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Spring 2016

The Howl - Spring 2016

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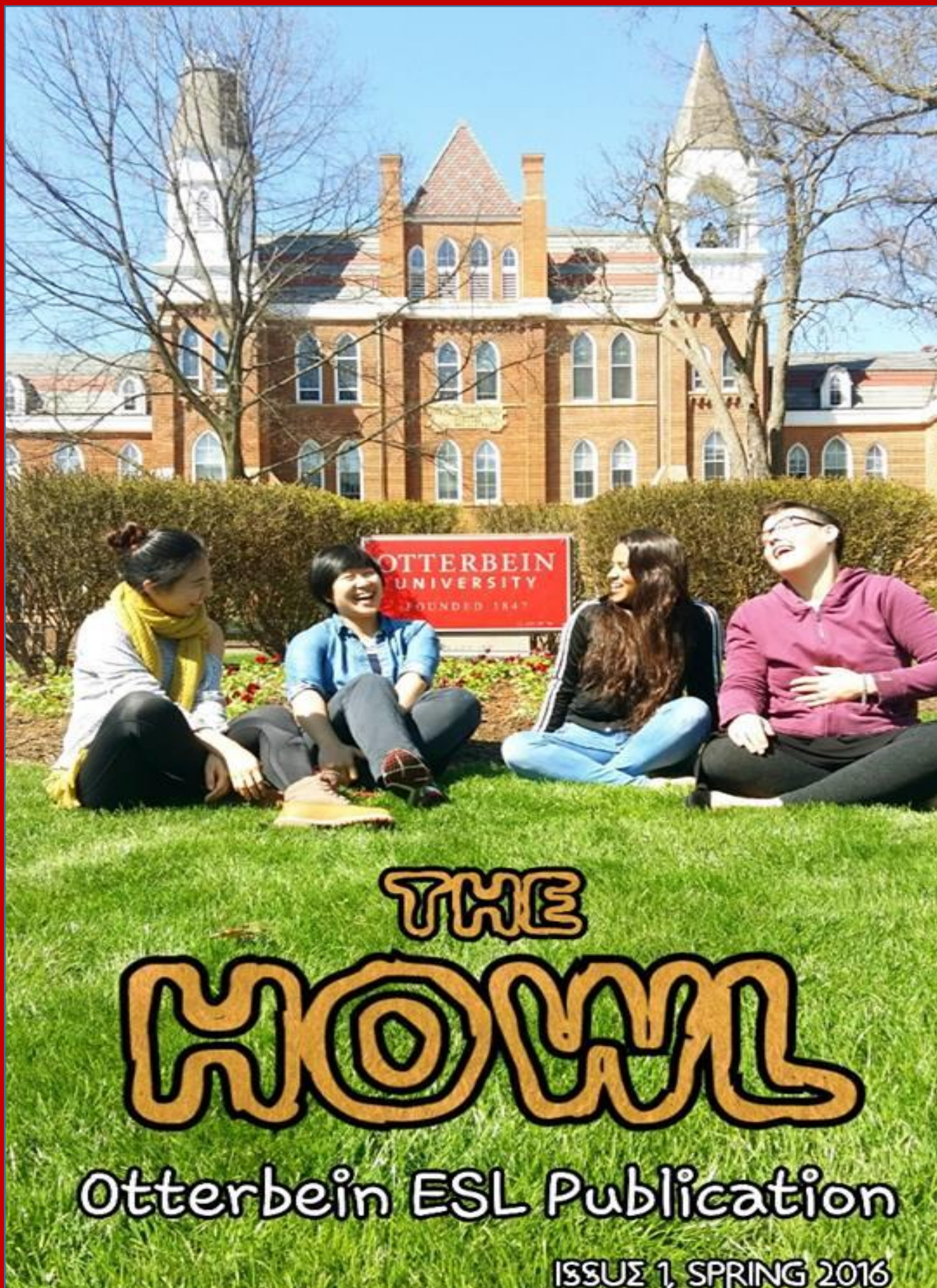


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Recommended Citation

McMurray, Elizabeth; Lin, Jennifer; Cheng, Chih-Jou; Larrarte, Paola Celis; and Sirvent, Elisa Martinez, "The Howl - Spring 2016" (2016). *The Howl*. 1.
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INTRODUCTIONS

A Farewell from the Editor, Liz McMurray:

When I first conceived of the idea of our magazine, I was just teaching basic writing to our ESL students. However, in class, when we discussed the idea of audience in our work, it occurred to me that our English Language Learners had no real audience besides their peers and teachers in ESL to read the experiences and worldviews expressed in all the hard work they were doing. Thus, our little magazine was born.

Since its debut in the spring of 2015, I have watched students proudly claim the magazine as their own, sharing academic, creative and journalistic work with the Otterbein community.

Seeing submissions and support pour in and magazines fly off the stands as the semesters go by fills me with emotion. I'm so thrilled that this means of publishing international student and especially ESL student work now seems so accepted, so expected, so normal.

Thank you to Otterbein ESL's coordinators and teachers for the guidance, encouragement and support you give to the students and the magazine. Thanks to the Otterbein community for your readership and financial contributions during our bake sales! Finally, thanks to our brave and creative international students for the time, effort and courage it takes to step outside the comfort of your own language and culture to share your lives and ideas with us through your writing and art. I've learned so much from you.

It's been an honor and a pleasure to work with all of you. I look forward to seeing the evolution of the Howl as students with ever diverse and inspiring ideas and contributions come and go under the guidance of a new editor.

Please enjoy the culmination of months of hard work by our amazing ESL students: this spring's edition of the Howl.



Jennifer Lin (Chia-Hua, Lin)

I am an exchange student from Taipei, Taiwan, majoring in Drama Creation and Application. I love acting, singing and dancing. I am especially good at Hip-Hop & Girl Style. I am glad to study at Otterbein University. I really enjoy the life here.



