



Fall 2025
American River College

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The Parrot



Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, Californians, and, well, anybody really...

ISSUE 200

70 YEARS OF



YOU BELONG HERE

ARC's 70th Homecoming Brings the Beaver Family Together

The American River College campus came alive on November 1, 2025, as students, staff, and faculty gathered to celebrate ARC's 70th Anniversary Homecoming. It was more than just a milestone; it was a week-long celebration of community, creativity, and school spirit that reminded everyone what makes ARC truly special.

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Got a Funny ESL Story? Pick up ARC Gifts!
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FUNNY STORIES

LEARNING ENGLISH

The Parrot is happy to share the following true stories from ESL students who responded to last month's invitation to share a funny story about learning English. They will each receive a small back pack and some cool ARC swag! Thanks to each of them for sharing their stories, and enjoy a laugh or two or three!

My husband and I had just arrived in the U.S. We were at the airport in Texas. We waited for the next flight and wanted to buy some food. We found a small cafe that sold fried potatoes. When I went to the cashier, I asked, "Can I have a free potato?" She looked confused and said, "We don't have free potatoes." Of course, I actually meant fried potatoes, not free potatoes. I was confused and didn't understand why she didn't get what I was saying.

A couple of years later, I realized my mistake. In Russian, we say "free potato" to mean "фри картошка" (French fries), but in English "free" means "бесплатно." That's why they didn't understand me.

–Yulia Bekirova, ESLW 340

It was about 2016 when my sister and I came to the USA. I had been in the USA for about 6 months or so. In 2017, I had to go back home for my wedding. We were on the flight, and we got the menu for the meal on the flight. They had mentioned all the menu. I checked carefully to see that everything was ok. My eyes went on "snacks," and I immediately told my sister, "Look look, they serve *snake* here! Oh, my! We should be careful. How do they eat it?" After we came back to the USA again, I started my work and made friends. One day my friend asked me if we could go out for dinner and have some "snacks." I was shocked and said ok and will try to ask my sister. She said, "Ok. Bring your sister as well." When I reached home, I told my sister that my friend asked us for dinner to have a snake. My sister said, "Why didn't you tell her that we don't eat this kind of food?" I was confused what to do, so we had a roommate, and I asked her if she wanted to come with us. I explained that we wanted to go out for dinner with my friend, but the problem is that she asked me to go and have some snake, and how can I explain to her that we don't eat such things. She laughed so much and said, "Silly girl, it's a *snack* not a *snake*. Snack means we go to eat something like a small amount of food." It's a little funny story of mine that I will remember for the rest of my life whenever I hear or see the word "snack."

– Khatira Mohammadi, ESL 315

Got a Funny ESL Story? Pick up ARC Gifts!

The Parrot wants to hear from **YOU**—students, staff, faculty, and administrators!

Tell us about a funny or memorable moment you've had while learning or teaching English.

Send your story to TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu.



As a BIG thank-you, the first 10 people will receive a bag full of ARC swag, complete with:

a stylish lunch bag
a portable speaker
sunglasses
campus goodies

Courtesy of the ARC Unite Center. Don't miss your chance to share a laugh and grab some cool gifts!



How to sign up for ESL Assessment

1. Scan the QR code below with your phone, or click on English as a Second Language (ESL) Assessment if you are on a computer.
2. Read all the information, and then scroll to the bottom of the page to choose if you want an in-person or an online ESL Assessment session.
3. After you choose in-person or online, sign up using your student ID number and birth date.

Need help?
esl-assessment@arc.losrios.edu



Ode to the Mountains of Afghanistan

BY ASMA NURSI, ESL 350

POETRY

Oh, majestic mountains of Afghanistan,
You stand so tall, touching the sky,
Your heads wear white hats of snow,
Your feet sleep in fields of green and dry.

You are powerful like an ancient soldier,
Silent but full of stories to tell.
When the wind blows through your rocks,
It sounds like a melody, a silver bell.

Your colors change with every season,
Red in autumn, shining in spring,
Your stones are chilly like winter's hand,
However, your beauty warms my heart.

I see you just like the sun rises
I smell your flowers after a rainstorm.
You are a piece of art painted by God.
A home for dreams, but also a home for poverty.

Oh, amazing mountains, proud and free!
Your stone symbolizes my country's nature
You inspire me to be brave and strong,
Even when I feel alone.

THE POTLUCK

BY MUSTAFA ARIFI, ESL 325

NARRATIVE

Leaving Afghanistan felt like stepping off a cliff into a world I did not yet understand. At first, I thought I understood what it meant to start over. I imagined that life in America would be full of opportunities, freedom, and a chance to build a new life. However, after spending quite a bit of time in America, I quickly realized that “starting over” also meant leaving behind everything that felt familiar—my family, my friends, traditions, and even the sound and smell of home. The streets around my apartment were filled with a heavy silence that made me feel like a stranger to my own thoughts. The hardest part of my new life in America was not learning English or finding a job; it was trying to figure out who I was supposed to be. At first, I thought belonging meant behaving, speaking, and thinking like an American. However, over time, I learned that true belonging is not about erasing where you come from or becoming someone completely new; it is about learning how to live between two cultures and embrace both.

The first months in the United States were some of the hardest times of my life. Everything felt foreign and strange—the weather, the unfamiliar streets, the way people greeted each other, and the quiet streets with no people but full of cars. Soon after arriving, I started working in a warehouse. It was a large warehouse full of workers, where the sounds of forklifts and packing machines felt unfamiliar. Every day felt like a test I was unprepared for. My English was good enough for simple tasks but not fast conversations, so I often stayed silent. My coworkers spoke quickly, often using slang I had never heard, so I pretended to follow along and tried to keep up with their conversations. When they were laughing at a joke, I could not tell if I had missed the joke or if I was the joke. At night, I sat on my bed watching English movies and YouTube videos, pausing often to repeat new

words. I sometimes laughed at my mispronunciations but kept practicing English. After work, I usually sat alone in my quiet apartment, and most of the time, the deafening silence made me reflect on the life I once had back in my home country—a life I still miss deeply. My apartment was in a backstreet, where I did not see many people walking, but I could see many cars passing by with an annoying noise. While looking out into the street from the window, my thoughts took me back to Afghanistan; I started to think about my family and my traditions. Then I remembered my mother’s kitchen, where the smell of Qabili—an Afghan dish made of spiced rice with sliced

carrots, lamb, and raisins—filled our home on weekends. This brought back memories that comforted me but also made me question whether I would ever feel like I truly belonged in this new world.

However, a turning point came during a work potluck when I shared my Afghan culture through food. One afternoon, my supervisor announced that there would be a cultural potluck lunch at work. Everyone was invited to bring a dish from their country or a dish that they like

the most. Everyone seemed excited, but I hesitated. I wondered if anyone would even want to try Afghan food since people here seemed to have different tastes. I was thinking, “What if they say it smells or tastes strange?” When I got home and started thinking about what to make for the potluck, I called my mother for advice. My mother recommended Qabili, and then I said, “What if they do not like it?” I still remember my mother’s voice, “If you cook with love, people can taste it.” Her words comforted me and then I felt more confident about cooking Qabili. That night, I stayed up late preparing Qabili. The scent of sizzling lamb and warm spices filled my small kitchen, wrapping the air with the same comfort I used to feel in my mother’s home. As the rice cooked, the

*“If you cook
with love,
people can
taste it.”*

sweet aroma of carrots and raisins rose like a memory, soft and familiar. When I tasted it, the flavors carried me back to long Friday evenings with my family, gathered around, laughing and passing plates. For the first time in a long while, I felt close to home again, even though I was thousands of miles away.

