



IYLO

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



**Collected essays from emergent bilingual
students at Portland Public Schools**

In preparation for the International Youth Leadership Conference, we asked our Emergent Bilingual students to share a few words about their experience in PPS. Regardless of their English ability, it is easy to recognize their youthful energy and optimism for the future. But they also provide a unique perspective into a world that may not fit with our picture of a typical high schooler in the U.S.



There is the pain of pain of being ripped from one's home land and loved ones. The excitement and anxiety of an uncharted future in a totally new world. There is the relief of being plucked from war and life threatening oppression. The joy at having access to a first class education. The confusion at being "othered" and hampered by lower expectations. Then of course their is the universal struggle of every teenager to simply fit in.

As an Emergent Bilingual myself, their words force me to recall my own stuggles within our system. However, they also inspire me to reflect on my own personal triumphs, and to reminisce about those who took the time to listen to me, those who believed in me, and gave me the opportunity to succeed (and sometimes fail) while never letting me give up on myself.

Our EBs have given us the gift of their truth. It is now time for us to give our full attention to their words and appreciate the cultural and linguistic assests they bring to all of our schools.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Veronica Magallanes". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Veronica Magallanes, Senior Director
English as a Second Language Department
Portland Public Schools

Editor's note:

The following essays were collected from students currently enrolled in ESL programs at Portland Public Schools. They were asked to describe their experiences adjusting to public school culture and education in the United States.

Students submitted their responses in English and they have been reproduced here in their entirety. Grammar, spelling and typing were not modified in the production of this book.

Darwin Esquivel Herrera – “SMILE”

A smile doesn't mean happiness
Some can be real some, it's just to hide
The real feelings.

I smile to be strong.

I smile to keep going,
no matter how hard it is
we always have to smile.

Some smiles just hide feeling,
Feeling that just the person knows,
Feeling like the one I hide.

We smile to be happy cause the smile
is the best look of a person

I will always smile no matter what,
But in that smile will always be secrets.

Smile it's my way to keep going

There will always be moments where
i will fall but i will always stand up
Smile and keep going.

Smile is our way to show happiness or
To hide feeling it will always be like that.



Wilondja Mashimango

I am from Iron.

from Plows and Buckets.

I am from brick adobe, Open friendly.

I am from rose, The big mango tree

whose long gone limbs I remember as if they were my own.

I'm from uji the porridge we dranked without the spoon and jambo greetings

from Mashimango and Kamalebo.

From whom we learn to be respectful and careful

and I'm from humbleness.

I'm from maembe I usually said and aah pere as my word when I am surprised

and twende kumungini song.

I'm from blue shorts and white shirts that we wore at school. I'm from congo and congolese.

Ugali and maragi as our routine food.

From little father fell in the sea, going to bed.

Certificate and pictures under my bed.



Abaas Hassan – “Where I’m From”

I am from small town in burao
from cooking food in wood for injera and washing dress in a hand.

I am from the big house and 5 bedrooms.

I am from the beautiful natural plant place.

The trees are nice to have it help to cover the sun.

I am from helping each other and having dinner every night
from Mohammed and Hibo

I’m from A Home without mother is like a desert and You won’t live
forever so leave a legacy

I’m from sleep more and you will grow up
and think about before you do something wrong

I’m from take off your shoes before you enter the house

I’am from Mogadishu hospital and I’m from Somalia

Pasta and Rice is the best food

From A brave man that killed the jungle lion

My grand grandfather

Family, Friends, Teachers,

Pictures is on my heart is on the wall and in place that i keep my
secret.



Zakariye Sabriye – “I Am From”

I am from soccerball
from homework
and tea time.

I am from brick house I feel happy with my brick house.

I am from a tree near my house that if you cut it will make a milk.

I am from Quran and I read everyday from morning to sunset

I am from having no books as a baby.

I am from “Dhaanto, Dhaanto” the Somalis’ favorite dance and song.

I am from Mogadishu and Somalia, injer and spaghetti from my dad

my dad always moved from country to country; he is my dad and I love him.



Darwin Esquivel Herrera – “WHERE I’M FROM”

I am from big old tv
 from red small motorcycle
 and hamacas where I had dreams
 I am from a wood house
 with a smell of nature.

I am from roses
 the apple tree
 whose long gone limbs I remember
 as if they were my own.

I’m from Blue Lake and picnic together
 from Ademar and Leticia
 the people that will always be for me
 I’m from Multnomah Falls
 and Mexico the place of my vacations
 and from Wild Wave .

I’m from smile always and keep going
 and Tu vida distes por mi
 I’m from oregon and merida.

Tamales and cochinita
 from crashes
 Close to losing brothers on accidents

From Playing together
in a long yard
from moments that were hard
and made me stronger.
I am from bikes jumping and falling
I am from moments that is the
best of life that one's



Daniel Martínez Vidal – “I am from”

I am from dogs of the streets because we like to save the life of a animal if we can and goats because it's the favorite animal of my grandfather.

From electronics like tv, computer, and a cell phone with buttons because my dad lives in the United States for 20 years and I never see him before until the last year and he can buy us the electronics and soccer balls.

I am from “everything need to be cleaning” and a special smell, like my mom and it smell good.

I am from “hierbabuena” it's a plant and another tree of coco whose long gone climbs I remember as if they were my own.

I'm from dia de los muertos because it's a tradition in mexico and we can remember the people we loved but they died and los tres Reyes magos (the 3 magic kings) because I thought the magic was real.

From mom sister, and my brother he's like my friend, dad and my brother because he talk with my about everything



and when I wanted something he worked to buy me that.

I am from movies together

we were together for everything

like when I played soccer they ask if they can go to my games and eat together

because if we missed one of us it's weird

and we wait for everyone

from "we need to clean the house every 2 days".



I am from Santa Claus is real

because my brother put the presents on the tree

and together forever

my brother think the most important part on a family it's the union

and la cucaracha

because it was a traditional and little song in mexico

i think everyone knows that song.

I'm from birthdays celebrations if they don't want one we make one for them.