I'm from Bogota, Colombia. I'm taking ESL classes and my future project is to be an academic student at Otterbein and take Journalism as a major. I've been cheering for 7 years for All Stars' teams, and I love it. I speak Spanish, Italian and English (In progress), and I'm open to learning more languages. All my triumphs are due to God, and Otterbein has been such a blessing for me.



Chih-Jou, Cheng (RoRo)

Hi, I am a dreamer from Tainan, Taiwan. I like to smile but also struggle with the problem that my eyes will disappear while smiling. I enjoy dancing and singing a lot. I am fascinated by musicals (I am also a big fan of all the junior musical majors and dream someday to sing as well as they do.) Also, I love sharing stories and bringing joy to others. If you would like to get to know me, just talk to me!

**Paola Andrea
Celis Larrarte**

It's Bowling Time!

Jennifer

Want to hang out with friends but have no idea where to go? Want to celebrate friends' birthdays but don't want to go to a restaurant again? Want to improve your bowling skills but don't know which place is good? Columbus Square Bowling Palace is your best choice.

Columbus Square Bowling Palace is a huge bowling center located at 5707 Forest Hills Blvd, Columbus, OH 43231. It's open 24 hours a day. You can just go whenever you want and no need to be worried about whether it might close, which is a really great thing for a night owl, like me.

What's exciting is that they always have different happy hours, which are at such good times that you might want to go and get the cheaper price. For example, if you go there on Monday through Friday from 11am - 2pm, Bowling 2 games (including shoe rental) and lunch is just \$10! I bet you won't want to miss these good bargains.

There are many facilities, including a restaurant, arcade, cocktail lounge, and 64 new synthetic lanes. They also provide many services such as birthday parties, office parties, and casual or league bowling, regional or national tournaments. I strongly recommend that you try their restaurant. They have so many choices of foods, such as twisty fries, which is my favorite. And also hot dogs, chicken salad, stacked turkey, onion rings, side salad and some drinks. So you will never worry about being either hungry or thirsty while bowling. What a nice things it is!

The space there is clear, bright and comfortable. The only shortcoming, I think, is that the bowling machines might have frozen a couple of times while playing, which can bother customers' moods sometimes. However, the staff is polite and patient, they will solve your problems immediately.

Columbus Square Bowling Palace is my favorite place to hang out with friends. I hope it will be your favorite place as well





Do YOU NEED A HYPERACTIVE FRIEND?

Paola

When people write reviews, it is usually to talk about things like gadgets, passions, and current themes, like the funniest movie, a new book, a fresh new song or a newly opened restaurant. However, reviewing dogs is unusual. Since I came to America, the distance from my Columbian home is a reason why I think about my dog. All the time, it is hard to be so far away from your best friend and not to think about them. Hence this is a way to feel closer to my unconditional friend. My dogs, one Labrador and one Golden Retriever, have enriched my life, so I want to give you a quick comparison and review of them for their positives and negatives as members of different types of homes and families.

Now I'm living in the United States and it is 2,524 miles of distance between Ohio and Bogota (Colombia is my home country). I'm here to study English and major in journalism. I want to bring my dog, who is called Gota (translation : Drop), because she is a little bit of happiness in my life., it is important to have a friend near, and the best example of that is having a dog. In the university where I am now, the psychology department gives the recipe of dogs against sadness and loneliness.

Having a Labrador is to be prepared for all, either a good dog or a naughty dog.

They have a big heart for loving anyone, especially children, and they have a facility for meeting new friends. Labs aren't fighting dogs; however, labs are good partners. They like to play all the time, but when they grow up and become adults, they stop playing and instead rest almost all the time.

Labradors are often portrayed as the almost "perfect" family dog. According to the Nest.com, they are "an energetic hunting machine specializing in retrieving foul from water and field settings."



Similar to the Lab, having a golden retriever is like having a kid in the house. They want to play with all the things inside or outside the house. However to have a Golden Retriever is to have a storm in the house.

When they meet someone, they start to think that the 'new friend' obviously wants to play all the time. Therefore, when someone meets a golden retriever, they have a large, hyperactive friend for a long day.



Golden Retrievers are athletic, natural-looking and large. They are peaceful with other animals, eager to please, and very responsive to training. Having a dog is almost always a good option for company, a reason to do exercise or just to have an unconditional friend. But if you really need a good dog to feel love and have someone with whom to have fun, Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retrievers may be right for you. Both are great options. However, in my personal opinion, Labs are always the best option for

falling in love again; they are more dedicated to family and they have a more developed sense of protection of their family. This breed of dogs falls in love with their owners as well. Finally make your own choice according to your desire. Good luck.

You Should Not Miss -- “The Hunger Games”

Chih-You



My friend, Esther, and I went to our “monthly hunting books event” in Taiwan, Tainan the biggest bookstore. Normally, we just wrote down the books that we were interested in and borrowed them from a library. When we had almost finished our hunting and were going to have lunch, we stopped in front of a book. In the meantime our stomachs growled badly and we blurted out “The Hunger Games” together. We couldn’t help but laugh out loud. It was my first encounter with “The Hunger Games.” Esther was very sure that I would fall in love with these books. Therefore, she bought them as my birthday gift. This was how it started. Seven years ago, I met and fell in love with “The Hunger Games.”

I love books, especially adventure novels. I have seen thousands of books; mostly, I can easily guess how the stories will go. Yet, this time I couldn’t. The Hunger Games is a 2008 science fiction novel by the American writer Suzanne Collins. These books received mostly positive feedback from teenagers to adults. Suzanne has written quite a lot of best-selling books, like “Grigori the Overlander” and “Fire Proof.” Her books are fantasy, unexpected but still logical. Her books catch our hearts and make someone hold us captive. “The Hunger Games” series are even the best of the best.



