Being a foreign exchange student is a great experience, but it also has its downsides. Not so long ago, Chicago received a group program known as "YES - Youth Exchange Study" and Hancock welcomed a student from Palestine. "It was my dream to learn in an American high school," said sixteen-year-old Lana Musa. She was so excited to be able to live her dreams; however, little did she know she'd become homesick and miss her family. Lana had not yet come to the realization that this new life of hers would be difficult to adjust to.

Lana came here without a clue of who she'd meet and how her life in Chicago would be. This group of students moved here away from not only their family but also their friends and home. They moved into a host family's home, not having a clue about them. They were then put into a host school that they will attend for one year. "Our home is so different," she said with uneasiness. It takes lots of courage for these students to be here.

Before these students are allowed to become a foreign exchange student, they have

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Hancock Needs More Mental Health Days

"I agree with there being days in the school year dedicated to mental and emotional health because students need time to relax and focus on themselves. Now I am wondering about how often students need time"

-- Carlo Garcia

"I think those kids who struggle with academics and are failing should be checked the most because they might be struggling with a lot maybe not only in school but outside of school or at home, or at work and they might be caught up with other things that don't quite let them concentrate enough and might get in the way of school."

-- Karina Mejia

"We also have to take into consideration that students need a life outside from being a responsible young adult. I thank our block schedule a lot because we have ACLab and although it's supposed to be used to do work, I never do because it's a good period to de-stress."

-- Idania Flores

"{On the mental health article} I feel if people take extra-curricular activities and Honor/AP Classes, they should be mentally prepared for what they are getting into when they signed up for those classes. It gets annoying when I hear students complain about their classes, and I always tell them, 'What did you expect?' So I don't feel Hancock should have mental health days."

-- Jared Niever

"We are unlike other schools because we work harder by a million. We deserve one mental health day per month. Only 7 hours out of 730 to simply relieve the build up of stress."

-- Alexis Caballero

If You Can Vote in 2020—Vote!

"I agree with Alexis Mata that everyone should vote. It is a known thing that our voting system needs some reforming. To help with this issue, we need more people voting on changes. When people say our vote is for nothing, I disagree. Even if we don’t get it our way, at least we can say we tried."

-- Diana Segoviano

Please write neatly so we can read your ideas and names.
to go through a series of interviews and paperwork since they wish to live and study in another country for a year. In order for these students to apply, they must have Bs and above for grades, as well as be between the age of 15-17. After that application process, they are selected randomly if they meet these requirements. Once selected, Lana and other students had to be interviewed by a committee of three Americans and three Arabians. Then, they had to pass the International English Language Exam to see if they could properly speak enough English to attend school in the U.S.

After this, Lana finished a twenty-page application. Lana wanted to be a foreign exchange student to "Live the American culture," she said. In Palestine, their culture and home is completely different from our culture here. This is a range of many things: food, school, clothing, and language. In her home country, they learn English in school, so she had no trouble communicating with students here. But many students come from bilingual families and live in a Latino community, so she didn't quite understand Spanish. She is currently enrolled in a Spanish class at Hancock.

Adjusting to a new life, home, and family wasn't so easy. Lana referred to it as "a struggle." Lana feared so much, such as stereotypes. Lana was afraid to be judged about where she came from. She wanted to be accepted. She also feared not being able to make friends since everyone at her high school has known each other for a while now. Lana didn't fear everything though. She had the courage to travel thirteen hours away from her family alone to fulfill this dream of hers.

The first two months for her flew by. Although making friends, Lana said, did not come so easily. She didn't know anyone at Hancock since her host sisters attend De La Salle. Day by day, Lana slowly began to talk to people. Her one fear was that "people know each other" but what she didn't know is that those people would introduce her to their friends. Lana started to become close to some students and hang out with them outside of school. Since Lana's home is different than ours, she told us, "We don't have a Chick-Fil-A or a Starbucks or big malls everywhere." Lana and her friends went downtown and she was overwhelmed by everything that she was seeing. She tried things she never tried before and enjoyed them.

It had been four months since Lana first arrived in Chicago. Although she made so many friends, she began to feel lonely. It finally hit her. She was homesick. Lana is the only daughter and has two older brothers. She stays in contact with her family and talks to them every day but that was not enough. Being the only daughter she was "so connected" to her parents, she said. She didn't want to tell anyone about how she felt because she knew they would not understand. At times, she said in a low, quiet voice, "I wish I was there. There's no one like them." She felt so alone, yet she was surrounded by friends and hundreds of students.

Although she is away from home, she has a family here in Chicago who takes care of her and supports her just like the rest of these exchange students. It isn't all that easy for these students to adjust to a new life, home, and community but with the help of others, this struggle isn't all that difficult. From the beginning, Lana has had many ups and downs in this journey of her dream, so it will be hard for her to leave in a few months. After four months, all the obstacles Lana has faced made her adjust very well and helped her establish a new life for herself here in Chicago--as well as be part of the Hancock community. She feels welcomed to the point where she feels that she is part of the school. "I don't want to leave anymore," said Lana.