I'm from Portland Oregón, I born on the hospital of Providence and I lived here until my 3 years old and México because I lived there for 11 year on Puebla Mexico and a little and small part of Puebla.

I'm from Pozole and tamales it's a traditional food of mexico and I love it we made it for christmas or special days.

From memories like when I drink beer because I thought it was soda and I get sick after that and the money that my mom give it to me before I came to the United States.

Hanad Hassan – “Where I AM from”

I am from a small chair that had my father’s name on it.

From mat bench and tea with milk every afternoon.

I am from the corrugated iron house with big door and big space.
with five bedrooms filled with the sweet smell of baarfun.

I am from the long tree with many red, yellow and different color flowers.

I am from a big family: one sister and one brother and my father made meals,

and of our family that came together having fun playing cards every night before we sleep.

I am from Cilmi and Adan and if you don’t stop and listen you will come running back.

When I was a child my family would say to me, “just jump, don’t cry”

A song that I remember when I was young.

“Sleep and sleep you will become strong and big sleep enough my childs”

I am from Somalia and Mogadishu. From sweet mango juice with rice,

from my grandfather who lost his camel when he was farming.

I am from family mementos in a picture box.



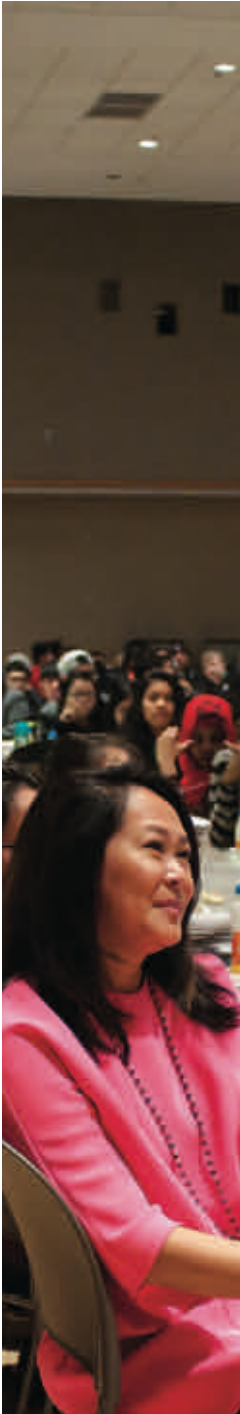
Kalkidan Ketema

My dream collage would be full of teachers and classmates that challenges me to be a better person. My teachers and classmates would capture my interest throughout my college career. They would give me hope and courage every time I see their face. At the end of the day I'm going to think about how amusing and exciting my next day would be instead of another lifeless day I have to face in life. When I walk by my college I'm going to feel at home, where I feel secure and at the right place.

My family would be delighted their hard work and cheerful smiles got me a high education to a country different from ours. Not only do I please my parents but I would also be a great role model to them. When I get accepted to college my parents would feel like their daughter has grown up and can take responsibility for her actions. However, financially wise my family would struggle with that, even if I get a few scholarships it wouldn't cover the whole cost.

It's hard to imagine me going to college would affect my community that much, because I believe it takes more than one person to change how people see things as a community. But if I got in a group and talk about why it is important for people to go to college, it would give them confidence to go to college. I know going to college is not everyone's dream, but if a person puts effort in what they do, there is no such thing as not being accepted.





Asha Hassan – “Where I’m From”

I am from a toy dream home that stood in our living room, reminding us of our dream home.

from a small bench which my mom always sat on when she made food and talked on her old 1994 phone

I am dull dark

boring

I am from the daisy

I am the yellow bright spot

I am from uncles who tease the children until we cry and then make us happy again

from Abbas and Abdullahi

I am “if you don’t stop and listen you’ll come back”

I am from you are my beautiful young one that my dad always sang to me and finding comfort in inshallah

I am take off your shoes

I am from Kenya and Somalia, Ethiopia

I am from goat with spaghetti or with rice

from my grandpa who likes to talk to all of the family girls to teach us with stories

From a skirt and pictures in a box under my bed

Janvier Gasabato – “Where Am From”

I am from the oil condition and weaved basket.

I am from the wood house, dirty floor.

I am from the artichoke tree whose long gone limbs I remember as if they were my own.

I am from the house without the TV and computer.

I am from the where we went to find the wood for cooking beans.

I am from chopping firewood by ax.

I am from where we were in the church on Sunday where we sang and remove your shoes before you get in the house.

I am from cooking the potatoes with my parents and cleaning the house together.

I am from Scott, Innocent and Danny, my blood.

I am from the where my parents told me to be respectful to someone who is older than you.

I am from the mugenzi wanjye song in Rwanda, where we prayed for peace.

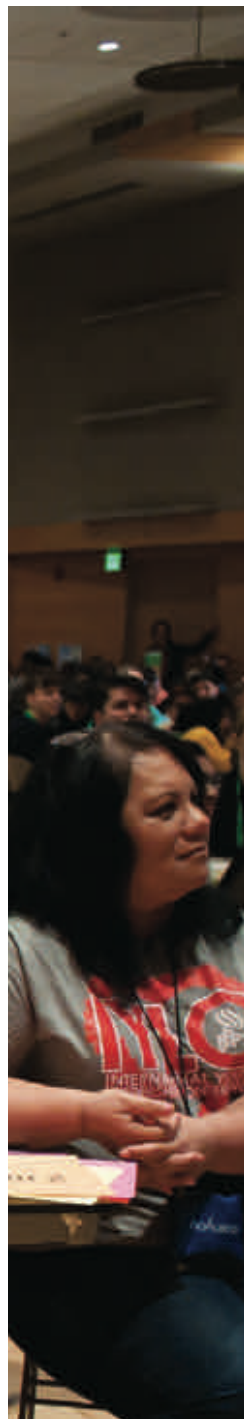
I am from where I am Tutsi where our parents got killed because they are Tutsi.

I am from the rice, potatoes and sweet potatoes.

I am from where we were remember what happened to our parents.

I am from the treasure in my country, the cow.