(Picture from CinemeBlend)

Once you start reading it, you can't help but keep reading. In one moment, you will be very tense because Katniss, the main character of the book, was almost found by killers, and in the next moment, you will grieve because a pure, innocent girl was killed by the unfair system. You cannot eat but think about all the detail in the books (get it? Ha ha. "Hunger" games!). None should miss the "Hunger Games."

Before you rush to a bookstore, just let me tell you a little bit about the story. In the dystopian future, formed from a post-apocalyptic North America, it is a country which has an extreme class system. The country consists of a flourishing wealthy region surrounded by 12 poorer, exploited districts. Each year, two young representatives from each district are selected by a lottery to participate in the Hunger Games, a gladiatorial match to the death, which is an honor and is necessary to the country's stability in the Capitol's opinion. This unfair system has run many years. Most people are disgusted with the system but still follow helplessly. Some people even enjoy this inhuman massacre. When Katniss, who is not a hero but also not a quitter, volunteers herself instead for Primrose, her little sister, everything changes. Katniss stands up to protect what she loves. Just like Hamlet, in the beginning of the story, Katniss plays a passive role in this story. She is a novel tragic hero.

The setting of the book is not only strong but also satirical. While we are enjoying the great adventure story, it keeps reminding us that we are in a capitalistic region similar to our own societies. Moreover, the news reporting of war causes you to feel like a cold blooded observer. Yet when the big gun rings, it tells that someone has been sacrificed in the inhuman Hunger Game, and you can feel the pain as if you are a part of them. When the mutated wolves run toward you, you aren't insensitive to their terrifying form. Worse, you have goose bumps because you saw someone that you love's eyes through the wolves. This novel makes people's mood highly volatile.



(Picture from Daily News)

“The Hunger Games” makes you feel guilty while you eat excessive exquisite food and wear expensive brand name clothing, as if you are one of the wealthy “Capitol citizens.” At the same time, you feel so pained by so many unfair things that happened in your life, just like the people in the districts. You have no choice but to suffer.

However, don’t struggle too much. You still have some right to make your life different. Grab everything that can delight your life. To see a great movie is definitely a good idea. In 2009, Lions Gate Entertainment decided to bring “The Hunger Games” onto the big screen. It was totally a great decision. Lions Gate Entertainment did not bring a great amount of income but let us enjoy many great movie nights.

The strong style is one of the highlights of the movie. The master vision is clean with bright color. The symbolism increases the viewing experience. The architecture for the capital looks so totalitarian and oppressive but is still also beautiful in a way. The costumes are eccentric but very attractive.

Without a doubt, the actors were fantastic, too. Their acting is natural and just perfect. They had a strong, unique style, but not too much. Especially Jennifer Lawrence, who played Katniss, “She didn’t have much obvious craft in her work, which is part of what’s sort of surprising and amazing,” said the director, Francis Lawrence.

The director caught the most important master architecture and connected the four movies perfectly. However, the movie did miss a few brilliant details like the describing of variant wolves or the Capitol’s using the voice of who you care about to put you in danger. Although the movie missed some great details, it is still very worth it to watch. The exquisite scenes are closely linked with one other and are never dull for a moment.



(Picture from AbcNEWS)

As Francis Lawrence said, "Part of the reason that the series is a success... is that the author decided to write stories about the consequence of war and the consequence of violence for teenagers but treated them with respect and didn't flinch," he explains.

The movie, let alone the books, had received a positive reception from most of the audience. The books are full of imagination and reflection. Although the movies are fantastic, the books are a very worthwhile read. "The Hunger Games" series are absolutely a great book-hunting target. Write it on your list!

If you have already read the book, then you can't miss the movie to experience the scenes' ambiance. If you only saw the movie, you definitely shouldn't miss the books. There are lot of details to strengthen your imagination.

Anyway, there's no day like today to get a book for yourself. Yet, make sure to bring some snacks and a great drink and make yourself comfortable before you start it. Because once you start reading it, you won't leave your spot until you finish it!

"May the odds be ever in your favour."



Pablo Escobar, Good or Evil?

Paola



Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria was born on December 1, 1949 in the Colombian city of Rionegro, Antioquia. He started stealing cars before moving into smuggling, and then he played a high profile role in the control of Colombia's smuggled cigarette market during a conflict known as the Marlboro Wars.

Pablo Escobar rose to power step by step from the lowest to the highest rung and became the wealthiest, the most powerful and the most violent criminal of all the time.

He had two children, Manuela Escobar Henao and Juan Pablo Escobar Henao, the latter of which wrote a book about his father, "Pablo Escobar, My Father," after overcoming the assassination of his father and obtained life without prosecution. Juan Pablo was private after his dad died. This is because he couldn't live a normal life until twenty years after his dad's death. In this book, he recounts his experience of growing up with the world's most notorious drug kingpin.

The story of Pablo Escobar is about a man with all his virtues and all his flaws because he wasn't only the famous drug dealer and murderer who turned public opinion against himself. He was also the man who helped millions of poor households to have a house and get out of poverty. He also funded the building of schools, stadiums, and skating rinks, which helped many people in Colombia.

Actually, most people think that Pablo Escobar helped poor people more than the Colombian government. He was the popular hero of the poorest people of Colombia; he stole from rich people to give it to poor people, like Robin Hood in the old story.

Nevertheless, the good things that he did don't counteract his body count: approximately 1,000 people.

When the government of the United States of America got involved in the Escobar manhunt, they decided to train the military forces of both Colombia and the United States. 13 years after finding Escobar, the same training would help to catch Osama Bin Laden.

The Colombian justice system was involved in Pablo Escobar's drug business for the exchange of money for the system. Because of this power, no one could stop him.

1997 was the year Pablo Escobar terrified all of Colombia with bombs in the central police station and all over the country and also in the "Palacio de Justicia," which is the court house. The Colombian people were sleeping with the fear of being one more victim of the hands of Pablo Escobar. This was the year in which everyone had to obey Pablo Escobar's orders.