The next day, I carried the dish nervously into the breakroom, my hands trembling as I placed it beside pizza, tacos, and pasta. My coworkers began asking what I had brought, and I said, "It's an Afghan dish called Qabili." To my surprise, they smiled after tasting it and went back for seconds, asking how I made it. As I described the recipe just the way my mother once taught me, I found myself speaking and laughing with everyone. The room buzzed with stories of family traditions and foods from around the world, and I realized that almost everyone at the table had once come from a different country or carried roots from elsewhere. In that moment, I understood that connection did not depend on perfect English or an American accent—it came from honesty and heart. The food that once reminded me of my distance from home now connected me to others, turning silence into conversation and strangers into friends. The fear and loneliness that once surrounded me began to fade and were replaced by a sense of pride in who I was and where I came from.

Now, when I celebrate American holidays and cook Afghan dishes beside American ones, I am reminded that I belong to both worlds.

Looking back, I realize that belonging is not about changing yourself to fit in; it is about embracing who you are. Living between two cultures has taught me strength, patience, and pride. I am no longer afraid to say that I am both Afghan and American. My roots remind me of where I come from, while my life here shows me how far I have come. Together, they make me who I am. I am Afghan. I am American. And I am proud to belong to both worlds.

HEALTHY HABITS

BY *MARIANA TEMERIVSKA*, ESL 37

ADVICE

Our life has some important things that you should do to be healthy. The first thing is physical activities. You should do physical exercise for 10-15 minutes every morning before you leave home. You should remember about physical exercise during your day because when you work or study at school or college, you still need to move your body to stay healthy. Also, you can go swimming, go to the gym, or walk with your friends, and you will have a really fun and healthy time. You shouldn't do physical exercise in the evening because before sleeping you need to relax and be ready to sleep. The second thing is healthy food. You should eat proteins, carbohydrates, and fats every day. Every day, please eat eggs with vegetables, bacon, and chicken. You shouldn't forget to drink a cup of water every morning to be healthy. During the day, please try to eat on time because it's very important for your health. You shouldn't eat fast food or soda or alcohol because they are not good for your health. The last thing is a medical review. You shouldn't forget to visit your doctor every year for a health check. If you don't do it, you can have many problems in the future. You should visit your doctor when you feel bad and never skip your medicine. In conclusion, three things such as physical activities, healthy food, and a medical review are very important. You can easily do these things and feel great every day.

THE BAR WHERE STEREOTYPES DIE

BY ASIA BELIAEVA, ESL 325

NARRATIVE

Hi! I am Asia, My world is divided inside me into before and after. When I started working at a bar in America, I thought I already knew the world. I had my own picture of people - pointed by movies, news, and old Russian stereotypes. But behind the bar, I discovered that every drink comes with a story, stronger than any cocktail I could mix. Working at the bar for many years changed how I saw people's and cultures. It taught me that stereotypes are like bad cocktails; look fine and smell good at first but hit you wrong later. Behind every glass I served, I found a world I never knew - one that broke my old beliefs and built our understanding.

It was 2016, in Houston, Texas. I remember that day like today. I saw many people at George Bush International Airport.

I heard many voices and sounds, which blended into one beautiful melody in my mind. At that moment I felt inside me that It was going to be an incredible, interesting trip. New life, new job, new friends, and the breaking of old stereotypes. When I started working behind the bar in a restaurant, my bar became a small version of the world, a place where stereotypes came to be challenged and crushed.

It all began the moment I met an African man from Nigeria. His name is Ayo. Ayo is a regular customer at my bar. He always asks me to make him a stronger cocktail - a Long Island. He shared stories about his life in Africa, describing how he dedicated many years to studying en-

gineering and now works for one of the top companies in Houston. He showed pictures of his beautiful family home in Nigeria, carefully maintained and surrounded by a riot of colorful flowers and bright green trees. He also spoke proudly of his parents, who are respected doctors in the city of Lagos. My stereotypes about Africa that I pictured in my head were of a bleak, dusty, and poor continent - no color, no joy, where people were just surviving and struggling. The more I learned about the

details of his life, my stereotype about Africa cracked, like a cube of ice in his cocktail glass. Because Ayo was successful, worked at an oil company, was highly educated and had multiple degrees, the massive iceberg of my stereotypes started breaking apart piece by piece.

A modest Colombian woman once told me about her life. She

had come to Houston for a medical internship. She shared that she came from a family of five generations of doctors and had followed in her parents' footsteps to become a doctor. Polite and serious, she was nothing like the party-loving image I had imagined. I realized instantly how wrong my assumptions were. Just her presence reminded me that people are far more complex than the stereotypes we hold.

Another night, I had fun because there was an Asian businessman who taught me how to make the perfect green tea shot—right at the bar. I expected a dry, precise lesson, but he turned it into a playful experiment. He shook the shaker with exaggerated flair, tasted,





laughed, and joked about which ingredient made the drink “magically perfect.” I couldn’t stop laughing. He was very open and relaxed, easy to talk to, and with him, any topic of conversation flowed effortlessly. In that moment, my stereotype of Asians being overly serious, slow to open up in conversation or boring completely shattered. He was disciplined, smart, and yet full of humor and spontaneity.

Each of these conversations showed me that people’s stories run far deeper than my assumptions. Listening to them, I realized how narrow and small my worldview had been. Their stories made me laugh, think, and sometimes even cry. Every night felt like reading a new chapter of

a global book, and I started to enjoy discovering people instead of labeling them.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “The Danger of a Single Story” helped me understand what was happening. Like her, I learned that believing only one story about a person—or a whole culture—is dangerous. My little bar had become a university of humanity, where I was learning the beauty of diversity firsthand. My old stereotypes melted away, replaced by curiosity, empathy, and respect.

I no longer serve drinks, but I still serve attention, curiosity, and understanding. Each night at the bar proves that people and the world are much kinder, deeper, more sincere, more alive, and more humane than stereotypes suggest.

Every person I met at the bar shattered stereotypes. Each story was richer and more unexpected than the last. In the end, I realized that people and their cultures are far more fascinating, complex, and human than I ever imagined.

Beautiful Places in Herat

BY SIMA TABIBI, ESL 37

OPINION



Herat is a very beautiful and old city in Afghanistan. It has a strong history and many wonderful places to visit. When you visit my city, you should visit Ekhtiardin Castle, the Great Mosque, and Malan Bridge. First, you should go to the Ekhtiarding castle because it was built over 9000 years ago. You can take nice photos and learn about the history of this place. You shouldn’t write on the walls because it is a national place. Second, you should visit the Great Mosque because it is famous mosque in Afghanistan. It is about 800 years old and has very beautiful designs. You will see the culture of the people of Herat and take beautiful pictures of these places, but you shouldn’t go without a hijab because it is a holy place. Third, you should visit Malan Bridge. It is almost 900 years old. It has a beautiful view. You can walk across the bridge and enjoy the fresh air, but you shouldn’t throw anything into the river. You will never forget this view. In conclusion, Herat is full of history, art, and kind people. You should visit it one day, and you will see amazing places and learn about Afghan culture.

What's on your holiday table?

POZOLE

BY EMMA MENDOZA, ESL 47

DELICIOUS



I come from Mexico, and one of my favorite dishes from there is *pozole*. One time in my childhood, at my uncle's wedding, we ate delicious *pozole*. *Pozole* is a very old dish from pre-Hispanic cultures. During cultural and national celebrations, we always eat this dish. Originally, it was a ceremonial dish, prepared with corn. Corn was a fundamental and sacred food. The preparation of *pozole* takes time because it starts with preparing the grains; people start doing it a day before. Pork, beef, or chicken, and seasonings are added. The meats are not mixed; each one is a different dish. There are different versions of *pozole*, such as red, white, and green, adapting the ingredients of each region of Mexico. Delicious flavors blend together. This dish is accompanied with cabbage, chilis in vinaigrette, and tomato salad. Families usually eat *pozole* on holidays. During Christmas days, my children enjoy tasting this delicious dish. When you eat *pozole*, you feel the taste of home. Indeed, *pozole* has become an emblematic dish of Mexican cuisine and is delicious in all its versions.