I am from where the cow was kept in the Congo.



Mohamed Matan – “Minds of Memory”

I live within minds of memory

I share an intellectual chemistry with my inner fantasy.

We rapidly tell people that we’re at the age of 20, when actually we’re just 17.

We network to extend our family but confidentially our life remains a secret.

Unnaturally lost from the real world, we lie to make ourselves seem more mature

We don’t want to endure

true facts.

Growing up in the U.S. losing my own culture.

I live within minds of memory

I can feel my first language Maay-Maay fading away.

I ask myself, who am I in this bilingual world?

My toes curl with fear of dying not knowing who I am!

Hooyo, oh Hooyo, my sweet, beautiful dear hooyo

please guide me in finding my true heritage.

I live within minds of memory

I fled my homeland, my kingdom “Kenya” to start a new life despite leaving my loved ones back there to escape my own problems not wanting to face the consequences.

Now in the U.S. my “my problems can be resolved with a 1600 by 1700 Revolution”



I'm around all these devices but away from Mohamed, my true name.

Technology slices you in half, takes you apart from reality to imaginary.

This is unordinary as it's not necessary
for us to lose our sanity just for a secondary
life we live online.

We are lost in our own visions and we don't see eye-to-eye.
We may be in the same room, but our eyes are drawn to other
minds.

We are on an unpassionate date unsure of what to say
confused on what to do
our face grows red from shyness
talking seemed easy online behind a computer screen.

Social media is blocking our flow of chemistry.

Our conversations are sinking down with density

"We have become accustomed to a new way of being 'alone
together";

so we just sit there and stare endlessly.

Our online description becomes our identity.

we need to refreshingly free
ourselves from social media.

I live within minds of memory.

* Hooyo means mother in Somalia .
Maay-Maay is a Somali Bantu language

naomi kabale ngimbi – “I AM FROM”

I am from firewood

From plastic chair and wheel barrow

I am from the square house and big it smell like green paper

I am from the ngai ngai and makarakasha

I’m from we talk story and wash clothes every friday after school

From father and mother

I’m from marry with a rich man and if i get a boyfriend i will kill you
know matter how what

and from finish school

I’m from finish school and be rich

And katoto lala mimi katoto silali

I’m from every night we talk story about a shogura and the frog

i’m from congo and uvira ,bugaly and sombe

From sugure na shura sugura is smart and clever

A picture that i was kid and dirht we talk story and when my father
bit me with no reason

i am from osire primary school we wear blue top and gray short



Ngan Ta – “I am from...”

I am from my large white bed
from white pillows and pink blanket
I am from the small bricks house
very comfortable
I am from the small white Orchidaceae in
my yard
Planted by my father

The large mango tree next to my house
whose long gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I'm from Lunar new year and Christmas
from Khuong Ta and Ri bui
I'm from we pray together every night about us healthy
and go to church on Sunday morning
and from we eat dinner together.

I'm from don't tell lie and work hard
and ca nha thuong nhau
My mom taught me a song to sing as a child
I'm from Vietnamese food
I'm from Vietnam and Vietnamese

Pho and chao(congee) is a vietnamese food I like
From a story “ The boy and wolf “
Is the story told by my mother
the boy is a character of story
small picture together
on the wall
the picture include all members of my family trip in Da Lat.



Ruth Tha – “The Story OF My Life”

I am proud of my country which I love dearly and it made me who I am; they have shaped and formed the person that I am today. I love living in the Bae Nai soi, mae hong son city in Karenni Refugee camp (1) which is the place I was born in. There Are mountains and rivers that’s making people relaxing, trees, coconut tree with beautiful green leaves and grass are all in my blood. I love the land that formed me, the land where I’ve walked and breathed and gazed in wonder at clear skies and green fields my whole life. In my country we always celebrate traditional dance every years. We never forget about our culture’s traditional days, because we have a very strong work ethic, and we don’t complain. In Thailand the people are diligent like birds. Every day you see people walking to store, even at night time. There when you go shopping at midnight you don’t have to worry about thieves or robbers snatching your purse.



In addition we live out of a basic belief that life is difficult. My family left our country for many economic reasons, political problem and sometime just some to fulfill a personal dream in our lives. Since I was a child I knew that someday I would eventually leave my country, because there’s too many problems for us to stay there. My family waited almost ten year for our UN card in order to come to the United State. I was so excited to come here because I thought America was a dreamland and heaven. Many immigrants from different countries come to America for freedom. However when this moment came true I was already a young lady. When I left Mae Hong Son City I endured many hardships in my life. I felt very sad because I thought that things might never be the same for me. It was the last

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day living in my country, a sunny beautiful afternoon in December. My grandmother getting ready for Christmas, the best time of the year. I remember that beautiful day when I was in the airplane flying to the United State. I saw my grandmother cry and suddenly everyone in my family member were crying. My heart was pounding so fast as I was crying. I could not believe what I was doing on that airplane. It was one of the most difficult day in my life. I had many thoughts in my mind. All these thoughts were about my future. I thought of the day when I would return to Thailand, But sadly I left my beautiful, poor and small city. My poor house , my two elder sisters and friends who were there for me, and listened to me when I had problem or doubts. I never forgot about Christmas, when all of my family were together sitting at the dinner table holding each other's hands, praying together and sharing delicious food. Which are Thai sticky rice, Papaya, chicken, and many other food that I can't



remember and sharing wonderful gifts. These are all the best memory I'll keep in my heart forever. I was so happy to know this county' people, places and new language. It's one of the most popular countries in the entire world. It's from government, freedom and opportunity for people who want to live better lives. There are many reasons why many immigrants want to stay here, so I could not lose this important

opportunity in my life. My first day being an immigrant in a new Country had been very difficult for me and my family, because my family and I didn't know how to read, write or even communicate in English when we got to The United State. Both of my Mother and father particular had a very hard time, because they've never ever been in a school in Burma. My parents come from a culture where education is not available for poor people. Coming from a family where my parents received nothing, not even high school diploma.