The testimony of many people of Medellin, Colombia who benefited from Pablo Escobar is all about idolizing him. Actually, in most of the houses of these people there is a shrine with his picture and many flowers worshiping him. This thinking about him is that he was the saint that saved their lives and protected them against the corrupt power of Colombian governmental injustice.

On the other hand, the richest people of the country were angry about the power and control that he had in the Colombian justice system. All his murders went unpunished and he was free after killing so many people. It is hard to think about being in the shoes of the many families to which he caused pain.



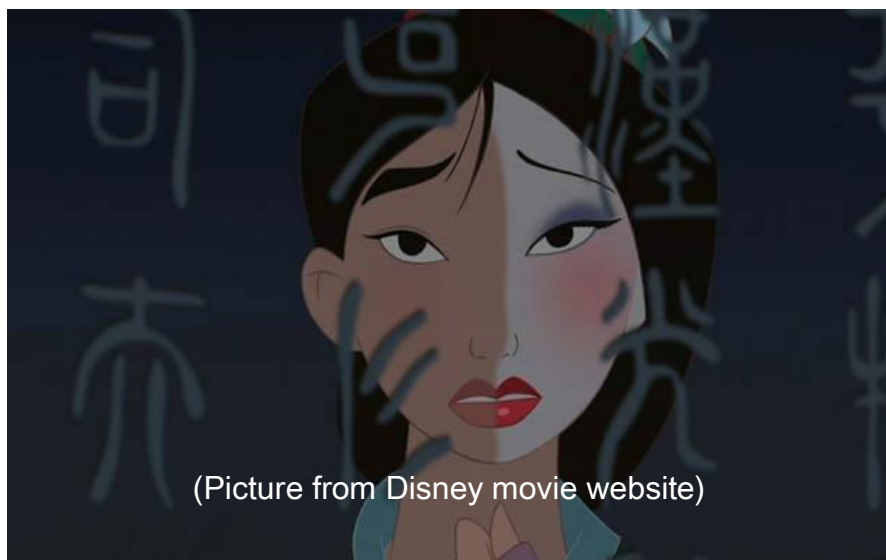
It is necessary that each country knows about its own history so that they don't repeat it and stop wars at the right time. We are a young generation that have in their hands the power to change the world with good actions.

In Colombia, to talk about him and the crimes that he was involved in was something that everybody wanted to do for years because the reputation he gave Colombia was something that we didn't choose. Without election and against our will, the drug trade of Escobar is the only one thing that we are recognized for in all the world; however, Pablo Escobar, cocaine, marijuana and assassinations are not the only things that we should be known for. We also have the best coffee in the world, the most beautiful flowers, gold and a lot of Colombian people who wait for tourists to come see the incredible nature of the Amazon and the seven colors of San Andres Island. I wish for others to take the time to investigate more about Colombia and think that Pablo Escobar was like the Yin and Yang: something dark with a little bit of light and something light with a little bit of dark.

“We... have the best coffee in the world, the most beautiful flowers, gold and a lot of Colombian people who wait for tourists to come see the incredible nature of the Amazon and the seven colors of San Andres Island.”

Mulan: a Traditional Chinese Girl Who Can Speak English Fluently

Chik-You



Mulan, the story of a Chinese heroine, has been passed down for hundreds of years. Mulan was not only a perfect daughter but also extremely talented. She mastered martial arts. Moreover, she was also proficient in English! Wow, it's unexpected, right?! Every adult and child loves Disney's film, "Mulan." Without a doubt, "Mulan" was a great movie; however, have you ever thought about why Mulan could speak English fluently? This is the case with many other 'princesses' as well! For example, Pocahontas was an American Indian. Yet, in the Disney movie she mastered English in only few days; nevertheless, she had no accent. Is it surprising? Is it weird? In spite of this strange miracle, we still enjoy the song "color of the wind" even though we realize how weird it is that Pocahontas could speak English.

Have you ever questioned yourself as to why Mulan can't speak English with a Chinese accent and why Pocahontas can't have a Native American, Tsenacommacah, accent? We all know that in Disney films, Mulan speaks English but not Chinese just to help English speakers understand easily and get into the plot comfortably. However, people all over the world with different languages still enjoy watching it with English. They still are touched by the film. The reason to bring audiences into the story is not about languages. It is about how the actors interpret the roles that made you believe it and brought you into their world.

Let's talk about a present situation in American theater. Have you noticed there are only a few Asian actors in American Theater? I heard many examples of Asian actors being refused roles just because their English has an Asian accent. However, they are really great actors in their own countries. Is it because the director wants to unite the speaking style and requires all the actors to have the same accent? But wait! There are plenty of Broadway actors who speak British English! Besides, people who grow up in different parts of America speak with local accents. Yet, we still know they are speaking English, right? The most important thing is that we can understand each other.

The purpose of language is communication. So as the language element in theater, the development of the plot is dialogue. Language is an important part of the six elements of dramatic structure that are mentioned in "Epic Poetry" by Aristotle.

Language is the main tool to deliver the playwright's thoughts. Stanislavsky, the most important Russian actor and director, also requested that actors should not only internalize the texts but also have subtext. They all mention how important the voice practice, which is almost the key of a play's success or failure, is and how actors should work on their lines. However, what they didn't mention is accent! Besides, Meyerhold,

a talented Russian director, raised a new viewpoint called "biomechanics." He believed the actors' bodies are the most expressive stage elements, not language. Later, Antonin Artaud, one of the most influential French directors, even promoted to reduce the importance of language or even to not use language in the play at all. He said, "To shatter language in order to contact life means creating or recreating theatre." Consequently, theater is not only about languages.