HOLUBCI

BY TAMARA PIVTORAK, ESL 47

INDISPENSABLE

I come from Ukraine, so my favorite dish from there is *holubci*. Many people called this food "cabbage rolls". In my country, *holubci* is an indispensable dish on every holiday table and even on the wedding table. It makes a special warm atmosphere, which people usually feel during family meetings. To prepare it you don't need a lot of money, you just need time and patience. The main ingredients are cabbage, rice, minced meat, carrots, onions, salt, pepper, and spices. You can use different kinds of meat: beef, pork, chicken, turkey, or a mixture of them. You can also add some vegetables to *Holubci* instead of meat. For example, my son doesn't eat meat, so I made vegetarian *holubci* for him. If you have all necessary ingredients, you can start. First, the cabbage leaves are blanched, and the rest of ingredients are wrapped in them. Next, these small "envelopes" are put into a saucepan and poured with broth with sour cream and tomato juice, and then cooked in the oven or on the stove over low heat. After one or two hours we have an exceptional meal with a unique taste and smell. Each cabbage roll keeps its shape, but it is really soft and tender. Ukrainians really love *holubci*, but they don't make it often because it takes a lot of time. I make *holubci* only for special events like parties, but if I want to eat it at another time, I go to the Elena's Kitchen restaurant. When I eat *holubci* I always remember the most pleasant moments of my life. Indeed, *holubci* is a really delicious food, and I love it very much.



KECHERRY GOSHT LAND

BY VAHIDEH QATALI, ESL 47

FLAVORFUL

My favorite food is “Kecherry Gosht Land”. This is important in my country because in the past when people faced difficulties in the winter, while they couldn’t go to the city for shopping, they would prepare dry meat. In the winter, they prepare it for emergencies, such as gatherings in the upcoming winter. Once, when I was pregnant, I dreamed of *Kecherry* every night. We prepare this dish with special rice and meat. *Kecherry* is a delicious food. Cooking this is easy, but it requires specific skills. This food has a brown color, and a good smell. The *Kecherry Gosht Land* taste is salty. This dish is eaten with a special type of pickles. This special dish “*Kecherry Gosht Land*” is mostly eaten at parties. My mother always cooked this dish in the best way along with *gormeh sabzi* and salad. My mother cooked this dish the way people used to make it, which is why it was very flavorful. Indeed, I want to eat this dish in this upcoming winter. I want to buy and prepare the meat because we definitely have a party with *Kecherry Gosht Land*.



LASAGNA

BY NADIYA KIPORUK, ESL 47

TASTY



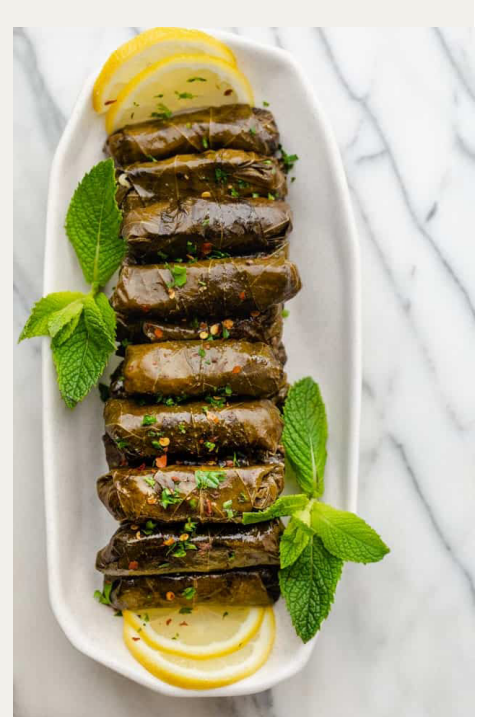
Lasagna is one of my favorite foods. It is an Italian dish with pasta, meat, and cheese. I like soft noodles and rich tomato sauce. The melted cheese on top makes it very tasty. People usually bake it in the oven until it is hot and golden. I eat *lasagna* for lunch or dinner. Sometimes my family makes it at home, but I prefer to eat *lasagna* in a restaurant with delicious wine. The smell is wonderful, and it always makes me hungry. One time, I cooked *lasagna* for my friends’ birthday, and everyone said it was amazing. It was the first time I made it by myself, and I felt very proud. The cheese melted perfectly, and the top was crispy and golden. We ate it together, laughed, and took many pictures. When I remember that day, I always want to make *lasagna* again. Indeed, *lasagna* is a delicious food, and I love it.

STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES

BY RAHAF MHAWESH, ESL 47

MEANINGFUL

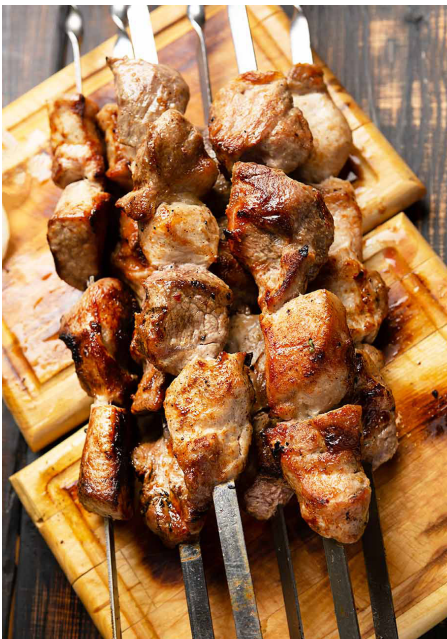
One of my favorite foods from my country is stuffed grape leaves. This is called *worak enab* in Arabic. It is very popular in the middle east, and people often make it for special family gatherings. Stuffed grape leaves are made with rice, tomato, onion, and spices that are wrapped inside soft grape leaves. Sometimes people add ground meat, and sometimes they make it vegetarian. The taste is sour and savory at the same time and smells fresh and full of spices. The grape leaves look small and green, and they are rolled into little cylinders. People usually eat them as part of lunch or dinner, and they are often served with yogurt. I eat stuffed grape leaves a few times a year, usually when my family has time to cook them. They are not very expensive, but they take a lot of time and patience to prepare. When I eat this dish, I feel connected to my culture and very happy. One time during Eid, when I was a little girl, I helped my mother roll the grape leaves for the first time. It was not easy because the leaves were small and soft, and my rolls looked funny. My mother laughed and said I would get better with practice. The smell of lemon and spices filled the kitchen, and I felt proud to help her new every time I ate stuffed grape leaves. I remember that happy moment with my family. Indeed, stuffed grape leaves are one of the most delicious and meaningful dishes in my country.



SHASHLIK

BY SERHII SAVCHUK ESL 47

WONDERFUL



I love meat, and my favorite dish is *shashlik*. My dad taught me how to cook *shashlik*. He knew how to do it very well. *Shashlik* is grilled meat. It can be made from lamb, pork, or beef, but my favorite is pork. Before frying, *shashlik* needs to be marinated with onion and spices for several hours. Then you need to put the meat on an iron skewer and place it on the grill. I like to cook *shashlik* by myself because when I grill it, I enjoy the wonderful smell, and I really like it. Cooked pork is grilled in square pieces of meat about two inches in size with a wonderful spicy flavor. In my country, we eat grilled pork for some celebrations or holidays, mostly for lunch or dinner. My children help me cook *shashlik*. In the cold season, they like to grill meat and feel the heat from the grill. One time, on New Year's Eve, I was grilling meat with my family outside, and it was great because snow started at that time, and everyone was very happy. This is not a very expensive dish because pork is much cheaper than lamb or beef. Indeed, *shashlik* is a really delicious food, and I like it.

