

# ELP STUDENT NEWS

Volume 2, Issue 1

April 2004

"ELP Student News" is on the internet! Go to...

<http://www.vcu.edu/oie/elp/newelpnewsletter.html>

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## ELP Advising wants you to know...

### VCU Students in ELP

Summer and Fall 2004 Registration has begun! If you need an ELP Clearance Form to register for academic classes, please come in to the ELP Office as soon as possible.

*Don't forget* – even if you are exiting the ELP at the end of the Spring 2004 semester, you will still need a Clearance Form to register for Fall 2004 classes.

### ELP Students

Jessica Lonnes will complete registration for Summer 2004 ELP classes by the end of this week and will bring your schedules to your classes on Monday, April 26th.

### Final coffee hour and certificate ceremony:

**Wednesday, April 28th, 1:15 p.m., Student Commons.**

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## Escape Culture Shock by Traveling!

By: Blanca Maldonado (Mexico) and Julie Hyely Ellery (South Korea)

Every person that has changed his/her home country has experienced what is called "culture shock." All those unpleasant feelings, the loss of familiar things, a change in your values and perceptions of "what's right and what's not" seems confused in the new culture.



There are many ways to escape from culture shock and we recommend you travel in America. The state of Virginia is located on the east coast of America, right between the north and south. We would also like to recommend visiting one of the beautiful beaches in Pensacola, Florida and Niagara Falls, New York. If you would like to see white sand and the greenest ocean, you had better go to the Gulf of Mexico. The water is so clear you can see fish and crabs while you are in the water. Niagara Falls is also fantastic. Looking at this you can realize how great Mother Nature is.

Living in another country is a difficult thing to handle, and the one thing you must not do is stay at home and feel bad. That's why we offer these ideas about where to go to get to know better know the country you are living in. ELP students are here to learn English. Perhaps when we go back to our country, if we do not use English we might forget it. But, travel will remain with you for the rest of your life.



## Don't Stay at Home Anymore; Let's Hang Out and Enjoy!

By Minna Cho (South Korea) and  
Chunghyun Kim (South Korea)

What do you do on the weekend? Do you have a plan to hang out with your friends? Don't say just staying and watching tv at home. There are lots of interesting places around you if you open your eyes and look for them.

First, you can taste Vietnamese food at *Saigon*, which is on Grace Street and opposite of the *Tokyo* restaurant. There are many kinds of "pho" and Vietnamese steak. Most foods are not expensive -- about five to six dollars -- especially if you use the special lunch menu. You can have delicious food for just five dollars even and you can walk to the restaurant from VCU.

Do you like sports? You can also use the fitness center to work out at the *Cary Street gym*. All you need to bring is a VCU student ID card because it is free for VCU students. You can play badminton, table tennis, racquetball and basketball. In addition, you can borrow sporting equipment such as basketballs, table tennis rackets, towels, etc at the entrance of the gym.

Finally, at night if you want to listen to local music and meet and enjoy underground bands, you can go to *Nancy Leigon* on Grace Street. The admission fee is \$10, and then you can enjoy food, local music, and dance until closing. If you want to check the playing schedule and name of your favorite band, you can look at the big outside window.

Now you can't say, "I don't have a car, enough money or friends." It's not a reason to stay at home anymore. Let's hang out and enjoy campus life in America.

## Fun Ways to Improve Your English

By: Wan-chi Chen (Taiwan) and Sara Asad (Jordan)

Are you looking for some fun ways to improve your English? From my own experience in living in America, I found that attending the coffee hours and going to watch movies at the Byrd Theatre are the best ways to improve your English. In this article we will explain why we think these two ways are the best.

As we all know, there are a lot of American students attending coffee hour. If you go and talk there every week it will help you to improve your English. The best thing about it is that you don't only improve your English but you also make new friends, learn more about American culture and just feel more comfortable around campus.