I am not saying that language isn't important. Contrarily, I totally agree that actors should work hard on the language of their lines. Also, there are lots of acting skills which mention that actors should understand the line well and feel the emotion that the language brings you. What I would like to say is that the actors' accent should be the last thing you need to worry about. The purpose of language is to deliver the thought, promote the plot and show the character. It's not a beauty contest about the best accent.

A great actor should practice the lines until they become second nature. And then get into the role and believe. You will lose a memorable opportunity to work with a great actor if you refuse him or her just because of his or her accent!

I will concede that if the goal is to be historically accurate and authentic, you should not necessarily use an Asian actor with a special accent to act as one of the Wright Brothers. However, if you are not doing a history show, why not give some actors who speak English with an accent a shot? I believe they will brighten your eyes!



Hip-hop = Rebel?

Jennifer

"What kinds of dance do you do?"

"I do Girl Style and Jazz"

"That's it?"

"I also do Hip-hop"

"Oh! Are you a rebel?"



That was the conversation which usually happened to me. I ask them, "Why do you think that?" and they can never give me a reasonable answer. "I don't know. I just feel like that." It's what they always respond.

Hip-hop is a sub-culture developed by Latino Americans and African Americans in the Bronx. It includes four main elements: rap music, DJing (Disc Jockeying), b-boying and graffiti art. Hip-hop dance was actually developed from b-boying. Mr. Wiggles', a hip-hop master from the Bronx, gave a speech in Taiwan in 2015. He said "The first meaning of b-boy was Bronx boy. Those boys from the Bronx, they were dancing on the floor while others were just doing rocking steps, so people started to call them "break boys", or "b-boys". Hip-hop dances focus on the connection between rhythmic movements and the music. It expresses the feeling of randomness, freedom and rebellion due to the fact that some moves were evolved from gang symbols at underground parties." So, I admit that there's no doubt that hip-hop's origin is related to block parties and gangsters. But it doesn't mean the people who do hip-hop are all rebels.

Mr. Wiggles also explained how people approached hip-hop based on their own culture. It's important to put our culture in to the foundation of hip-hop. That's why people from different countries have their own dancing style. But, even if their dancing styles are different, we don't categorize it into American hip-hop, Japanese hip-hop or Taiwanese hip-hop. We just call it hip-hop. That is just the different ways how you view hip-hop. The hip-hop culture in Taiwan is not rebellious but creative, thoughtful and emotional. We express our love and passion of dancing.

In my case, I am not a rebellious person at all. I never break any rules. I study hard, obey my parents and teachers. There is no reason to think of me as a "rebel". But the other truth is I love dancing, especially street dance. Street dance is the general name of many different kinds of dance, such as Hip-Hop, Popping, Locking, Waccking, Dancehall, Jazz and so on. I fell in love with dance when I was a child and learned hip-hop dancing when I was 16. I like the movement of hip-hop dancing and I enjoy the music as well. Before I knew about hip-hop's reputation in Taiwan, I couldn't help myself. I totally already loved it.

In most cases in Taiwan, the students who do street dance are in the best high schools or universities. They usually dance better than the students from other schools. I think it might break many people's stereotype of "the student who does street dance doesn't study hard at all," and, "only rebel teenagers do hip-hop." But the truth is, we do hip-hop dance and it doesn't mean we are rebels or have to be rebels. We enjoy dancing for no reason and we are usually too busy dancing to do other bad things.

So, when can I get the response: "You must be a creative person," after I say, "I do hip-hop?"

Reference: Mr. Wiggles's speech video from:

<https://www.facebook.com/taiwanstreetdanceart/>



Students Are Spending 13 Dollars to Buy a Salad: What Otterbein Students Think about the Meal Plans

Chik-You

Lots of students struggle with the meal plan that many schools mandate they buy. Students complain that what you gain is not proportional to what you pay.

Jordy is a senior student who studies early childhood education at Otterbein University. This is how she feels about the meal plan at Otterbein. Whenever she was living on campus, at the end of the semester, she always had meals left over. That was a big problem for her because she could only eat once or twice a day. She felt like it was way too expensive. For example, each time you swipe your card it is 10 dollars and sometimes you will just go to dining hall to eat a salad. She said, "So it's like I paid \$10 for a salad, which I could get in a store for \$1.50. So that was really frustrating." She wished there was a better way to calculate the amount that you are spending instead of just all you can eat. "That is great for some people, but then someone like me, who doesn't eat a whole lot during the day, which is really pointless. I felt like I spent a lot of money for nothing." She is now living off campus, and her budget for food is \$200 a month. Her cost for food is under \$1,000 per semester.

As mentioned on the Otterbein website, Otterbein offers three flexible block meal plans. Each of the block plans gives you a number of meals to use in the Cardinal's Nest and The OtterDen. Students also get Cardinal Dollars for allowing a student to buy food from two other cafés. The three combinations are the 210 Block Meal Plan and \$150 Cardinal Dollars, the 150 Block Meal Plan and \$225 Cardinal Dollars, and the 120 Block Meal Plan and \$260 Cardinal Dollars. "I haven't yet used all my swipes or Cardinal Dollars. But I got closer last semester." Tori, an Otterbein student said. "I think, overall, it's not too terrible. Except for those of us who have classes right over lunch time."



The three meal plans respectively are 2,355 dollars, 2,269 dollars, and 2,183 dollars. The average number for one meal is between 10 to 16 dollars. "I think it's a little bit too expensive. I don't really know what the appropriate price is. But you've got to pay it. However, I wish there's a way to be cheaper." Emily said. Now she is living outside the campus and she only needs to spend around \$1,120 on her meals per semester.

"I think Otterbein is greedy with the meal plan. Because they take 20% off profit from the meal plan," mentions a student who used to work for Bon Appetit. "I think that's a terrible thing. Don't make me pay \$15 for a meal but others who are not a student here can buy a meal for \$8! It's very expensive and not fair!" Besides the price, she also mentions that this influences the quality of the food.