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After many years, my mother met my father somewhere around her city and they got married. After four or five years of marriage my two elder sisters were born, and my mother promised herself that no matter how hard the circumstances; she would make sure our siblings were educated, because it would be helpful for our future and our lives . After that my parents and two of my elder sister moved to Thailand. Me and my other two elder sisters weren't born yet at that time. They were immigrants in the Mae Hong Song refugee, about two years later my two sisters were born. My father looked for a job so that our family could have money and buy food, clothes for my two older sisters, school cost and for our family needs. One day both of my parent went to UN where they help refugee people having a hard time with their own lives and need to relocate to a new country to have a better life. Somehow those who help refugee people who were relocating to a new country helped my parents get a job, Rice, Bean, and oil for our family for every single month and year. That's how they're giving or feeding refugee people. Only Rice, bean and Oil. Other food you have to buy it with your own money. After three and four years, I was born. My mother was so sick and she stopped working. Only my father worked till I turned 6 years old, because my mother had to take care of me and also my four sisters at the same time. Three of my siblings were born in Thailand, but we were not accepted into a citizenship; because we are immigrants.I spent 12 years living in refugee in Thailand. It was very difficult because we were poor. My parents got money from their job, they had to pay for our school cost and school supplies that we had to use. None of my sisters worked, because my parents didn't allow them. Our parents were pushing us to go to school and be educated. That's all they wanted. All of immigrant people from Thailand and



other different countries were so blessed that the government gave the opportunity for all immigrants to come into The United State, because our family also get a chance to come here. We are so blessed to be in this country, because of God's planning for us.

My first day going to school in The United State was terrible, because I didn't have any friend at school and also at my apartment. All of the people seemed strange to me. I did not understand the new language. When I sat in class I didn't understand what the teacher was teaching about and didn't even know how to read, and write in English. I didn't know how I was going to communicate with other people. I felt so lonely and invisible during the first week of school. After half a year later, I

tried to learn more everyday so I would have a good future. IN the school I worked hard everyday, harder than American students because I want to be smart like them. My parents said I learned fast in a short time. I felt proud of myself learning a new language. Every day I came back home from school I tried



my best to teach my parents how to read, write their names, home address, and phone number, because it would be helpful for them when they're lost. All I need to do is follow my dreams, do my best so I could help back my parents and new immigrants people. Who speak the same language as me, because I don't want those new immigrants in this country face the hardships that I went through. I'm so blessed and lucky to be in The United State and learn new language. To help my family and those who need help. I wanting to be some someone who could look up to. My English was never perfect even now, but I was not sad anymore because all my worries, my fears were gone. It was one of the happiest day in my life.

Selam Mengesha – Where I’m from

I am from Injera

From dresses and yellow drink that was sweet and strong and forbidden unless I was my mom or dad.

I am from the adobe Aluminum house.
and more Injera.

When I smell it I smell fresh bread
Most succulent and sweet dish ever

I am from the yellow flowers.

The banana tree.

A green tree that grows big yellow
bananas

The leaves used to wrap the rising bread
that we used to make.

I’m from manners and drinking strong black coffee with Mom and three older sisters and two brothers.

I’m from Destiny Future Ethiopian Academy where I wore hot uncomfortable uniforms and strict teachers filled with love. also from TV.

I’m from be good and respect your elders.

From singing ABC’s, and dancing.

I’m from Addis Ababa, and Ethiopia.

Spicy lentils that burn your tongue, and chicken leg’s with egg.

From my mom’s surgery, and her scar.

My momento of a necklace, that is always carefully placed around my neck and brings me luck whenever I need.



Thu Nguyen – WHERE I AM FROM

I am from refrigerator
from hair dryer and mirror
I am from the small house
Blue and white house, lavender scents
I am from the carnation
The apricot blossom
whose long gone limbs I remember as if they were my own.

I'm from go to the church every sunday morning and Lunar New Year
from Hieu Nguyen and Huong Pham
I'm from get up late and drink coffee
And from eat together every night.

I'm from eat much chocolate it was delicious and play game
And Con Co Be Be

I'm from Bible studies
I'm from Hoi An and Viet Nam
Pho and Bun bo Hue
From make chocolate cookies
My sister's name is Trang

Pictures of my family went to the beach during summer vacation
On the wall in the living room.

I will always love my family.



Thao Do I from VietNam

I'm from microwave

From lavender lotion and news channel on television

I am from the blue brick house

Three floors , apples smell

I am from the sun flowers

The eagle trees

Whose long gone limbs I remember

As if they were my own .



I'm from lunar New Years and mid-autumn

From HaiDo and HieuDo

I'm from eat dinner before 7p.m and stay up late

And from drink milk before go to bed .

I'm from don't tell lie and must eat vegetables

And abc songs , I love you

I'm from eat vietnam rice cakes in lunar new years with my family

I'm from Ho Chi Minh city and Vietnamese

Pho and rice cakes

From snow white my favorite story

My mother read for me before go to bed

Picture of my family were go to travel

On the wall in living room

I love my family

Jorge C. – Where I from

I am from new and old sofa
from T.V. and clothes

I am from snake

The big apple trees

Whose long gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I'm from fly with your dream and don't
get lost in the desert

from Darwin and Daniel

I'm from three kings and pray every sunday
and from clean the house every friday

I'm from play and getting a girlfriend

And abc song to scholarship

I'm from going party's

I'm from emanuel from Mexico

panucho and tomares

From dad crash a deer

at the forest to a box

under my bed

when I was a baby

I from kid who likes play soccer from basketball

from making new friends my family is awesome



Tra-My Bui – I am from ...

I am from chopsticks
 from bowl with a flower pattern and
 spoons with a panda or elephant pattern
 I am from the brick big house
 two floors, blue house, lavender smell
 one living room, four bedrooms and two
 bathrooms



I am from the lotus flower with pink and yellow stamens
 The coconut tree is tall and has many coconuts
 whose long gone limbs I remember
 as if they were my own.

I'm from Lunar New Year with lion dance and eating Chung cake
 and Mid-autumn with lion dance too and moon lantern parade
 from Thinh and Trang
 I'm from get up early at dawn and drink lotus tea
 and from eating chips.