I MISS MY PARENTS

BY SHEILA KHOKOLA, ESL 350

POETRY

I miss my parents—
Their love, a constant river, flowing forever.
I miss their smiles,
As beautiful as flowers blooming in spring.
Their kindness is priceless,
Like life's breath to humanity.
Their care wraps around me,
Like sunshine warming the earth.
Our bond, sacred and deep,
Is a spiritual thread tied to God.
I miss my mom's cooking—
The scent dances through the air, rich and warm.
The taste, a comfort,
Like water to the lips of the thirsty.
Their love shines brightly,
Like the sun blazing in the sky.
Their tears for our future
Fall gently, like soft rain on soil.
Their faces light with joy
At each small success I achieve.
My parents are sweet,
As lovely as life itself.
My dad, steady and strong,
Like the rhythm of day and night.

OPINION ESSAY

ENDLESSLY THANKFUL

BY VITA HOT, ESL 47



THE GRATEFUL GULL

Gratitude is a powerful feeling that reminds us of the beauty in our lives. As I reflect on what I am thankful for, particular things stand out: the park, my ability to read, and my car.

First of all, I am thankful for the park near my home. It is a peaceful retreat where I can walk among the trees, breathe fresh air, and connect to nature. The sound of birds, the rustling leaves, and the open sky provide a sense of calm that rejuvenates my spirit. This park has lots of benches and tables where I can come and study in silence. Sometimes on holidays we gather in this park to celebrate someone's birthday. The park is also a place where my daughter and I can spend time together laughing and playing. Whether we're strolling along the winding paths, playing on the swings, or simply sitting on a bench watching the sun and nature, the park offers us a variety of ways to spend our time. It's a place where time slows down, allowing us to focus on what really matters: our connection with as parents and children. I am truly and deeply thankful for the park near my home, a peaceful sanctuary where I can escape the hustle and bustle of daily life.

Second, reading is an ability that I have, and I am grateful for endless opportunities it provides to learn and draw. A good book has the power to transport me to different words, open up new perspectives and teach valuable lessons. It enriches my mind, broadens my horizons, and nurtures my love for history and the world. In a minute, you're

immersed in the world of the book, and you can imagine it all as much as you can. Reading makes you smarter, it contains a lot of information that you can later apply in your life. I am deeply grateful for the ability to read, a gateway to endless knowledge, connection, and understanding.

Last of all, for me, one of the things I am most thankful

for is my car. My car helps to cover long distances and protects me from heat and cold. My car saves me time and effort. On a more practical level, my car has been a life-saver for daily responsibilities. From grocery runs to doctor appointments, my car ensures that I can tackle my tasks with ease and convenience. My car allows me to travel wherever and whenever I need to, whether it's going to work, visiting friends and family, or embarking on spontaneous road trips. Without it many of these journeys would be difficult, if not impossible. It grants me the freedom to explore new places, meet new people, and experience life beyond my immediate surroundings. My car feels like an extension of my home, a small sanctuary on wheels that helps

me stay grounded, and focused. My car reminds me to be grateful for the opportunities it affords me.

In conclusion, in reflection on the park, my ability of reading, and my car. I am reminded of how much they contribute to my happiness and well-being. The park gives me a feeling of peace, reading fuels my curiosity, and my car makes my life easier. For these blessings, I am endlessly thankful.



FUN PLACES IN SACRAMENTO

BY *SONYA SADATI, ESL 47*

DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

Have you ever wondered where you can have fun and relax with your family in Sacramento?

Sacramento is a city with many fun places to visit. I like to visit all the fun places. On weekends, I enjoy going to the Sacramento Zoo, the Central Library, and William Land Park with my friends and family. My kids like to go to the zoo. These places are enjoyable and offer different activities for everyone. In addition, Sacramento has many beautiful parks and peaceful spots to relax.

The Sacramento Zoo is a fun place to see animals. We can see lions, monkeys, and giraffes. The zoo is not big, so it is easy to walk around. There are places to sit and eat lunch. I like to take pictures of the animals and learn about them. The zoo also has special programs for kids to learn about animals and is a great place to spend time with family. For example, my kids love attending the "Zoo Camp" during summer where they learn about taking care of animals. In addition, there is a reptile house where you can see snakes, turtles, and lizards up close. The zoo helps protect animals and teaches people about them. Visiting the zoo is very good for me. I like to see animals in person. I always have a good time when I visit the zoo. The Sacramento Zoo is one of my favorite places.

The Central Library is a quiet place to read and learn. It has many books for children and adults. There are also computers to use. Sometimes, the library has story time for the kids. I always bring my kids there to listen to the story. I like to go there to read and relax. The library is a peaceful place to study. It is cool in summer and warm in the winter. The staff are friendly and helpful. They are helping people with their problems. For example, the staff can help you find books for a school project or show you how to use the computers. In addition, the library sometimes offers free classes for adults, like English lessons or computer skills. I enjoy spending time at the library. The Central Library is a great place to visit.



William Land Park is a big park with many things to do. There is a playground for kids and a pond with ducks. My kids like William Land Park to play in the playground with my relatives. We can have a picnic or go for a walk. The park is very pretty with many trees and flowers. It is a nice place to spend time outside. The park has open spaces to play games. There are picnic tables and BBQ areas. It is close to the zoo and golf course. For instance, after visiting the zoo, we sometimes have a family picnic at the park. In addition, there is a small amusement park called Funderland where kids can enjoy rides and games. William Land Park is my favorite place. I like to go there with my family on weekends. William Land Park is a fun place to relax.

Hoffman Park is another wonderful place to visit in Sacramento. It is a peaceful park with wide green spaces and lots of trees. There is a big playground where children can climb, slide, and swing. For example, my children love playing tag and running around the open fields. There are also walking and biking trails for people who like to exercise. In addition, Hoffman Park has picnic areas with BBQ grills where families can enjoy a nice outdoor meal. Sometimes, we bring a soccer ball and play games together on the big grassy fields. The park is also very clean and safe, which makes it a great place for family outings. During the summer, Hoffman Park hosts small events like outdoor movie nights or community festivals. Visiting Hoffman Park is a fun and relaxing way to enjoy nature with family and friends. For instance, last month we went there with my cousins and spent the whole afternoon having a picnic and playing games. Hoffman Park is a place where we always make good memories and enjoy being outdoors.

In conclusion, Sacramento has many fun places to enjoy the weekend. The Sacramento Zoo, the Central Library, William Land Park, and Hoffman Park are my favorite places to visit with my friends and family. They are fun, relaxing, and make me happy. I love spending time with my loved ones at these locations. Whether it's learning about animals, reading new books, or playing outside, Sacramento has something fun for everyone.

COOKING WITH MY FAMILY

BY VIOLETA CHOBAN, ESL 47

HOBBY CORNER

Everyone has something that brings them joy and happiness. For me, that special thing is cooking with my family. It is about fun and time together. I enjoy making new recipes and teaching my children how to cook. Cooking with them brings joy to our home.

First, cooking with my kids helps us spend quality time together. In today's busy world, it is hard to find time to be together. But when

we cook, we talk, laugh, and work. For example, on weekends, we often bake cookies or make pancakes. My daughter mixes the flour, and my son adds the eggs. It is not just something I do with my kids. My husband also enjoys helping

in the kitchen, and when we listen to music and sing at this moment, these activities help us become closer and create happy memories. Cooking makes us happy and teaches us to be a team.