Most colleges require the students living on campus to have a meal plan. OSU's website claims that it requires students to buy a meal plan, "because we want to ensure that residential students have access to ample, healthy food, all students who live on-campus are required to take part in our dining plan program, and we offer several flexible options." Those plans vary by school. Lots of schools offer at least three options from 75 meals per semester up to 210 meals per semester.

Not only the students quoted in this article but many students at Otterbein are empathetic to this situation. They wish that the price of the meal plans could be cheaper and the quality of the food could be higher.



International Students' Difficulties of Making Friends with Americans

Jennifer

Making American friends can sometimes be difficult, say some Otterbein international students. No matter what countries international students come from, they feel more comfortable and confident when they hang out with people who speak the same language. Also, they find it difficult and feel alienated when they spend time with American students sometimes due to language problems, cultural differences and misunderstandings.

Most international students at Otterbein are from China, and in second place is Korea. Students from other countries, such as Spain, Japan, India, and Columbia are minorities at Otterbein. Most Chinese and Korean students spend more time with people from their own country than with American students while minority international students might spend more time with American students since there are not many people from their country. Although some international students prefer to make friends with other international students, some prefer to make friends with Americans because it's really helpful to improve their English.



Image Source: ISA (International Student Association) on Otterbein University's Facebook page

Ishan, a Taiwanese girl who came to Otterbein two years ago, thinks Otterbein is a nice school and suitable for international students to enroll in, since the people here are very kind and friendly. In addition, the school provides a lot of resources to help international students, such as the ESL program, workshops, the writing center and conversation tables. However, Ishan still wants to go back to her hometown instead of staying longer at Otterbein. She feels lonely and she misses her family and friends in Taiwan so much. In her stay here at Otterbein, she loves to make friends no matter what country they are from. She said, "I like to make friends. It doesn't have to be Taiwanese. To have Taiwanese friends is good, because we will have a lot in common and we don't have language problems. I still remembered when I first heard someone speak Chinese, I almost cried. In contrast, friends from other countries are also good, because I can learn their culture and learn a lot of different things from them. For example, I experienced the real Christmas and Thanksgiving from a culture unrelated to the Asian culture. Though we have language problems when we communicated, it made things more interesting. Misunderstandings made things fun. The most important thing is that it helped improve my English." She stated, "They gave me chance to practice my English and improve on it." She also mentions that she spent more time with international students because it was easier to get together. "In some excursion that was only for international students and that brings us together, so we have a lot of time being together, and makes us close easily. In contrast, I think it's hard to make American friends because most of the students leave right after class. So it's hard to have interactions with American students. However, group projects were something to look forward to in the sense that it forced us together and was a good chance for us to make American friends."

With regard to the difficulties of making friends with Americans, a junior student from Otterbein, Andrew Davis, also known as "Doodle" has a different thought. He felt that one of the biggest problems that international and exchange students faced is that they didn't branch out. And the reason that they're not branching out might be their personal choice but could also be being so new and unfamiliar to the American culture as well. He mentions, "They are hesitant when deciding to meet new people, going to social events, and ultimately getting out of their comfort zone. Most of them all hang out in a group which hinders them from socializing outside of that specific group." But he also gave a possible suggestion: "If the group were all girls, then maybe they can check out a sorority to see how the American girls react and how their behavior is towards the International girls trying to reach out to new opportunities. A suggestion that Otterbein could do in respect to this 'issue', perhaps put together a Greek Life – ISA event or at least encourage Fraternities and Sororities to put together events with the ISA to get to know the International Students experiences, personalities, cultures and such. This will give the Otterbein students (Americans) and even the international students a better understanding of other parts of the world and possibly gain a friend, brother or sister."

To go along with Doodle's opinion, Chen Wang, the president of International Student Association also has some recommendations for Otterbein. He writes, "As a president of International Student Association, sometimes when international students need help, they are always looking for me, so I kind of like know what they want and what they need. I think Otterbein should give a house for international student like another association or fraternity or sorority. I think this because I feel that it will help international students get through being home sick or maybe even depression in that sense, and so that there's a place that they can use their home country language to talk, or have a place to hang out. Also that house is a way to welcome American students to come and to learn more different colorful cultures that they never known before."

This issue not only affects international students but everyone at Otterbein. Nevertheless, based on the interviews and surveys that were conducted, more events/activities or having an international house might be a good way to make interactions between international students and American students and it also helps international students to solve their language problems to build a closer relationship with Americans.



Image Source: ISA (International Student Association) on Otterbein University's Facebook page



Transmilenio, According to Its Users: Fast and Safe or Unsafe and Delayed?

Paola

Currently, a large percentage of the citizens of Bogota use the city transit, Transmilenio, as it is fast and reaches all parts of the city, facilitating transport over long distances. But in spite of the fact that a lot of people use this medium, many problems make it a nightmare for people who have to spend more than one hour waiting for the bus and going to their places of work and study every day.

An everyday concern for public transit users in South America is that they have a mass transit model which is copied from that of other countries. However, the copy is not always so similar to the original. According to the magazine, "Semana", and testimonials of riders, some problems with these transit systems are the following: useless routes, limited space, slow transport, few buses for many people, the poor condition of buses, low quality of security against theft and also the irresponsibility of the driver (by carrying too many people).

Colombia has a big transit model copied from European countries but the progress of it is not the same. A good example is the Transmilenio, which has a lot of problems according to most of the people who use to use it. One of the main problems is congestion at the stations because of too many buses or a lack of routes for certain parts of the city. The newspaper, "El Tiempo," did interviews of many passengers that used to use this mass transport for moving into the big city, and the answers of many interviewees was almost the same: "The only reason that I use Transmilenio is because it is the only option that I have to go to my job and come back to my house," said a passenger in the exit of the Transmilenio station.