As international students, we care about managing our budget; however fun is also very important for us also. I have found a good way to cover both budget and fun. You can watch a movie at the Byrd Theatre that is located on Cary Street for only \$2. By doing that, you are not spending much money, having fun, and improving your English because there are no subtitles and you will have to listen carefully to understand.

In conclusion, we have found that these two ways have helped us to improve our English a lot, as well as to cover our needs as international students. These things have helped us make friends, interact with the new life around us and just became more confident about living here. Interact with your new life and the new people around you. Don't be shy any more.

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## English is the Bridge to Helping

By:  
Laura García-González (México) and  
Eulalia Enriquez-Capdevila (Spain)

Did you know that each year VCU's English Language Program gets students that want to learn English in order to go to Africa? We are these students. We are here to prepare ourselves for future service in Africa. We have to study English—not just to speak English—but to be able to learn the local African languages that we will meet in the future. For us, the English language has become a bridge. English permits us to approach the people in most of the countries in Africa where, as a result of British colonization, English is the second language. We are interested in **COMMUNICATING** with other people, and the best way to do this is English.

We are a religious group of catholic women called the *Comboni Missionary Sisters*. Daniel Comboni founded the group more than 100 years ago, and we are dedicated to helping the world's poor and abandoned.

**Hi from Pam and Bob!**

Greetings from VCU / OIE Student Services! The International Student Coffee hour has been a great success this semester with attendance averaging over 120 – 130 each week. It has literally been standing room only. We, (Pam and Bob), have enjoyed meeting all the new students, and keeping up with the returning ones.

**Winter 04 Activities**

Monthly trips have also been popular! In February, we took 70 students night skiing. It was a great chance for many, who had never even seen snow, to try this cold, but fun sport. Going at night reduced the cost so that more students were able to attend.

During Spring break, we had 20 students explore New York City with us for three days. We caught the Greyhound bus in Richmond at midnight on Friday, and arrived in New York at 7:00 in the morning. Traveling underground by metro, and walking above ground, it was a whirlwind tour. For the next three days and nights, VCU international students combed the streets and places of NY, inhaling all the sights and sounds that the most famous in the world city has to offer.

April 17<sup>th</sup>, the program went to Jamestown VA, the birth place of America. Students learned about the ways of the first Europeans that settled America, and the Indians that lived here before them. We visited recreations of an Indian village, and the settlers’ fort, and complete reproductions of the three English vessels. It was very interesting and instructive.

**Summer 04 Activities**

Students Services has more engaging trips for the summer. After the ELP session starts on June 21<sup>st</sup>, we will spend the evening of July 4th at Dogwood Dell, enjoying live band music and fireworks to celebrate America’s birthday and independence. This event is at no cost.

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, it’s off to Washington D.C. to visit the seven Smithsonian museums, the national monuments, the White House, and other US government and historical sites. It will be a busy day and all places are free!

The last trip is the river canoeing trip on July 24. This ever popular trip is a relaxing fun filled day that fills up fast. Keep it on your calendars.

Remember our door is always open for you if you’re having difficulties, questions, or just want to say hi!

**EATING in RICHMOND:**

The restaurants on West Broad Street

By: Fowsiyo Warsame (Ethiopia)

I just moved here from Northern Virginia to continue my studies at VCU. The worst thing about moving to a new location is not knowing where to dine. When I lived in Northern Virginia, I used to dine out at least three times a week.

During my first week in Richmond, I spent time driving around scouting for restaurants. I was driving on West Broad coming from Henrico County, and I began to notice a number of restaurants. I was so happy; I could not wait to eat at any one of them.



For the next couple of weeks I have tried almost every single one of them (Italian, American and Mexican). I only ate once in all of them—except one. *Casa Grande*, which is Spanish for “Big House,” is one of the best Mexican restaurants that I have ever visited.

First of all the food could not be any better; it is flavorful and authentic. Their steaks are well seasoned. Second of all the service is great. The servers are very polite and friendly. Last but not least it is very affordable. Two of my friends and I drive there, and we can eat a delicious meal for under \$30.