I'm from go outside and eat spicy chips
 and "Con co be be," con co be be no dau canh tre
 di khong hoi me biet di duong nao" which I loved to sing with my
 mother when I'm was kid

I'm from "Banh cuon, Pho,..."

I'm from "Bien Hoa" and Vietnamese

"Pho" and "Chung cake"

From The Sheep and The Wolf

That grandma would read to me

Large and very beautiful picture wedding anniversary of parents

On the wall in the living room,



Cryslina Aisek – "I am from"

I am from hair wreaths

From Chuukese combs and leis.

I am from the clay house that smells like
burned food.

I am from the pink plumeria and the
Chuukese apple.



I am from praying and eating together.

From John and Karsita.

I'm from respect and take care and listen.

I'm from "you can have no boyfriend" and "take care of yourself."

And "babe babe babe oh" sung by Justin Bieber

I'm from candles on Sabbath.

I'm from FSM-H and Micronesia Chuuk.

Fish rice and chicken with water.

I am from security, a grandpa with a lot of keys.

The ring on my finger reminds me of my old school, and all my
friends.

Tam Truong

“Lương y như từ mẫu” means “The doctor as gentle mother.” That is an old idiom in my country and it shows how they compared a doctor to a mother. Conviction and a desire to save patients made me want to become a doctor.

I said I want to be a doctor and that’s my dream. I was asking myself why do I want to be a doctor? I don’t know where this idea came from. “One day you will find out why and what your purpose is.” That was the answer from my mom, the person I respect the most. Now, I believe I’m on my way to find out the answer to my question. My brother is the one inspires me to become a doctor. I heard this story from my mom: He got a disease when he was born and he died. It made me want to help people as much as I can. The truth is I just wanted to have money from that job, but when I met a doctor and I understood he is not working only for the money, but he wants to see healthy smiles on his patients.

When I grow up I want to attend Oregon Health and Science University. That will be a place which will provide me with new experiences to improve and complete myself. The problems here are money, shelter, and time. It takes at least 5-6 years to become a doctor. Those problems could make me stop, but I won’t because if I stop I’ll lose my purpose. From occasionally failing I will realize that those fails will make me stronger and push me to continue chasing my dream. I know that college is not the only way to be successful in life but it’s a short way to be successful. When I am on the way it may be hard and I might want to give up. One thing is sure that I will never regret after I pass the “hard way.”

I will become a doctor even the path I choose may make me stop but I will never give up and regret it. I’ll be proud of it.

Thai , Pham. – “I’m from Vietnam”

I am from tooth brush
from chopsticks and clothes of lion dance
I am from the normal house having five bedrooms
and two bathrooms
With six brothers around me there are good feelings
I am from the black rose with banana tree.
I’m from Lunar New Year and mid-autumn
from my dad Trong and my mom Luy.
I’m from fighting game and learning
And from reading intelligent books.
I’m from do homework quick and you know what time is it , now !! .
And One More Night song.
I’m from going to church
I’m from Vietnam and Vietnamese.
Fish fry and vegetables.
From breaking my head when I was falling down and my head
touched the road surface
With a lot of blood.
From be with a lot of funny pictures
In my heart.



Quang Nguyen

I am from computer
 from TV and a wall mirror
 I am from the small home and smelly, the smell of flowers
 I am from the sunflower
 The lemon tree
 whose long gone limbs I remember
 as if they were my own
 I'm from cleaner welcome holidays and lunar new year
 from Hieu Nguyen and Huong Pham
 I'm from play and read holy bible
 and from teatime
 I'm from permission and stories
 and Ca nha thuong nhau, a song my mother sing for me when I was
 kid
 I'm from Vietnamese food
 I'm from Vietnam and Vietnamese
 Pho and pancake



Innocent Mugenzi – “My PAST STORY!!!!”

I am from house wood and firewood.
from sheep chicken and big chair. I am
from trash can.

My house made on cry. I am from the
Rose and busy. The apple tree, big tree,
small tree. whose long gone I remember
as if they were my own.



I'm from new year and new cloth. I'm from new shoes. It's mean
every new year we do something good new. I'm From Gafuta and
scott. that name for my grandma. I'm from somewhere and go out.
and from eat together. I'm from the big table. Red big table, huge

I am from story and ready books. And my baby calm down and get
to sleep and relax.

you could be felt good. that was my mom told me when I was cry.
I'm from dancing. I'm from kigali and Rwanda. I was born in the
camp rwanda especially I grow up there. I'm from church with my
brothers.

I'm from Chicken and beans. And they telled story and carried on
her back. And baby can sleep confutable. my mom took care of us.
she was always told me I had be carefull when I doing something
bad to me, can made me be in the hospital. I'm from school. I'm from
we were wearing uniform at school every day. That's blue pants and
white t shirt. If u come school not uniform. They can send you back
home. I'm from small house. I'm from to bedroom house. I'm from
the roof is plastic. I'm from the one door in the in front. I'm from
kitchen outside. Small and huge.

Tu Pham – The Culture of Vietnam

Have you ever heard about Vietnamese culture? If you don't know anything about Vietnamese culture, you should know. Vietnam is a country with plenty of culture. Lunar New Year is between late January and late February, Liberation Day is on April 30th, Labor Day is on May 1st, National Day is on September 2nd, and Mid-Autumn Festival is on August 15th. There are also many holidays. These holidays have lasted for a long time. I was born in Vietnam. I had a flight with my family coming to Portland, Oregon about one year ago. I am afraid that I will lose my native civilization and start a new one with a lot of strangers around me.