Congestion is not the Transmilenio's only problem. There are many other issues that still affect it, and they all make the day stressful for the people who have to bear them, which causes them to forget to tolerate each other. They become a part of the big group that pushes people into the bus. Many people complain of being pushed and shoved. Thieves are another big problem on the Transmilenio because the many people who enter without paying for their ticket go to rob others of their cell phones, bags and personal belongings.

The people who gave the testimonies above are just people who have all capabilities to fight these problems. However, also to be considered are the people who have disabilities and might need the help of others. On the Transmilenio, it's nearly impossible for them to ride comfortably because they may be carrying a wheelchair, or perhaps they're on crutches or are accompanied by a service dog who should be concentrating but could be stepped on by someone in the huge crowd.

Another major issue that riders are talking about is the high price of the Transmilenio ticket that is \$2,000 COP (About US\$ 0.60) per ticket. Though it may seem economical, it is not, as the average monthly salary of the majority of Colombians is around \$6,400,000 COP (\$2,000 US). According to a lot of people who don't want to follow the rules and pay the price, the best way to travel on the Transmilenio is for free by bypassing the ticket payment. The only way to access the Transmilenio station this way is by entering through the same gate that the bus has to use. This is dangerous because the bus can run over people and kill them. Therefore, the passengers must decide between paying for regular services with a high price or not paying for the ticket but being likely to die.



Elizabeth Rossetti: Why You Have to Love What You Do?

Paola

“Do what you love and love what you do,”

said Elizabeth Rossetti, president of AmeriCheer, with a smile on her face.



(Picture from Otterbein website)

When you start from zero with all your dreams and wishes, it is hard to think about the future, thinking about if they will work out or maybe not. But the philosophy of Elizabeth Rossetti is thinking positively all the time and staying positive, even during the hard times. With her glasses in hand, sitting in a comfortable position in her office, she decided to start talking about the hard process of starting alone with no bases. She thought about whether her projects would be considered successful or not and if, in fact, the dreams that she had when she was a 21 year old college student, were successful and about where they took place. She had a purpose then, and it is still her goal to create other people with goals, future leaders, training them as personally as professionally.

She tells us that it all started when she decided to do cheerleading camp at Catholic school. The camp's goal was to form cheerleaders and help them to improve their abilities. This led to the triumph that she and her Ohio State University team got long ago in the National

Championships. Since that moment, she began to build, little by little, her dreams. Elizabeth Rossetti opened up other cheerleading camps and continued to be the hostess of championships around the United States that would grow and become the AmeriCheer InterNationals Championships, which give the opportunity for a lot of people around the world to come and experience a real cheerleading championship.

It's spring outside the office, and 'Maroon 5' is playing on the radio in the background. She returns to the past in her story. She affirms that the road was hard and turbulent, her face as always, talks about the ups and downs that she lived on the road to this person. Nevertheless, focusing only on the good things is one of the many tools in her actual position. She smiles again, remembering the anecdotes and the obstacles that she faced. These, she decides to keep these tales a secret and instead talks about how much she does.

Thoughtful, looking at the ceiling in her office, which is decorated with many Disney teddies and photographs that speak of the happy moments captured in those frames, she confesses that it is completely necessary to sometimes sit down and look back to reflect and assess all the things that made her the person she is nowadays. She appreciates the road as it is presented to us but doesn't stop being in the present thinking about all the things that will come in the future.

Elizabeth Rossetti concludes her interview by telling me about the projects that she is hoping to bring to fruition with her workmates. With that smile on her face that defines her personality, she finishes the interview.



(Picture from RSI website)

The Pivotal Moment of Jon's Life

Jennifer

The first time I saw Jonathan Smith was at the “Fancy Feast”, a formal dinner, to which my friend, Carol, invited me. I still remember the first question that he asked me: “Are you Carol’s friend?”

“Yes.” I answered.

“I am sorry.” he joked with a serious and sympathetic face. Then we all laughed. At that time, I knew he was a humorous and interesting person.

The second time I saw him was at a Bible study, and after, he asked me about what I thought of God. I mentioned I am not a Christian, and he said, “I wasn’t, either.”

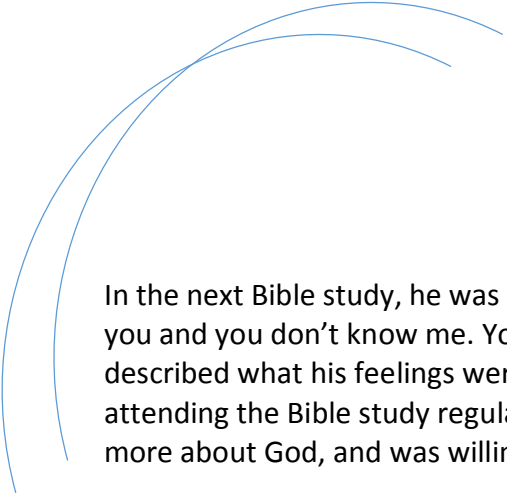
“I don’t believe you,” I exclaimed.

“I was a much different man than the one you see today. “

I was confused and looked at him with a disbelieving face. Then he started sharing his story with me. He told me he used to smoke, drink much more and was addicted to a party lifestyle. He was always depressed and angry in the past. He remembered the time that he was going to college and moved to Columbus. He was so lonely. His daily life consisted of sleeping, getting up, eating, going work, and playing video games. He wasn’t satisfied with his life, but he didn’t know how to change it. One time, he hung out with William, his only friend in Columbus, and William told him he was going to a Bible study. “Can I go with you?” Jonathan asked. His only hope was that he would make some friends. He paused here and looked at me and told me what he thought. That was his first time to go to a Bible study. At his first Bible study night, people asked him about his hobbies. “Fighting video games,” he answered, embarrassed. After the conversation, he enjoyed the Bible study and decided that he would go again.