Tell us whatchoo got to say!
Believe it or not—Hancock cares whatchoo think and do.
Submit your writing, photography, or art!
See Mr. Salazar in 201.
Yo! Before You Get That Early Dismissal . . .

Chicago Public Schools, in accordance with the State of Illinois, recognizes only the following as approved valid causes for a student’s absence from school. We will correct student attendance to an “excused” absence for the following reasons only:

- Student’s illness
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Death in the immediate family
- Family emergency
- Circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for a child’s safety or health
- Other situations beyond the control of the student

Family vacations, students’ job responsibilities, or not feelin’ like bein’ in school today are NOT approved valid causes for student absence.

Hancock discourages EDs during lunch time, academic lab, and assemblies since it is challenging to find students in the building at that time.

Please attach any official documentation (medical, funeral, religious, etc) to your early dismissal note and submit the evidence to Ms. Gutierrez in the main office. If a student does not return to school with proper documentation about their early dismissal, the early dismissal will be counted as “unexcused.”

Please ask your parent or guardian to inform you via cell phone or main office phone that they arrived.

This way, the school is not making loud announcement after loud announcement when staff is working with students and when students are trying to learn.

(So . . . uh . . . take a phot of this and share it with your parent or guardian—and tell them to check out the school paper on our Website.)

Hancock Student Values Being in a Tamborazo Group Despite the Struggles
By Alex Romo

Being a teenager in a tamborazo is not all fun and games; behind the countless gigs, are long, sleepless nights. “I really never have time to do homework, but when I get home at 2 a.m. or 3 a.m., I just start doing homework,” said Luis Angel Perez Diaz, 18, a senior at JHCP who also plays first trumpet for the Hancock Concert Band.

His padrino was a musician and inspired him to start playing in a tamborazo, which included the younger generation of his family like him and his cousins. A tamborazo is a band with four players or more who use the bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, trumpet, and a saxophone. Even though his original band isn’t together anymore, Luis now plays for Tamborazo El Amanezer; they play at parties, funerals, nightclubs, and many other events.

For a musician, it all depends. No two days are the same because there are different events and different venues.

Playing can be very spontaneous because a new gig can change his schedule completely and even ruin personal plans, meaning he might have to miss a loved one’s birthday, Thanksgiving, or even family parties.
Laurie Niles, a formally trained violinist, explains in her article “The Life of a Musician” that “an artist is never poor” because the art of music yields a certain kind of wealth that money just can’t buy. Luis has found this wealth within his passion, and he shares his love for Mexican music through his work: “I love it. I learned that music is important and puts happiness in so many lives. You have no idea.”

Because music has become such an important part of his life, Luis has developed his own identity, which he describes as being paisa. The literal translation of this Spanish word is “countryman” according to Spanish Dictionary; however, there are different interpretations with some even being offensive.

Often times, this word is used to describe someone who is really Mexican based on the way they talk, what music they listen to, or where they live. “All the seniors at school, when they think of someone paisa, they think of me,” Luis explains.

Nevertheless, Luis takes pride in his identity because it has brought him closer to his culture.

The music director of the LA Philharmonic, Gustavo Dudamel, highlights in an interview with Classic FM that there are “no walls between cultures” because music can “create and unite,” which is what Luis admires most about his job and makes all the sacrifices worth it: “It means the world to me because it’s influenced my music taste and way of speaking so much, and it got me closer to Mexican culture. It’s really beautiful.”
The definition of a businessman is simple: a man who does business. The world has a stereotypically fixed idea of what a businessman is: someone in a tidy, midnight rayon suit with a leather case and a degree in economics and international relations. What most can’t picture is a man with an apron and a piping bag in hand.

For various years, an immigrant baker has been taking over the production of his boss’ bakery; thus, he realized over time that if he was able to maintain someone’s business, he could have his own. Raul Moctezuma Andreu was born and raised in a humble home in Acapulco, Guerrero, during the early 1970s. His family didn’t own much, and it was especially difficult being from one with an abundant number of kith and kin.

My father discovered this passion of his through his older brother, Mariano Moctezuma—who learned from an older man. Moctezuma finished la preparatoria, the Mexican equivalent of high school, and both brothers then traveled to the state of Guanajuato, from Guerrero, in order to master the art of cake decorating and baking. My father stayed to work for about five years before returning home. Once back in Acapulco, he then went on to pursue a career in accounting. He studied for two and a half years before dropping out. Moctezuma explained his decision: “In Acapulco, the profession is saturated. There aren’t many jobs in that field. The fountain of jobs and profit is tourism.”

In order to maintain himself, and earn a little bit of money, Moctezuma began to bake the traditional pan dulce, sweet bread. He mentioned, “I started off selling to neighbors and people on the street.” Before he knew it, he had stores ordering batches of his sweet bread so they could resell it themselves. He says he “ended up making batches and orders with about ten different stores.”

In 2001, Raul Moctezuma decided to immigrate to the United States with another one of his brothers, Gonzalo Moctezuma; subsequently, they crossed the border for the very first time, both were petrified. There were all kinds of things that could have gone wrong for him, but the odds were in his favor.