Culture includes customs, history, moral values, religion, political values, and means of entertainment. When a person is born, they are raised by their parents and are merely grateful to their parents. However, they don't ask themselves where they live and how they have a place to live. Instead, they live through the year with a lot of holidays but they don't figure out that how these holidays are celebrated. They just tend to pass vainly over these special days like they are not aware of them. There are some people who always try to strengthen their countries through the dedication of their culture spectacularly on holidays. They reveal patriotism and veneration to ancestors who spent the whole lives for their



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countries and culture. As far as I am concerned, my hometown contains a lot of meaning. I am always conscious that if history does not exist, I don't live in a country with a name or culture with glorious like. Living in a new country is impossible not to be homesick. America is a country that is 100% available to support my education when I don't have money to pay for tuition and shelter when I don't have house to dwell in. In Vietnam, I did not have these opportunities, but I still had childhood and nice memories. More importantly, culture in Vietnam has me brimming with joy whenever I get red envelopes attached with positive wishes during Lunar New Year. This is a wish is one offers to others, "This is another good beginning. May you be richly blessed with a successful new year.

May my sincere blessing surround your life." Mid-Autumn Festival is a holiday with kids making creative lanterns by themselves and using their brains and intelligence to build patterns of a lantern in the way which is striking and outstanding in audiences' eyes.



Now I am far in my childhood and I always keep words in my mind that, "East or west, home is best." I live in Portland, Oregon, a place that I used to think I would not ever see any Vietnamese holidays like in Vietnam unless I went back. However, it was not the same that I dreamt up. It was the opposite. For example, I was not expecting to have a Vietnamese teacher the first day I signed up for school. I signed up for Vietnamese club and right after I broke the ice with my Vietnamese peers. They introduced me to many activities to keep Vietnamese culture in American schools. I was so excited to join them. Last year, the president of the group tried to fundraise money for celebrating holidays but she did not collect enough. She gathered all of the members to meet each other and then she

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planned to raise enough money through washing cars and selling T-shirts. While she fundraised, she introduced and flattered Vietnam's culture, too. At the end of the year, she got many of compliments. She deserved to receive all of the credit. She did not only keep our culture, but she also fulfilled her leadership skills completely.

This year, there is a new group leader and he is doing well. I am in the 11th grade and I want to help him with a purpose. Next year is a chance for me to experience leadership as the president of the club. I always provoke myself to try my best. I was lavished last year because I could spend several hours a day hanging out carelessly without pushing myself. Vietnamese parents live in America about some dozen years ago. They know what their own



culture is, but they don't remind their children to keep their native culture. When I ask my Vietnamese friends what our culture is, they just shake their heads. So I narrate our culture's history for them and they look very interested. I tell them that they should be proud of their country. Overall, my roles in shaping my community have been successful. I want to ensure that every Vietnamese child knows about Vietnamese culture. I want to let all countries in the world know about my prominent culture.

No one will be significant if they don't have culture. They will be anonymous. Culture is on behalf of yourself. You need to compete for your own culture. I am Vietnamese. I have a spectacular culture. I have a question for you. Would you like to tell me about your culture?

Catarina Felix-Juan Friends Future and Me

Five year ago. When I was in 5th grade me and my friends. When we went to a field trip. We started talking about high School, and college. That we are going to study to the same high school, and college. My friends and I we were so excited to talk about School. One of my friend came in to the U.S with all of her family. I did not know that I am one of that who is going to live.

When I was in 6th grade on August 25th in 2012 my mom told me that I have to come to live in the United State with my family. That day I did not know what to say to my friends. Weeks later I talk to my friends that I am moving to the U.S. My friends said " We all have different luck but one thing do not forget us" My friends told me, that I have to go to high school, and college to follow your dreams. When I came here in portland every monday I call my friends. But, now some of my friends are here in the U.S. Friendship never ends no matter where we are and dreams came true.

When I came here did not know what do but my friends encourage me to go to school. Now I am a senior in Jefferson high school no matter what we deal with. I am going to college I want to be a nurse is important to me because I want to help my family and one day I will visit all of my friends.



Yikai Peng – Teenage Dream

My family and friends like to ask me one question since I am a junior, what do you want to be when you grow up? I have considered for 15 years, yeah, since I know how to think. The answer is simple, I want to be a teacher.

Basically, to be a teacher is difficult. You don't want to teach students some wrong ideas right? So, you get to be a good student first. I want to get both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in college, so that I can use my knowledge to teach my students. I know the tuition is expensive, so I will try my best to get a scholarship. Even though to be a teacher is hard, I still want to try my best to catch my dream.



Now, you may have a question, why do I want to be a teacher? The reason for this is that I want to be able to make a positive difference in the future of children. Just like what my most respectful person, my grandmother did. She had been a teacher for about 40 years. To be a teacher is hard, as I said before. But your hard working will affect students' future. I got a chance to met Ms.Wang last year. She was my grandmother's student. She said, "My favorite teacher is your grandma. She influences me by using her kindness and patient. You know, I was kinda 'wicked' kid in school at that time. Every teacher seems like give up me. But she didn't. She told me, 'every new day is a chance to change yourself, and the only way to change your life is made by yourself; no one can stop it.' This sentence had really encouraged me for my whole life. I studied incredibly hard since

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then. And now, I can feel my life is so different !& rdquo; Her story had a big effect on me. In my memory, grandma is a nice person because she taught me so much when I was still a little little girl. But I never know she is such an awesome teacher who is being respectful so much. Since then, I have a dream to be a teacher. I would love to give students chance. Even they may have bad behavior, they will be better after modification. This is why I want to be a teacher, and is what my purpose to be a teacher too.

This is a dream from a 16-year-old girl. She wants to try her best to get into a good college and get the better education. She wants to use her knowledge from her life to inspire children’s future. And she loves her grandmother! Yes, you are right. This is me!



