it on our bulletin board to share with everyone.*



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Read All About It!

Craven Literacy Council's Student Newsletter 2015

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Student Stories

**Send us your stories or poems
for the June newsletter**

Learning English, by Kalaya Soe

My name is Kalaya Soe. I'm twenty-five years old. I'm from Burma. I have four brothers and four sisters. When I was eleven years old, I moved to Thailand. I was in Thailand seven years. After seven years, I moved to California USA. I was in California two years. After two years I moved to North Carolina.

I stay with my Aunty. My Aunty always loves me. She always teaches me good things. I love her, too. Then I got a job. I go to work every Monday to Saturday. I want to be able to learn more English because if someone talks to me in English, I don't understand at all.

Now I have a teacher to teach me to learn more English. Her name is Miss Jo. I love her so much. She is a very good teacher. I hope God blesses Miss Jo forever. Thank you to all teachers who teach me to learn more English. God bless you all.



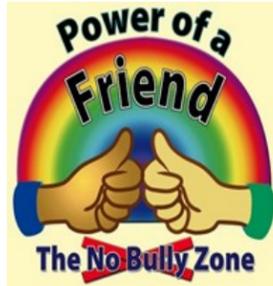
An Extraordinary Man, by Viangie Martinez

I met someone that gives meaning to my life with only his presence. He transforms my bad day into a good day. No matter what problem I have, he will try to find a solution. That man is extraordinary because he knows how to be a husband, a father, and my love. He knows how to change my humor in just a second and he makes me feel extraordinary too.

He is my husband, Felix, the father of my three children. He works very hard for us and he always wants the best for our lives. I'm proud of the man I have beside me not only because I love him. I see a man with determination. He is clear with what he wants in his future and for those he loves. He has demonstrated a commitment to such a level that he achieved the goals he proposed in a short period of time. I'm happy to be his wife. And congratulations to this man for his promotion to Sergeant. I'm married to an extraordinary hero who defends our country and our freedom. He is a United States Marine.



Stop Bullying Early, by Morro Keys



We all know home is your first source of learning. So, technically, your parents are your first teachers. A parent's role has a major impact in their children's life. So, can bullying start at home?

Many people have their own personal theory on how bullying is started. Since parents are leaders and kids are the followers, parents must lead in a positive way. For example, often parents get in heated arguments. Your child may over-hear parents verbally abusing each other. The kids might start abusing other people because often kids repeat what they hear. Bullying may even come from older siblings.

What people don't understand is that bullying is not an individual problem. Bullying affects everybody. Even if everyone looked the same, people would still bully other people. Most people are followers and do not use their own mind. People feel all alone and take matters into their own hands. As a result, many people have committed suicide as a way out.

In order for us to stop bullying, it must start at home. Teach your kids early that bullying destroys lives. Always talk to someone if you are getting bullied. Remember, if you are getting bullied, someone else is too. Stop bullying and spread love because love never hurts.

My Gallbladder Operation, by Fannie T

I went into the hospital on January 22, 2015 at 8:00 in the morning. Everyone was real nice to me from the nurse to the housekeeper. When I woke up from my surgery, I was put on a straight liquid diet. I was on a liquid diet for three days. On the fourth day, I could eat some solid food. I was glad to hear that.



I looked at my stomach. There were four little holes about the size of a raisin clamped together with staples. At least that's what it looked like to me. When I left the hospital, I was in a little pain. Not much, the doctor gave me medicine for the pain. He is a good doctor. He told me when I get home to get plenty of rest. I will listen to my doctor. I will try to eat the right food and get plenty of rest so I can get well and stay well.

Brazil, by Mack McCaffity

I would like to move to Brazil to see the beautiful women and to become friends.

I would like to eat the food they have there. I would like to learn to cook Brazilian food.

I would enjoy seeing the animals in the Amazon Rainforest.

I would want to own land over there and build a big beautiful house.



The following two articles are from students studying at Uptown.



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The People and the Reason I Changed My Life, by Jermarl Best

The people that changed my life are the people on the streets. Some sell drugs, smoke drugs, or are homeless. Everyday I see someone asking or begging for money. I see drug dealers getting locked up left and right, always watching their backs. I know I don't want any of their lives for myself. It was time to make a change.

Jail is not a place I want to be. Being homeless is something I never want to experience. I began to change some of my ways. I stopped hanging out late at night on the block. I changed the people around me who wanted nothing out of life and were heading for disaster. I planned for my life to be much better than that. So I started working toward my GED at Uptown.

Making those steps was hard but very important to my goals in life. And with the help of my wonderful teachers at Uptown my change in life and goals was easy and obtainable. In a few weeks I will have one part of my goal reached, my GED. And from there I'm going into the military.

So I would like to thank the bad influences around me. I overcame them. I also thank my Uptown teachers, staff and everyone else that supports the program for my change and for the goals I reached and will reach. THANK YOU!

The Purpose of Getting My GED, by Deonca Greer

My main goal is to get my GED so I can make a better life for myself and to get a better job and not depend on anyone to help me with my bills. When I get my GED, I'm planning to go to college to become a cosmetologist, a pediatrician, or a teacher since I enjoy being around children.

I want to make a difference in my life as well as others, to let them know that when you feel that life's over because you don't have your GED, it's not. You have programs that will sign you up and it's within walking distance. You also have instructors who will take the time with you to show you the right way and the key to success. I appreciate my instructors: Mrs. Dorethea Neely, Lucinda Barfield, and Mrs. Sharon Taylor-Fernandes for being the best at what they do, and that's teaching



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California, by Richard Frazier

I would like to take a trip to California to see what it is like.

Even though the food costs a lot of money, I would like to try different things. I would like to try some tacos from a taco truck. I would like to eat some fish in California. I've seen pictures of their nice, big, juicy cheeseburgers.

California grows many fruits and vegetables. I want to taste some of the good fruit they grow.