While in the United States, instead of pursuing a real bakery job, Moctezuma worked as a cook at Rainforest Café. He believed that coming to this country meant that he would be able to do what he wanted to do, gain enough knowledge, enough money and experience to have a better life.

At the end of 2001, Raul Moctezuma had to cross back with his brother. Laura Vigueras, Moctezuma’s wife, was already unknowingly pregnant on the day of their wedding. While they were preparing to welcome a child into their lives, they decided to open up what would be

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their first business ever. It didn’t work out, seeing as how the economy didn’t provide a good income.

His second business, now in Shorewood near Joliet, allowed for him to be more creative, but there were always challenges along the way. He says, “English is not our first language, and when looking for help, there were always people trying to find ways to take advantage of us.” He mentioned that there are “contracts that some can’t get out of.” Moctezuma ended up being the co-investor and a partner of Acapulco Bakery, Inc. He learned many things, such as “the administrative portion of owning a business,” seeing as he was there for over a decade.

Being an immigrant has stopped Moctezuma from doing things in his career such as “being able to own the building [he] is currently renting.”

After many years of being a co-owner, my father needed to branch out. Moctezuma envisioned a colorful bakery, with a need for the incorporation of more products. As a partner, he could not make sole decisions for the old establishment, and the other owner was very conservative and would rather not progress, but remain the same. As a risk taker, my father found the environment as not ideal. After twelve years of being a part of that bakery, he decided to set up a second chain in Chicago, Acapulco Bakery #2.

He also mentioned that there continue to be barriers to his profession. The environment compared to that of Shorewood is completely different, and there is more of an economic struggle. The bakery is larger which means more rent. Moctezuma says that “there are sacrifices people have to make. The labor is tiring as well.” Raul Moctezuma doesn’t see his family a lot because he’s the only baker in the facility.

As his business continues to grow, he learns different things, how to manage his time and how to establish a productive workplace. He advises others to stay “determined, know their opportunities, [and to] simply go for it if they feel like it’s what they want.”

Raul Moctezuma Andreu is currently the boss of his own business, and he works days and nights, weekends, and holidays to keep it going, and to maintain his family.

Being an immigrant, citizen, a man or a woman, young or old, shouldn’t stop anyone from setting high standards and achieving them. Society expects people to fail based on status or stereotypes. Moctezuma has proven that those barriers are nothing but a way to prevent those with aspirations from completing their goals.

Money and education do not make up what a person can be. Passion, determination and diligence are what drive someone to attain something great in life despite the difficulties and sacrifices. In many ways, a man with an apron is more of a businessman than one in a suit.

Maria’s favorite pan dulce is el muffin de

For more information about this travel opportunity, see Mr. Phillips or Ms. Phillips. You can find their emails on the Hancock Web site in the staff directory.
Hancock Student Starts Club to Discuss “Tuff” Topics
by Fatima Castillo

"Ultimately, I decided to start ‘Tuff talks’ because of my own realization that we weren’t having as thought-provoking conversations as we could have, so I wanted to give people a safe space to have the conversations that they cared about and that mattered to them,” explains Luria Tapia, a senior at Hancock, who decided to start a club where students can speak about current social issues that are not addressed in class. After realizing that many of the conversations she had about social issues with her peers were at surface level, she decided it would be best to create this wished-upon space herself.

From college culture and college admissions to the violence in Chicago, Tuff Talks addresses social issues everyone faces. Talking about the issue itself, the root, and one’s own opinion, the club expands upon the lessons that can be learned and how to implement those lessons to overcome social issues as minorities.

Tapia’s idea to bring the club to Hancock sparked after attending the University of Chicago for a week in the summer of 2019 as part of the FLO (Future Leaders of Chicago) program. Tapia was able to attend events and field trips regarding social justice issues and was part of a group activity called “Debriefing” where, after an event, students would have a two-hour discussion where the facilitators proposed questions as students sat in a circle to talk freely upon the topic and build upon their ideas.

When the college admission scandal, where affluent families and celebrities were caught buying their kids’ way into colleges, was introduced, Tapia thought, “It was a pretty interesting conversation to have around privilege, economic status, and how that relates to access of education.

But no one was really talking about it, and I personally didn’t know how to bring up the conversation.” Having discussions about sensitive subjects in class is hard thing to do. One must feel safe in the classroom without any limitations. TED Talks had an independent program within Colorado State University. “Tuff Talks” showed a TED Talk video about a certain topic and brought in speakers to spark a discussion within a small group (TEDxCSU).

Recently, “Tuff talks was rebranded from TEDxNCSU to give organizers more freedom in the topics that are covered,” said Gavin Stone in an article on Technicion.com.

Here at Hancock, “Tuff Talks” is open to all discussions, supervised by English teacher Mr. Splinter, students choose what to talk about. Meeting every other week, students are able to have conversations about topics that they have not talked about in the past, gaining knowledge by not only reading articles on the topic but having a discussion with their peers, allowing them to hear and think about the topics through others’ perspectives. For more information, email Luria Tapia at ltapia4@cps.edu or Mr. Splinter at ejsplinter@cps.edu.