So, the next time you want to find a restaurant, just drive down West Broad. I bet you will find something you will like. If you’re in the mood for Mexican food, then visit *Casa Grande*. I’m sure you’ll love it!

## DATES TO REMEMBER

ELP SESSION INFORMATION – HERE’S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TAKING CLASSES AT ELP.

Sessions	Placement Test Dates	Class Start – End Dates
Summer 2004	June 14, 2004	June 21 – July 30, 2004
Fall I 2004	August 18 and 24, 2004	August 30 – October 14, 2004
Fall II 2004	October 20, 2004	October 25 – December 10, 2004
Winter 2005	January 10, 2005	January 18 – March 4, 2005
Spring 2005	March 15, 2005	March 21 – May 3, 2005

## How to Buy a Good Car

Buying a car is not easy. You need to have experience in buying a car. You need to know most of the prices and most of the kinds and brands of cars. You need to get a book called *The Blue Book*. The best selling car is the American car because they are very cheap. You could spend between \$500 and \$2000 and get a really good car. Parts are very cheap and also the labor is a lot cheaper than other cars. You could also buy a Japanese car, which is a good car but more expensive. They have a longer life and you could use it longer than the American car. The problem is that parts and labor are much more expensive, and it is not easy to find parts.

It’s your choice whether to buy an American or Japanese car. Think about your budget and needs before you make a decision on which kind of car to buy.

## How to Find a Good Job\*

By: Michael Shenoda (Egypt)

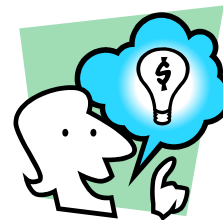
There are many good jobs that will be perfect for you and for your language. Your language is going to be hard for you to find a job in Richmond because most of the Americans don’t want to have a hand in explaining to you what they are trying to say or trying to understand what you are saying.

The best job you can find and you will qualify for is in your university. This is an international university and most of the students are international; they will understand you or they will try to understand what you are saying. You could go to the website for jobs at VCU, which is [www.workforstudents.com](http://www.workforstudents.com). There are a lot of jobs available in this site and most of the students can qualify for them.

There is another way to find a job, which is to find a job in the VCU labs with teachers. Students work as an assistant to help them and take care of their stuff.

At the end, good luck with your search for the perfect job and I hope you find the right one for you.

(\*Important Note: Many students on visas are not eligible to work. Please make sure you are eligible before spending time looking for employment)



Do you have any ideas for the summer edition of the “ELP Student News”?

What do you want our readers to know?

E-mail your ideas to Brian at [btarnold@vcu.edu](mailto:btarnold@vcu.edu)

# Attending ELP Classes Means More Than Just Learning English



By: David Daix (Ivory Coast) and Daniela Fernandes (Brazil)

Coming to the USA is the hope of almost all individuals today. The expectation is that this country has many purposes: to make their life better, to be a tourist, to become part of the American status or to fulfill the education and get a better job. However, the most important issue to reach some of these purposes is the English language, which may break down hopes. It is essential to a foreigner to learn English to try to become successful in the USA and be part of the society in which you are living. Attending classes is a good step to make this journey easier and that was what had happened to me.

As an international student living in America for the first time, I was worried about being able to get closer to American culture through the English language. After a few weeks of taking ELP classes at VCU, I realized that being an ELP student allowed me to learn more than just English. It brings the opportunity to be closer to many different cultures from around the world. In our ELP student life, everyday we are in touch with other students from different countries learning each day to live together with it and give value for this opportunity.

When I attended my first session at ELP, I realized how much I could learn from other students about their cultures in and out of class meetings. Being in my second session, I had the pleasure to be in a speaking class where the teacher took advantage of the diversity of our cultures. This gave the students the opportunity to share their own culture in academic work going through research and finally cooking typical foods.

Since this session began, we have all gotten much closer to having the feeling that we all brought to the USA. Something important to offer. Besides any language that we add as a second one in our mind always has an impact in us.