Yaislenis Estrada

I was born in Santiago de Cuba, a small state in Cuba, and five years ago my parents decided to come to the United States to provide a better education and life for my brother and I, leaving behind half of my family. We arrived here in 2011 without knowing the country or how to speak English. I experienced many things in my life which have made me the person that I am today. My first year in high school was painful. My English freshman class was the hardest class for me. I remember crying every time I was supposed to do homework because I was unable to understand or write in English. I tended to be distant and quiet with the students in my classes as well. Although it was hard for me, I worked hard reading books, using the dictionary and taking ESL classes. After one year of working hard with the language, I was able to understand and speak more with other people, which let me express myself and my personality. My ethnicity is represented by everything I do in my daily life. The value of education that my family has taught me has guided me to be a successful person. Even though neither of my parents attended college, they have been a huge influence in my life as a student. Growing up without privilege in Cuba gave me the experience and the skills to work hard and not give up. My culture, Cubana, values pride in my own voice, which has shaped my perspective of education in life. Since I was little, I have had the aspiration to be a leader. It is an attribute in my blood. In school, I was the representative of my class in both science and history. I have been passionate about science since then, especially since in Cuba our labs were very different from here; they weren't even close to a lab. In Cuba, we learned by watching videos on the TV, and everything we knew about science was from there. Being able to increase my education level in this country is a big opportunity and I will always be thankful to my parents for making the big

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decision to move here for my best interest. Being bilingual and a multicultural student was never on my mind, and learning a new language, culture, and lifestyle wasn't easy for me. During the first years, I was confused, and scared. I used to think that I wasn't strong enough to confront the obstacles I had in my life, but when the time came, I was feeling powerful again. Yes, I was different, but I learned that life wouldn't be life without the chance of failing or overcoming obstacles in my way. In addition, due to my involvement in the International Youth Leadership Council, I have learned to take risks , to speak out as a student, and discover how my voice and my opinion could mean a lot more than I thought. The International Youth Leadership Council has improved several aspects of my life. This program has represented, and improved the lives of the international communities in Portland. The objectives of the program are eliminating discrimination and supporting international communities. All the experiences my family and I have overcome has given me skills and helped me become successful.



Mushtak Alinur – College and Career

At age of 17, me and my family came to live in United State. My family were happy to live peace country. We started learning how



to shop U.S . We didn't start school about a two month. We start learning how to use the max and buses to go the market. My brother found a job when he was working four week he pay computer for us to study and learn English. Two months and half later we want to the school. The first month of school very hard to me because I didn't speak English and I didn't have any friends. I try to work hard and study well to learn English. After three month the

summer began. During the summer I get marry. On August 5,2012 I thought I should not go to school and I should find a job. My husband didn't speak English and I didn't speak English. My husband told me If you didn't go to school later who will translate for us or your family. Who will help our children? He told me to not lose my school and I will work for you whatever we need. He said I want you get education and work better job. I went back the school keep learning reading, writing and, speaking. I had a friend and school gat batter and batter. Now I'm senior in high school. I'm going to graduate and go to college because I want my dream came true and be a nurse.



Daniel Mugisha

I came in portland with My Mom and My siblings. I usually have both parents but i live with one of them which is my MOM. one day day i did trouble at home and i met my mom getting sad and she started to tell my me about our family story. "When you were 9 years old we were lived together us hall family but our family family became poor and then your dad went to find job in Congo where we were born and he spent two years there" she said. did you guys called him that you can talk to him? i asked. "No" she said. What? Why ?.i asked. " Daniel i told you we were poor that means we had no phone" she said. don't get scared? i asked. "What are you mean" she asked. I mean like to think about him cause you didn't that if he still live or not. i said. " you are right baby we had to" she said. keep telling me. i said. " we were waited for him all 3 years i remember that how you were always crying because you haven't been seen him" she said. me? i asked. " yes you" she said. What happen after that? i asked. " after 3 years i get phone and we started to talked your dad" she said. How was life looks like in our family if dad was not there? i asked. " i did my best to made you guys happy and looks nice like your friends who live with their booth parents" she said. That is why i will go in college and make good grades and get good job then take care my both my parents.



Yanet Asghedom – Life

Life, you have completely transformed

I've become an alien of a country now

Living anxiously with my head down

Foolish and idealistic, who doesn't have the guts to do what his heart desires

Who live in torture, you made me endure internal wounds

I'm going to ask and I demand an answer from you

Why do you refuse me the love, the peace and the joy I want

Instead you stripped me off my right and my personal pride

And you auctioned me to shame and perpetual agony

You were a landscape full of flora and fauna

Endless happiness

But, now you are a desert

The flora have dried and, the fauna have died

And, happiness is no more

Answer me, where is my happiness?

You said, your happiness is not here,

I can't find happiness in a foreign land

Because, I live tiptoeing, unable to walk freely

I can't choose or be chosen

That I may have countless clothes, good food and opportunities



Continued »»

But, there is no where like your home land
And, there lies the happiness, the love and the peace you desire.
As I looked at old pictures, I started to reminiscence the bliss of the good days
Where we gathered around and hang out during holidays
Where we stayed up all night talking till the sun rises on weekends
And, the summer, the summer were so amazing
I miss my country, my friends
I know those days are no more
But, I wanna go back to my country, life
You gotta keep your heart strong



America has given me
The opportunity
I wasn't able to find in my country
A decision to make my dream reality
I will then, go back and build my country.

For this shall pass
It's a promise, you will walk the streets of Asmara once again
But, take advantage now
Gain enough knowledge, and experience
And, make your people and country proud
Coz, you will be the one building it one day
And, i have decided to take what

Sergio Ayala-Ramirez

So I want to go to a College that shows me how to do animation, editing, and other sources to make video game when I get have this career I show my father I can do it. I don't just want to show my father I want to show the word I can do it. And give my family money, instead of then feeding me, I want feed them.

My father is not alway proud of me because I don't pay much attention at school but I'm trying to.He'd wasn't proud of me when I an A, he'd wasn't proud of me when I when me and my basketball team 2nd place or maybe 3rd place, and he'd wasn't proud of me when I promoted! even If try my dad still not proud of me, I just want to dad too be proud for once.

When started playing video game I was three years old and I was amazed when I got older I was like "Hey could do that". But making my own game is dream and there always there for me when I feel happy, angry, sad, or confused. And I want other kids to feel the way.

My family mean everything to me I love my sister, my 4 brothers, my cousins, nieces and nephews, aunts and uncles, especially my mom and dad. I want to make it up to them.