Second, cooking teaches my children important skills. When they cook, they learn to follow recipe instructions and be careful. They also learn to feel the difference between healthy and unhealthy food. When we cook together, we always talk about healthy food. For example, we discuss which vegetables are good for the body and

how too much sugar is bad for our health. After cooking, we usually eat together as a family. The children feel proud of the encouragement when they have creative ideas for decorating the dish. We love and value the time we spend together in the kitchen. I believe this will help them in the future to be prepared and responsible.

Third, cooking is fun and builds relations for our family. We all enjoy spending time together in

the kitchen. My husband, my kids, and I like to try to cook new dishes. We often cook colorful and healthy meals. One of our favorite things is grilling meat, and I prepare the side dishes like salad and rice. The kids help by setting the table and

bringing drinks. We enjoy decorating the plates and making the food beautiful. Cooking helps us relax and enjoy each other's company. It is one of the best ways for us to connect as a family.

In conclusion, cooking with my family is my favorite hobby because it helps us spend time together, teaches us useful skills, and allows us to be creative. I hope my children will remember these moments forever and continue to love cooking when they grow up. Cooking is a beautiful part of our lives.



IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN MY LIFE

NARRATIVE

BY DIANA AFGHANZOI, ESL 47

Education is always a big part of my life. Your future is based on your hard work and education is a big part of that. Having a good education was always my biggest goal in life even when I had to do it from zero three times in my life.

First, when I was a little girl in Afghanistan, I was living in a province that education was different. The teachers and school is not as good as the capital. I

had younger siblings to take care of at the same time. I also had to help them with their school work and support them. The lifestyle is also very different in provinces of Afghanistan than the capital, so it was a big factor. I always worked hard with all

these factors to get education, and I got accepted to university with a high score in the capital. I moved with my family from my homeland to get further education which was a big struggle.

The second barrier that came to my way was the change in government. When the Taliban took Afghanistan for the first time and all schools and universities were closed, I stayed home. I got married around that time and started a new chapter, but education was always important to me and in my mind. After the second change in government, I started going to uni-

versity again as a married woman with kids, and I was working hard to achieve my goal, which was getting my degree. Not to mention, I was living away from my family with my husband, and the system and lifestyle in new city were so different, but that never stopped me from getting what I want.

The last challenge I am facing in this journey of getting an education is my immigration to the U.S. I left

my home and my life in Afghanistan and immigrated to the U.S. for my children and my self better future. I started studying in adult schools, and after that I enrolled in ARC. My current journey is here in ARC that I am trying to study and get the education I always wanted. Language is the biggest challenge right now because I am not

that good at speaking English. Even though I know this journey will be difficult, I am ready to try my best.

At the end, I want to say that education has always been the biggest part of my life especially when I had the big challenges like change of government, marriage, and immigration. I think if we have the plan and goal to achieve something, we can do it with hard work especially if it is something as important as education.



THE DAY I FOUND MY COURAGE

NARRATIVE

BY SHENKAI AHADI, ESL 47

When I was 10 years old, I had a frightening experience that I will never forget. It happened one summer afternoon in Afghanistan, while I was playing with my cousins and my older brother in our backyard. Our backyard was filled with many kinds of trees like apricots, apples, peaches, grapes, cherries, and more. What began as an exciting game among family turned into a moment that taught me about courage, quick thinking, and the importance of taking action in an emergency.

That afternoon, my cousins, my older brother, and I decided to climb the cherry trees to pick cherries. We made a game, and whoever collected the most cherries would be the winner and become the boss of the group. We all climbed different trees, picking cherries and filling our buckets while eating some as well. About twenty minutes later,

we suddenly heard a strange sound. We asked each other what the sound was, but no one knew. When I looked down, I was shocked to see my brother lying unconscious under one of the cherry trees. I called his name loudly, but he didn't respond. I quickly climbed down from the tree and ran to him; his eyes were closed, and his head was bleeding.

I immediately started crying, and all my cousins gathered around us, terrified. Everyone was scared, and my cousins suggested hiding my brother under a pile of leaves and leaving the yard. They said that if anyone asked about him, we should pretend we didn't know what happened. But I refused to listen to them. I knew I had to do something. A small stream of water was running nearby, so I ran to the stream, brought water in

my hands, and splashed it on my brother's face several times. After a few moments, I saw a slight reaction from him. I smiled through my tears and shouted, "He is alive!" I continued pouring water on his face, and soon my cousins joined me. I held his head in my lap, cleaned the blood with my clothes, and comforted him while crying and laughing at the same time.

After a little while, my brother began to speak, but he wasn't feeling well. I realized it was important to tell my family, even though no one else agreed with me. I ran inside and

called my mother, explaining what had happened. She immediately came running, followed by other family members. My mother picked up my brother, and my family quickly took him to the hospital because his speech was not normal. At the hospital, the doctor did several tests and gave him medicine for the pain. Thankfully, the doctor said there was nothing serious. When

we returned home, my family gathered everyone together, and I told them the whole story. They were so proud of me for my quick thinking, bravery, and courage. I felt wonderful knowing that I saved my brother's life by not listening to my cousins and taking action immediately.

That day is one of the most unforgettable moments of my life. It taught me the importance of courage, quick decision-making, and standing up for what is right, even when others disagree. My family's pride in me made me realize how brave I could be in difficult situations. I am thankful that I trusted my instincts and I didn't let fear stop me from saving my brother's life.



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THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

CAUSE/EFFECT

BY ANNA SMISHKO, ESL 55

EDITOR'S NOTE: This essay was written during the fall of 2021.

All people in the world prefer to be free in their choices, visions, and in everything that we want to do. The world has been experiencing the COVID crisis for two years. It has changed our lives in many ways. There are some positive and negative effects of the COVID crisis on the people of the United States: the people were able to spend time with family and delivery service was improved, but travel has become difficult, a lot of people lost their jobs, and some people passed away.

The first positive effect is that the people were able to spend more time with their families. My husband was free from his work for a few months, but he was with us. We chose to play table games, read books, and go biking. Some of our best friends had newborns. The brothers and sisters were happy to have new siblings. We could stop and think about important things in our life. I cherish my parent's life like never before. It is important to be together with your family!

The second positive effect is that the online and delivery businesses are growing and people are able to make money in new ways. It is comfortable to choose and buy online. My friends lost their jobs, but they found another way to make money. It was a Doordash and delivery service. Also, we learned how to save and not waste money. I bought a sewing machine and made natural cotton face masks for my family, friends, and neighbors, and I sold them online. Never give up and never surrender!

However, there were also some negative effects of COVID. A lot of people lost their jobs, such as nurses and small business owners. It was an economic crisis. Also, it is difficult to travel because some countries are closed. People doubt if they leave their homes that they will ever come back. I must say with a sigh that some of my friends have passed away. I am so sorry. It changes our thoughts and our actions.

In conclusion, it is not easy to monitor news from all over the world. It is a difficult time for people because of the COVID crisis: some people passed away, the journey is not comfortable, and people lost their jobs. It is important to us to never give up and never surrender because we can spend time with our families, we can stop and think about something important, and we can try a new online business.



**Would you like to
contribute to *The Parrot*?**

If you want to share your work, art, opinion, or anything else with *The Parrot*, please email us at:

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We would be happy to hear from you and will try to respond ASAP.

The Parrot welcomes all ESL student matters!

READING FOR BEGINNERS

An Evening Walk with My Sister

BY SAYED EDRES SADIQI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

This fall, I decided to become more active. For many years, I was very lazy and did not do any exercise. So, I made a goal to walk 10,000 steps every day. I usually walk in the evening. My wife stays home and takes care of our son, and that time becomes my free time. I call it "my time." I walk for about two hours and usually get between 10,000 and 13,000 steps.