Middle: Jonathan Smith



In the next Bible study, he was so surprised that people remembered everything he said. “I don’t know you and you don’t know me. You have no reason to remember anything about me, but you did.” He described what his feelings were when he realized that these people cared about him. He started attending the Bible study regularly and making lots of friends. He was getting to understand God, learn more about God, and was willing to accept what God did for him, through his son.

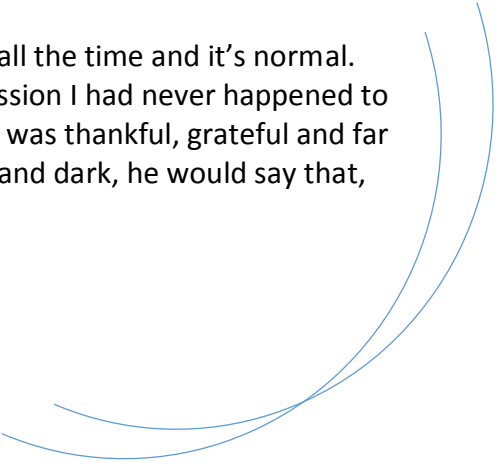
“Bible says, ‘Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me (Revelations 3:20).’” After that, he said, “I am a scientist, but none of my science knowledge could explain what happened to me that morning after I accepted Jesus Christ to live into my heart. When I woke up, I saw everything was brighter. It was between spring and summer, I was familiar with the sun, but I truly felt it to be brighter than before,” he excitedly shared his amazing experience with me with a big smile.

“While I was working, I found that I didn’t feel angry at all. It was so weird because I was always pissed off the moment I stepped in to my work place,” he recalled. “Even my coworker asked me, ‘Are you OK? You look so ...calm.’” He made a surprised face just like his coworker did to him.

He answered, “I am always like that.”

“No. you’re not,” his coworker responded.

“Since then, my life has been different. I know life has its ups and downs all the time and it’s normal. However, the lows aren’t as low as they were before and the deep depression I had never happened to me again.” And here was where the tone had changed with Jonathan. He was thankful, grateful and far more content than he ever was. Even though his life was painful at parts and dark, he would say that, “I have found hope, and it was the hope that I was always looking for.”



Happy Can Be Simple: Natalie and How She Deals with Her Tons of Stress

Chik-You



A loud and clear laugh broke through the studio. That is how she is. You can easily recognize her from her light and sweet voice. Natalie, a junior musical theater major, not only has a beautiful voice but also a pleasant laugh.

She perched unselfconsciously on the sofa in her apartment. She curled her feet up comfortably, opened her arms freely, and gave me a big warm smile. It seemed like she was saying, "Make yourself comfortable!" You know you can always be yourself when with her. The first day we met, she fervidly introduced herself to me by shouting, "Come sit with us!" It was because of her forward greeting that I first felt like study abroad maybe was not so scary. Indeed, you always can get a joyful greeting and a big smile whenever you run into her.

It is this bubbly personality that makes those around her wonder, “Why doesn’t she feel stress?” When asked about it, Natalie replied, “I have tons of stress, much like everyone else.” She shrugged and said, “Homework stress, rehearsal stress, personal life stress, stress about money and getting a job. There is always something or someone [I] can be stressed about.” She looked at me seriously, “It’s just whether or not you focus on that. It’s just how to deal with that. And again, finding the positives.”

Study in college isn’t easy for most students. Moreover, it’s understandable to get lots of stress and fatigue, especially having a side job like Natalie. She has to work, audition, and rehearse. She is definitely the busiest person I have met so far. “I make sure to balance out my work life and my personal life,” she said. “It’s important to have good balance. And it’s important to do the things that nourish your soul,” she paused and looked at me seriously, “and really making sure I do at least one thing a day that makes me personally happy.”

It seems today’s college students experience far more stress than students in previous decades, and the numbers keep increasing, which was mentioned by Best Colleges’ Website. However, students like Natalie can still find the positives in their everyday life. Natalie’s tip to make life happier is simple. “I write three things down in my journal every day that made me smile.” Instead of focusing on the stress, she said, “I try to be thankful.” She gave me a big smile as if saying, “Life is hard, but you have to go on. It depends on how you are facing it.”

Life is unpredictable, is a journey, a gift. Life is about creating yourself in the world. This is how Natalie described life. She is the one who can always find the joyfulness in the world. Just like Cinderella, even when the whole world turns its back to Natalie, she can still find the positive and the beauty of the world.



Bake Sales!

Jennifer: Liz, I am so glad to be your student. You are such a wonderful teacher, who cares about us so much and teaches us a lot with patience and love. Thank you for all you have done for us. Love you.



Chih Jou: Liz, you definitely are one of my favorite teachers. Thank you for answering all kinds of questions out of nowhere. You always can find something to encourage me. Also, thank you for always believing in me that I can do it. You helped me find out I have more potential than I thought. Love you so much!

Paola: Liz, thank you for all the time that you spent with us, for your dedication with each thing that we did and also thank you because meeting you was wonderful. You're a great person and also a wonderful teacher. You are always welcome in Colombia. A sincere hug for you, teacher. Your contagious energy and happiness made our classes better. Gracias por la sonrisa que nos regalaste a diario.

The Howl is a magazine that is planned, researched, written, photographed and formatted by Otterbein University's English as a Second Language students. The magazine serves to give them a safe space in which to use their voice to share their cultures, experiences and lives. Native English speakers are also encouraged to submit within the theme of the magazine: multicultural and multi-language experiences. Please enjoy Otterbein ESL's contribution to the Otterbein community's literary scene. To submit to the Howl, please see our Otterbein Digital Commons site at <http://digitalcommons.otterbein.edu/howl/>





*"When you want something, all the universe
conspires in helping you to achieve it."
-The Alchemist*