Erica Juan-Felix – College & Career

My dream is to become a nurse for cancer because I like helping people and saving their lives. My family want me to be whatever I want to be because they want me to have a better life and a good education because my parents didn't went to school my dad went to school for a year and my mom went for two years and they don't want me to do the same thing that they did my parents want me to learn a lot of thing.



My dad was leaving he going to United States so he have to leave everything behind like my two sisters Catarina and Elena and my mom and my dad was so sad to leave them behind. My dad stayed for 4 years at United States and my dad went back to Guatemala on a airplane to get my mom and so they can go to united state but they have to across the border and my mom and my dad have to leave my two sister back and my sister stayed with my grandpa and my grandma. my mom was pregnant when she cross the border with my dad and then i was born in the united state in portland oregon after they the across the border.

A couple of years in 2005 my grandpa died at Guatemala . I didn't get to meet him or see him anymore or never get to see him smile at me . In 2011 my dad told that my sister is coming to united states to live with us and my mom have to leave united states to get my sister and my mom have to stay at guatemala there for a year so they can get there paper's because my dad wants my sisters to have a better life and get my sister a good education. I was so excited when my sister come to united state but the one thing i really miss was my mom cause she have to stay at guatemala for a year and to me is so long.

Elena Felix-Juan

Eight years ago my grandparents had an experience not to have enough food. My grandparents have to share one tortilla because they do not have enough tortillas for everyone. Years ago there was not a lot of food, money and jobs. My families, nearly one out of every night goes to bed hungry each night They ate only one time a day. They went to " finca ", to work because the place where they live there are not enough jobs for people. My grandparents have to walk 15 days to get to " finca ", they have to carry their food, water to drink and blankets. When they see the sun go down and they have to find a place where to sleep and they wake up very early to start they are trip.They have to cook their food with firewood.

The hunger is a big issues in the world because many the countries don't have enough economic, jobs, and food. Some of the causes hunger are natural disasters, conflict and poverty. Some of the countries spend their money to fight with other countries. This make their country poor. The people don't have food they suffer every each day because economic crises have pushed more people into hunger. People do not get enough food to be healthy and lead life. They don't eat well and healthy may many of them get sick to not eat healthy food and not to eat every day. Malnutrition are risk to health worldwide greater than tuberculosis and malaria. Many people around the world die from hunger related diseases.

We can create a program to distributing food and providing food. Not the only to by providing food, but we can teach than how they take care their health to prevent diseases and economic. We do food donation it helpful for hunger and they don't have to worry about what they next meals. I think education is more powerful than hunger. Some countries have food for education where are give free food for coming to school.

The responsibility of everyone begin on the world to take action to help our people. If we work together many people will not suffer for hunger, and the more together we are the more powerful.



Contributors

Name	Writing Title	School
Daniel Mugisha	--	Jefferson
Darwin Esquivel Herrera	"Smile"	Madison
Darwin Esquivel Herrera	"Where I'm From"	Madison
Mushtak Alinur	"College & Career"	Jefferson
Sergio Ayala-Ramirez	--	Jefferson
Catarina Felix-Juan	"Friends and Future Me"	Jefferson
Elena Felix-Juan	Jefferson	--
Erica Juan-Felix	"College & Career"	Jefferson
Kalkidan Ketema	--	George
Ruth Tha	"The Story of My Life"	Cleveland
Tam Truong	--	Madison
Tu Pham	"The Culture of Vietnam"	Madison
Yaislenis Estrada	--	Grant
Yanet Asghedom	"Life"	Grant
Yikai Peng	"Teenage Dream"	Lincoln
Abaas Hassan	"Where I'm From"	Madison
Asha Hassan	"Where I'm From"	Madison
Cryslina Aisek	"I am From"	Madison
Daniel Martínez Vidal	"I am From"	Madison
Hanad Hassan	"Where I am"	Madison
Innocent Mugenzi	"My Past Story"	Madison
Janvier Gasabato	"Where am From"	Madison
Jorge C.	"Where I From" --	
Mohamed Matan	"Minds of Memory"	Cleveland
naomi kabale ngimbi	"I am From"	Madison
Ngan Ta	"I am From"	Madison
Thai Pham	"I'm From Vietnam"	Madison
Quang Nguyen	--	Madison
Selam Mengesha	"Where I'm From"	Madison
Thao Do	"I From Vietnam"	Madison
Thu.N Nguyen	"Where I am From"	Madison
Tra-My Bui	"I am From"	Madison
Wilondja Mashimango	--	Madison
Zakariye Sabriye	"I am From"	Madison

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EDITOR: Allison Smith,
English as a Second Language

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IYLC 2015-16 Planning Committee

Francisco Garcia, English as a Second Language

Tonya Mjelde, English as a Second Language

Anne Flores, English as a Second Language

Allison Smith, English as a Second Language

Suzanne Toole, English as a Second Language

Martina Iniguez, English as a Second Language



Español (503) 916-3582 ¿Necesita usted asistencia para enviar un mensaje a la escuela de su hijo/a, o necesita alguna información relacionada con la escuela? Una persona bilingüe de nuestra Línea de Lenguajes estará disponible para ayudar durante los días de clases entre 8:00 a.m. y 4:30 p.m.

Tiếng Việt (503) 916-3584 Nếu quý vị cần liên lạc với nhà trường hoặc cần biết thêm thông tin liên quan đến trường học của con quý vị. Xin vui lòng liên lạc với chúng tôi ở đường dây điện thoại ngôn ngữ "Language Line" vào những ngày học của con em quý vị từ lúc 8 giờ sáng tới 4:30 chiều.

Русский (503) 916-3583 Вам нужна помощь, чтобы передать сообщение в школу вашего ребенка? Вам нужна какая-либо информация о школе? Сотрудник русской линии, говорящий на двух языках, может помочь вам в течение рабочего дня с 8:00 утра до 4:30 дня.

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Department of English as a Second Language

Veronica Magallanes, Senior Director

(503) 916-6525 • vmagallanes@pps.net

esl.pps.net

Portland Public Schools • 501 North Dixon St. • Portland, OR 97227

www.pps.net

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