Today is Friday, and my sister Asila was visiting my home. She joined me on my walk. We started walking at 6 p.m. The weather was cool and calm. We walked on the trail next to the park near my home. There were not many people there. We enjoyed walking, talking, and listening to the birds singing in the trees.

During the walk, I told Asila my plan after I finish my associate's degree at ARC. I asked her for advice because I feel confused. I don't know if I should transfer to a university to get my bachelor's degree or start working and delay my education for now.

Asila gave me very good advice. She said I can transfer to a university and also start applying for jobs at the same time. If I get a job, I can take fewer classes and study part-time. It may take longer to finish my bachelor's degree, but it is better than stopping school completely.

As we walked, we passed the small park. Children were playing on the swings. Some people were walking their dogs. The park looked peaceful and clean. Before we went home, we decided to walk together at least once a week. It is a good activity and a nice way for us to share our plans and give each other advice.

Can you answer these questions?

1. Why did the writer decide to walk more this fall?

- A. To train for a race
- B. To become more active
- C. To spend less time at home
- D. To walk his dog

2. When does the writer usually walk?

- A. In the morning
- B. At lunchtime
- C. In the afternoon
- D. In the evening

3 Who joined the writer on the walk?

- A. His brother
- B. His friend
- C. His sister
- D. His wife

4. Why did the writer ask Asila for advice?

- A. He wanted to change his major.
- B. He was confused about studying or working.
- C. He wanted to buy a new car.
- D. He planned to move to another city.

5. What advice did Asila give?

- A. Stop school and only work.
- B. Travel for one year.
- C. Transfer to a university and apply for jobs.
- D. Take a long break from studying.

6. What did they see at the park?

- A. A big concert
- B. Children playing and people walking dogs
- C. Students studying
- D. A sports game

MOTHERHOOD: AN ESSAY BY EKATERINA ZHLOBA

Personal Narrative

My Son Is the Center of My Universe

The person who changed my life is my son, my only child. From the moment I held my son in my arms and whispered, "Hello, my love," my life changed forever. The birth of my son was not only the happiest moment of my life – it was also the moment when I began to see the world differently. Motherhood reshaped my priorities, tested my strength, and gave my life a deeper sense of meaning.

Before becoming a mother, I lived mostly for myself. I spent my days studying, working, pursuing hobbies, and simply enjoying life. At that point, I was completely satisfied with my life, traveling, and pursuing my career. I thought motherhood wasn't for me. But with the birth of my son, everything changed. What used to seem super important – education, career, and social life – became completely unimportant. I focused entirely on my child's happiness and well-being. My son gave me a purpose in my life, and with him, I realized that life is not only about personal growth but also about responsibility, sacrifice, and love.

The first days of motherhood were full of joy but also fear. I remember being afraid to hold him in my arms, constantly checking to see if he was breathing, and worrying every time I put him in the

car. Along with my all-consuming love, I was afraid of making a mistake or failing as a mother. These worries and experiences taught me confidence and patience. Motherhood made me stronger – not for myself, but for him, because now my life no longer belonged only to me.

Over time, I began to feel that motherhood is not only about caring for a child but also about

changing yourself. Your child grows, changes, and you change with them. With him, every day feels like a new day. I noticed that my son was watching everything I do. Kids, like sponges, absorb everything that happens around them. I realized that it wasn't enough to simply tell him what's right; I needed to show him by example and share my experience. So, I began to pay

more attention to my words, actions, and choices. By raising him, I was also raising myself, becoming a better mother for my child.

Motherhood has also taught me balance. Although my son is my top priority, I have learned to keep my individuality. I slowly returned to some of my old hobbies and interests, though not with the same freedom as before. My son has shown me that life is not about doing everything but about doing what is truly important. That balance between responsibility and individuality has made me stronger and more focused. I want him to see that his mother is not only devoted to him but is also a person with dreams, skills, and ambitions. By maintaining my



individuality, I hope to show him that he too can build a future in which family and personal goals go together.

One of the greatest joys of motherhood is seeing the world through my son's eyes. His curiosity, sense of humor, and unique personality constantly amaze me. Watching him discover the world feels like traveling to a new place and seeing its wonders for the first time. Every laugh, every question, and every hug reminds me that life is full of beauty and happiness. When I come home from work and he runs to me with open arms, I feel the purest kind of love. I'm truly sure that no achievement or success could ever compare to that feeling.

As I look toward the future, I am deeply grateful that my son is growing up in the United States, where it is safe and full of opportunities for education and personal growth. Knowing that he will have the chance to build a good future gives me peace of mind and fills me with hope. I want him to see that life is full of possibilities, and I hope my example will encourage him to work hard and dream boldly. At the same time, I dream of his happiness – not only in school and career, but also in his relationships, his passions, and his sense of self. My greatest wish is that he will grow into a kind and

confident young man who understands the power of love and carries those values into his own future family.

Love is one of the most powerful feelings a person can experience. But my love for my son is beyond anything I ever imagined. It is a miracle, a gift, and a connection that words cannot fully capture. Every moment with him is the best moment of my life. My heart is full of love for this incredible, kind, intelligent, sweet, and loving child.

In conclusion, I would like to note that having a child transforms your perception of almost everything, and as a result, your life inevitably undergoes radical change. The birth of my son was, without question, the happiest moment of my life. Motherhood changed my thinking and completely turned my priorities upside down. Now my son always comes first. This does not mean that my own life has lost its importance, but it does mean that my thoughts remain constantly focused on him and his well-being. Because of him, I live with love, strength, and purpose, and I know that my life will never be the same. Having my son was the best experience of my life, and I'm sure it will only get better in the future.

ARABIC PROVERBS

BY MOHAMMED EL MRANI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

PROVERBS

Proverbs are short sayings that carry deep wisdom. They are like little mirrors showing how people think about life. I enjoy comparing Moroccan and Arabic proverbs with English ones because they often share the same values in different words.

One Arabic proverb says, "Drop by drop, the river grows." It means that small efforts eventually lead to success. In English, there is a similar saying: "Slow and steady wins the race." Both remind us to be patient and consistent.

Another Moroccan saying goes, "Who plants good,

finds good." It's similar to "What goes around, comes around." It shows the importance of kindness and honesty. Growing up, my grandparents used proverbs in daily conversations to teach lessons without sounding too serious. When I translate them into English, I notice how wisdom crosses borders and unites cultures.

Proverbs remind us that humanity shares the same hopes and struggles. Whether in Arabic, English, or any other language, they teach us to live with patience, respect, and compassion. They are small sentences with big hearts.

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YOU BELONG HERE: ARC'S 70TH HOMECOMING BRINGS THE BEAVER FAMILY TOGETHER

BY EDRES SAYED SADIQI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

LEAD ARTICLE

Continued from page 1



Departments across campus joined the Decorating Contest, transforming offices and hallways into colorful displays of Beaver pride. It was fun walking around and seeing how creative everyone got, from banners and posters to balloons and themed decorations. Each department seemed determined to outdo the others, but all in good spirit.

As a student employee and staff member of *The Parrot Newsletter*, I had the chance to experience the event up close, and from the very first day, I could feel the energy all around campus. The theme, "You Belong Here: Re-Discover ARC", wasn't just a slogan; it was a feeling that echoed through every smile, handshake, and cheer.

Homecoming week kicked off with the Wellness Walk and Pep Rally, which immediately set a joyful tone. Students showed up in Beaver blue and gold, waving pom-poms and cheering alongside staff and faculty who were just as excited to celebrate. The sound of music and laughter filled the quad, and even those walking between classes couldn't help but stop and join in.

By midweek, the campus energy kept growing with Arts events, Spirit Fest, and plenty of moments that brought people together, whether it was dancing, taking group photos, or just sharing stories about their time at ARC.

What stood out to me most was how present and engaged ARC's leadership was throughout the celebration. Dr. Lisa Cardoza, ARC's president, joined the festivities in person, connecting with students and staff and showing genuine appreciation for everyone's hard work. It was inspiring to see a college president so actively involved, not from a distance, but right in the middle of the crowd, celebrating alongside everyone else.

I also saw so many teams working quietly behind the scenes to make it all run smoothly, from Operations and IT/Audio-Visual staff setting up sound and lighting to the Athletics Department lead-

ing games and contests with energy and enthusiasm.

The Student Ambassadors and Clubs and Events Board (CAEB) brought even more

life to the event with interactive booths and fun activities that kept the crowd engaged.

The teamwork was visible everywhere you looked, and that's what made the event feel so authentic. Everyone contributed something, no matter how small, to make the celebration shine.

Throughout the day, I talked with other students and staff who were just happy to be part of it. Many said they hadn't seen the campus this lively in years. You could tell people were

proud, proud of ARC's 70 years of history, proud of their departments, and proud of being part of something that truly brought everyone together.



There were smiles, laughter, and a genuine sense of unity that's hard to describe unless you were there. It didn't matter whether someone was a new student or a longtime staff member, everyone felt connected.

As the afternoon sun started to fade and the last cheers echoed across campus, it was

clear that ARC's 70th Homecoming wasn't just a celebration of the past, it was a living moment of community. It reminded us all that ARC isn't just a college. It's a place where people care for one another, show up with pride, and belong.



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CHASING THE AURORA IN LINCOLN

BY MANNY, PARROT STAFF WRITER

EVENT



Earlier this month, Northern California witnessed one of the strongest geomagnetic storms in recent years—a G4-level event that turned the night sky into a canvas of surreal color. While many across the region glanced up in disbelief, I grabbed my gear, got in the car, and drove toward Lincoln with one goal in mind: to photograph what felt like a once-in-a-lifetime moment.

When I arrived, the sky was already glowing deep red, an auroral shade rarely seen at this latitude. The horizon shifted between crimson,

fuchsia, and neon green, forming vertical pillars of light that stretched upward like silent flames. The land around me was dark and quiet, but the sky was alive.

As I searched for a foreground, I spotted a lonely tree near a small body of water. Its silhouette stood stark against the electric colors above, a perfect counterpoint to the intensity of the aurora. There was something almost symbolic about it: a solitary figure grounded in stillness while the world above erupted in light.



That tree became my anchor.

I set up my Nikon and framed the scene so its branches reached into the glowing night. The water below reflected some of the color, while distant lights from rural homes added a sense of scale and quiet humanity to the moment. The composition came together effortlessly, as if nature itself had arranged the elements for me.

The air was cold, but the adrenaline kept me warm. Every minute, the sky shifted into a new pattern—waves, curtains, vertical beams—and each exposure revealed a different personality of the storm. It felt less like photographing a landscape and more like witnessing a living phenomenon.

It was, without exaggeration, magical.

Nights like this remind me why I chase light, why I stay up long past midnight, and why I drive hours for a chance at wonder. The aurora over Lincoln wasn't just an atmospheric event; it was a reminder of how extraordinary our world can be when you're willing to step outside and look up.

These photographs are a piece of that night, a conversation between earth and sky, between stillness and motion, between a lone tree and a storm of cosmic energy. And I feel grateful that I was there to capture it all.

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A GRATITUDE LETTER TO MY PARENTS ACROSS CONTINENTS

BY EDRES SADIQI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Gratitude for one's parents is a nearly universal sentiment, but my story is one of uniquely profound appreciation. It's a journey made possible by the unwavering love, courage, and values my parents instilled in me, values that have guided me through life and across continents.



My Mother

Having a mother like mine is a blessing beyond words. From my earliest memories, she was not only a schoolteacher but also a courageous advocate for education and human values. Even in the toughest times, when the world around us tried to put out the light of learning, she stood firm. She taught us to always stand up for our values, to work hard, and to be like a candle spreading light rather than darkness. Her example of bravery, from opening an underground school for girls who were banned education (when the Taliban took over Afghanistan for the first time in 1995 and it was against their rule to educate girls and for women to teach) to teaching us science at home (when all we had to study at school was only religious books enforced by the Taliban regime), taught me that no matter what, we can make a difference by holding on to what we believe in. I am profoundly grateful for her presence in my life, for her teaching me not only knowledge but also the strength to be compassionate and courageous.



My Father

My father, too, is a blessing I cherish every day. He showed me that true strength lies in supporting your children's dreams, even when they go against societal norms. Whether it was encouraging me to play the tabla in a community that didn't always understand, or supporting my desire to study abroad, he was always there. He taught me that having a strong supporter in life, someone who stands by you no matter what, is like having a force stronger than any obstacle. His willingness to do whatever it took to help me succeed, including offering to sell our home for my education, is a testament to his boundless love and boldness.

In the end, having parents like mine is a gift beyond measure. They have been my guiding lights, my strongest supporters, and the source of values that continue to shape me. Though we are now separated by continents, some of us in the United States, others in Germany, our bond remains unbreakable. I am grateful beyond words for the lessons they've taught me and for the unyielding support they've given me. They are not just my parents; they are my heroes and my closest friends, always there to light the way.

In sharing this story, I hope to inspire others to recognize and cherish the incredible gifts that loving parents bring into our lives. Their courage, compassion, and unwavering belief in me have been stronger than any obstacle, and for that, I will always be profoundly grateful.

A Time When Translation Caused Confusion (Part 2)

CULTURE

BY MOHAMMED EL MRANI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

One moment I always remember from my IT major happened during a cybersecurity lab. The instructor told us, "Kill the process." I understood the English words, but when I translated them directly into my first language, the phrase sounded dramatic and confusing, almost violent. I thought, *Why are we "killing" something in the computer?* For a few seconds, I didn't touch anything because I was afraid I might break the system.

When I looked around, everyone else was already typing fast. The instructor repeated, "Just kill it," as if it were the simplest thing. Finally, I asked a classmate, and he laughed kindly and explained, "It just means stop it or end it." Suddenly everything made sense. The translation in my mind had changed the whole meaning of the instruction.

Since that day, I learned an important lesson: not everything in IT should be translated literally. Many expressions, like "spin up a machine," "dump the logs," or "pull the trigger", sound strange when translated word for word. Sometimes the English phrase has a special meaning inside the technical world, and translation only causes confusion.

Now, whenever I hear a new expression, I don't rush to translate it. Instead, I try to understand how IT people use it. It saves me time, prevents mistakes, and helps me feel more confident in class.

LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION HOMEBASE

HOURS

- ✓ Monday–Thursday
8–5pm
- ✓ Friday 8–4:30pm

SERVICES

- ✓ Workshops & Orientation
- ✓ Support Resources & Referrals
- ✓ Counseling Appointments
- ✓ Snacks, Study Space, Lounge Area, Fun Events

Included Majors

- ASL-English Interpreting
- Communication
- Deaf Culture and American Sign Language Studies
- English
- English as a Second Language
- Journalism
- World Languages

Located in the Portable Village Room 613B

Contact Us

(916) 484-8974

Askhb-lac@arc.losrios.edu

INSIDE OUT: A JOURNEY INTO EMOTIONS

BY ASILA SADIQI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

MOVIE REVIEW



I first heard about *Inside Out* during my Biological Psychology Lab. My professor was explaining depression, stress, and anxiety, and in the middle of all the scientific theories and brain structures, she suddenly mentioned this animated movie. At first, I didn't think too much of it. It sounded like just another cartoon. But the way she talked about it, almost with admiration, made me curious. How could an animation possibly reflect the complexity of real human emotions? That curiosity stayed with me, and eventually I decided to watch the movie myself. I wasn't expecting anything deep, maybe something cute or entertaining. But what I found was something much more meaningful.

Inside Out tells the story of an 11-year-old girl named Riley, but most of the story takes place inside her mind, where five emotions, Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust guide her through the ups and downs of her life. At first, Joy tries to take control of everything, trying to keep Riley happy all the time. But as Riley faces changes, uncertainty, and emotional pressure, the balance between the emotions shifts in ways she doesn't fully understand.

Watching this unfold felt surprisingly real. As I followed Riley's emotional struggles, I remembered everything my professor said about how depression can

develop when emotions become overwhelming or disconnected. The movie doesn't use scientific words, but you can see the psychological truth in the way memories form, how stress affects the mind, and how sadness plays a role we often underestimate.

The part that touched me most was the realization that Sadness is not the "problem." In fact, sometimes sadness is exactly what brings healing, connection, and support. It's a message many of us need, especially in a world where we constantly feel pressured to look happy or pretend everything is fine. The film gently reminds us that it's okay not to be okay, and that every emotion has a purpose.

By the time the movie reached its conclusion, I understood why my professor recommended it. *Inside Out* explains emotional well-being in a way no textbook can through definitions or charts, but through a story that feels personal and human. It made me think about my own emotional experiences, the moments when I tried to push away sadness, and the times when understanding my feelings helped me move forward.

After watching it, I truly believe that anyone who cares about mental health, especially those trying to understand depression, stress, or emotional balance, should watch this movie. It's simple, gentle, and surprisingly powerful. Even though it's animated, it carries a message that stays with you long after the screen goes dark.

Watching *Inside Out* felt less like watching a cartoon and more like being invited into a conversation with myself. It reminded me that inside all of us is a world of emotions trying their best to guide us and that understanding them is one of the most important steps toward well-being.

Have a tooth problem?

Need help?

No dental insurance?

Here are some resources:

WellSpace Health: 916-737-5555

One Community Health: 916-443-3299

Refugee Health Clinic: 916-874-9227

Elica Health Centers: 855-354-2242

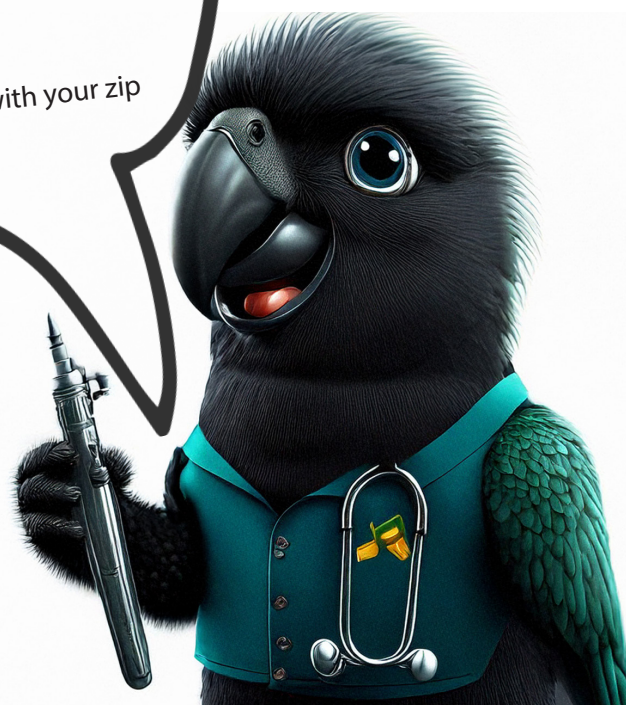
California Northstate University: 916-686-8914 (Dentistry School)

Sacramento District Dental Society: 916-446-1211

Emergency Dental Sacramento: 916-318-0911 (open on week-ends and accepts walk-ins).

Some of these places may require a fee. Call for information about cost.

You can also look on <https://cityhub.findhelp.com/> with your zip code.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY



Help for Refugee Children



Starting Point is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting newly arrived refugee children in the greater Sacramento area. The

organization strives to give them a warm welcome by providing basic necessities and programs as they begin their new lives in the U.S. They do things like meet refugee families with children at the airport, give them welcome baskets, and provide basic ESL and computer lessons, and they have even started a very popular soccer team for the kids. Visit the website and click on [REQUEST HELP](#).

Starting Point is directed by Vickee Moy, a professor of English as a Second Language in Sacramento. She launched Starting Point in June 2017 after being deeply touched by her refugee students' stories about their lives in their native countries and about their new lives in the U.S. Starting Point is one way she hopes to honor and remember their incredible stories and beautiful

lessons about perseverance, strength, hope, and humanity.

As a child of immigrants, Vickee feels a connection with new arrivals and is passionate about helping them begin successful lives in their new country. Along with her husband and three sons, she is excited to reach out to this growing community of newcomers.

<https://www.startingpointworld.com>

Want to help?

There are several ways that you can help Starting Point to help children. You can put together a welcome basket, assemble a backpack with supplies, help buy shoes, assist with lessons and program development for SPARK (Summer Program for Arts, Recreation and Knowledge), or even coach and support a soccer team!

Donations to Starting Point are tax deductible. Please visit the [Starting Point Volunteer](#) Page for more information.

A Surprising Piece of Afghan History

Discovering an Ancient Manuscript in Washington, D.C.

BY ASILA SADIQI, PARROT STAFF WRITER

CULTURE



During my recent trip to Washington, D.C., I visited the Museum of the Bible expecting to learn something new, but I never imagined I would discover a piece of history that connects directly to Afghanistan in such a meaningful way.

While exploring the exhibits, I found out that the museum houses one of the oldest known Hebrew manuscripts sometimes described as an early form of the Torah or Hebrew Bible, and it was discovered in the Bamiyan region of Afghanistan. This tiny manuscript, over a thousand years old, was once hidden in the mountains of a place many people today associate only with conflict. Before this visit, I had no idea that Afghanistan held such a rare and important historical treasure. Learning this completely shifted how I think about my homeland. It reminded me that beneath today's challenges, Afghanistan has always had a deep history of culture, learning, storytelling, and human connection.

What struck me most was the contrast: A country often portrayed only through war and hardship was once part of a wide, vibrant cultural world, a crossroads where people exchanged ideas, languages, art, and traditions. Standing there, looking at that tiny manuscript from Bamiyan, I felt a mix of pride, curiosity, and surprise. It was a quiet reminder that Afghanistan is so much more than what we see in the headlines.

This experience made me reflect on how easily politics and conflict can overshadow a country's true identity. They can make the world forget the beauty, creativity, and humanity that existed long before the divisions we see today. Yet, history survives in unexpected places, even in a small manuscript resting inside a museum thousands of miles away.



Seeing that ancient text reminded me that Afghanistan has a long, rich, and interconnected past, one that deserves to be remembered, shared, and celebrated.

OUT OF THE CAGE

PARENT TO PARENT PROGRAM AT ARC

Being a student and parent brings unique challenges that only another parent truly understands.

At American River College, a special resource called Parent to Parent (P2P), in partnership with the Mentor Collective, enhances the students' experience by connecting CalWORKs students with a mentor from within the program. Students are paired with someone invested in their success--a person ready to listen, inspire, help navigate challenges, and recognize opportunities.

Additionally, P2P mentors serve as a critical part of a student's success team by serving as a proxy for your dedicated counselors and the CalWORKs program. Mentor Collective's online platform provides training and resources for students' mentors and makes it easy for mentors and mentees to connect.

To enroll in P2P, scan the QR code or call: **(916) 484-8059**



Mentee Registration



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Please let us know what we can do to improve *The Parrot*. We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Contact us at TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. To see previous issues of *The Parrot*, go to <https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter>