

One last Trick or Treat!

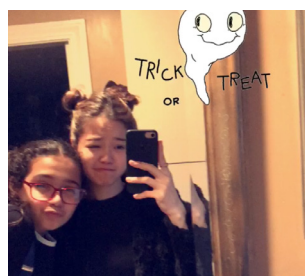


Dark, spooky, fairy, ghostly, haunted.. Yes, it is that time of the year-Halloween! If not yet aware, Halloween is one of the most enjoyable experiences international students will have in the United States. Even though Korea has been festively celebrating Halloweens recently, I personally think students like us have a big advantage over them as we are able to genuinely become part of this special day.



What amused me the most regarding Halloween brings me back to a memory of 2014 when I first celebrated Halloween in Virginia with my host family. Prior to Halloween, I was surprised and amazed to see diverse decoration all around the neighborhood. It was fun because I was so used to seeing those kinds of things only in movies and walking around the neighborhood, I felt like being in a movie. Everything was embellished in Halloween spirit and I was busy taking pictures. Spending Halloween together with my host family for three years, I had the last best Trick or Treating for over 2 hours.

Technically, I am too old to go trick or treating according to my friends as it is for younger kids. I, however, really love going around and being able to see how different people dressed up creatively. I wasn't sure if I would be able to get away trick or treating in age 18 but I made an excuse- I am not from here!



My host sister is still in middle school so I was able to easily go trick or treating with her and her friends. Araceli, my host sister, and her three best friends dressed up as M&Ms. She was a blue M&Ms while her other friends Lexi and Sammy dressed up as red and orange ones. I simply did a quick makeup and made myself look like a cat.

We first went to my host sister Araceli's best friend Lexi's house to have early dinner together and join a party. I have been going to her house every Halloween and yet, her family never fails to surprise me. It doesn't even seem like they spent a lot of time decorating but all the decorations are always very cute and impressive. This year, Lexi's grandparents joined the party, so it was extra fun.



Ding-dong. We got our first group of trick or treaters which meant it was time for us to go out. Bundled up with the winter coats, we went outside full of excitement. I remember feeling shy to say trick or treating when I first went. I am now the first one to knock on the door smiling, "Trick or Treat!"



Advice from senior at high school.



(Pictures of graduates from 1970's at my school)

The D-Day is less than six months. Soon, I will be done with high school. I still can't believe it is happening. I have already completed the first half of my final year. My long dream of getting out of high school is finally becoming a reality. Next year, I will be going into the real world. This year has been one of the most stressful years in my life. SAT, TOEFL, and GPA are just some of the things that I had to have in order to apply to the universities that I wanted to get into. There is a considerable amount of fear of getting rejected from all the universities that I am about to apply to.

For those of you who are looking forward to becoming a senior at high school, I would like to give you advice about preparing for college. These are some of the things that I wish I had known a couple of years ago, for that would have made my life much easier today. First of all, you want your GPA as high as you can get. If you want to get into your dream college, make your GPA a priority. Most colleges have the minimum required GPA scores, and

the higher your GPA is, the better your application will look. It will be so sad if you don't even get the chance to apply to the school of your dreams!

Second of all, try to participate in school activities because you will need them when you fill out your application. Universities don't simply want students who are academically good, but they want students who are passionate and committed to school activities (school spirit) too. If you are good at sport, it won't be a bad idea.

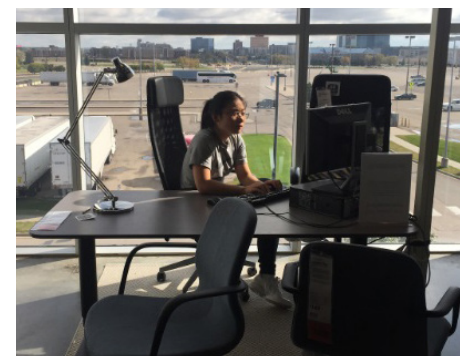
Thirdly, try to get your SAT, TOEFL, or ACT scores before your senior year because that will make your life so much easier. In my case, I had to get them done during my senior year because I did not know that they were that important. Most schools will either look at your SAT or ACT score, but some people choose to take both. The TOEFL score is required for international students whose first language is not English. It is a test that assesses your English skills in Reading, Writing,

Listening and Speaking.

Lastly, visit the school that you want to get into. A few months ago, I got to visit one of my dream schools in New York City, and the school gave me a completely different impression than what I had imagined it to be - more in a good way. Visiting a school can give you a better idea of whether you are really wanting to get in there or not.

I am looking forward to the day when I can finally get into my dream school and study what I am really passionate about. Start planning now on where your dream schools are and what you need to do in order to get into those schools.

-15기 박미성



(Me working in an office one day
- IKEA in reality)

Homecoming Week



Homecoming is one of the biggest dances in high school that majority of students attend. Since the dance is such a big deal, we have the whole week before called spirit week to get spirited! There are a lot of activities going on during spirit week, which allows the students to have fun and be excited. Spirit week, homecoming football game, and the dance are great activities that motivates students to be more involved within the community.

During spirit week, students are to dress up for the whole week following the given themes. Themes are different for every school depending on their preferences. The themes that my school has done are America day, Character day, Decade day, Tacky Tourist day, and Spirit day. A lot of students come out of their shells during this week and show their sense of humor, which is a chance for them to make new friends. Spirit week is fun not only because you get to dress up, but also because of the all the activities that you can participate in. Students can sign up to play powder-puff, human foosball, and other games or choose to cheer in the stands for your team. There are also pep rally performances by cheerleaders and dancers, which are super fun to watch!

On Friday night of the homecoming week, there is a football game which is another big event. And Finally, the dance is on Saturday night which everyone dresses formally. For most girls, it takes almost the whole day to get ready because they like to get their nails, hair, and makeup done, but it is worth it. After everyone gets ready, people meet up with their friends to take nice pictures and go out for dinner. The dance is very fun because you get to be with a lot of people and dance with them! Homecoming truly allows you to experience American cultures, and learn more about their events. It is a fun week that everyone loves, and the week that you can be more involved with the school.

-15기 노지수

What is a dual enrollment?



These days, there are so many ways to show a college about how much you can excel in their university. One of the ways, which can be really familiar to all of you, is by taking various courses and doing many extra curricular activities. Taking AP classes on top of the regular classes also helps you to show the college about your ability to handle the college classes.

However, have you ever heard of dual enrollment? To be honest, I had never heard of this term until the end of my Junior year. This is how the meaning of dual enrollment is described in wikipedia: "In the United States, dual enrollment (DE), also called concurrent enrollment, programs allow students to be enrolled in two separate, academically related institutions. Generally, it refers to high school students taking college or university courses. Less commonly, it may refer to any individual who is participating in two related programs." Yes, basically it's offered to high school students to take college classes. I'm going to share my experience of having dual enrollment since I really love this program.

There are two types of dual enrollment: taking college classes at your high school or taking them at an actual college. Luckily, I was able to experience both environments. The best output you can get from this program is that you are earning real college credits. If those are transferable to the universi-



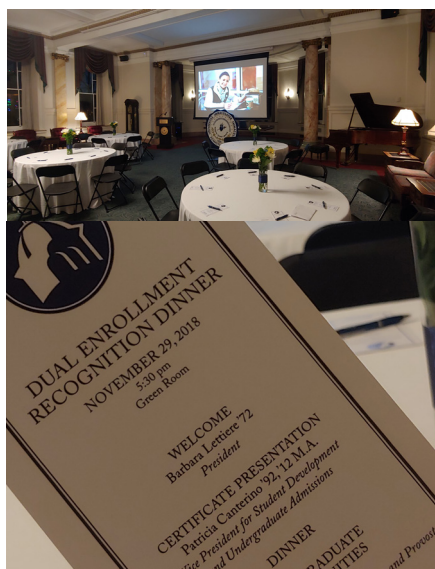
ty where you are accepted, you might be able to graduate college earlier. If you get options to choose between taking classes at high school or college, I strongly recommend the latter. Taking a tour of the campus can give you some ideas about the things that you want for your college, but taking actual classes really assists you to develop better ideas on it. Another advantage is that you don't have to take the AP TEST!

You don't need to take an additional test to prove your ability like you do when you take AP classes. If you just do your homework and do well in the class tests, you won't have any trouble with getting an A.

I did dual enrollment with Immaculata University and Villanova University. For Immaculata, the professor came to my high school for the class and for Villanova, I went to the campus to take the classes. Going to Villanova taught me so many things, especially giving me the real feel of college. Even though I took Immaculata class at my high school, I had a chance to visit their campus. They also provided a dinner ceremony for the students who took their courses.

Anyway, I highly recommend the dual enrollment program if any of you out there are considering to take this program. For those who haven't heard of this, please contact your counselors to see if your school offers this! You might be surprised:).

-15기 박지수



5K run for Gwyn



There was the fundraising 5K marathon race event. This event is held by the Gwyn foundation. This Gwyn foundation is established not to forget the Gwyn. Gwyn is Conwell-Egan alumni, who had passed away few years ago by accident.

The name of the race is "Gifts From Gwyn," which is raising a money to give the scholarship for the kids who couldn't afford to go to the Conwell-Egan Catholic High School.

The race had started with the big buzzer sound from the fire truck.

Everyone started to run around the Falls Park. I used to run cross country, so I was looking for being in a top 5 no matter the age groups. However, people who ran around the falls park a lot was really fast. It was so hard to chase them so I was in 7th overall.

The award was given by the age groups: 14 and under, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50 and over. I was 3rd place in my age group, which is 15-19. However, the 1st place in my age group was 1st in overall man, so he got the 1st overall trophy. Also, I got the 2nd 15-19 age trophy.

This weather for the race was really cold, but still it was a really fun and good race. I hope I can join this event next year too.

-15기 신원중

Halloween



Halloween is the eve of the Western Christian feast of All Hollows' Day. Halloween is a holiday that can be celebrated differently within countries. It is celebrated bigger in America than in Korea, which I like celebrating in America better since Halloween is one of my favorite holidays.

The biggest difference in the way of celebration is that in America, people go trick or treating, while people do not in Korea. Trick or treating is a Halloween ritual, where people dress up in costumes and go ask for treats by visiting houses. I think that going trick or treating is a great way to make memories since it is the only time that you dress up in costumes and go from house to house. I really enjoy looking at other people's costumes, and all the candies that I get!

Another cultural tradition for Halloween in America is booing. Booing means surprising your neighbors with Halloween gifts. People usually fill up a basket with Halloween goodies, put it in front of the neighbor's

front door, and run away after ringing the door bell. Once you are booed, meaning you received gifts, you have to boo one of your neighbors. This is nice because you are exchanging gifts with others, and it is a fun way to get spooky for Halloween!

There are a few more details that gets me excited for Halloween other than trick or treating and booing. Most people decorate their houses for Halloween, some fancier than others.

Some people decorate with lights, laser beams, and spooky figures. Also, people carve pumpkins to put out in their front porch, which I find very interesting. I think that this is a creative decoration, and it allows you to have fun while carving them! There are also a lot of Halloween movies and songs that make you feel nostalgic. Halloween clearly show that America and Korea have different cultures and traditions of celebrating events. I think that it will be fun for Koreans to visit America during

Halloween season and experience the difference because Americans are more spirited for Halloween!

-15기 노지수



Bridge between International Students and American Students



Everyone has their own goals and various expectations when they decide to study abroad. In my case, the biggest goal was to have a better education. But in addition to this, I had a strong willingness to develop a variety of friends from different countries. Meeting new people and expanding my boundaries was another huge goal that I wanted to achieve through studying abroad.

The school that I go to, Pope John Paul II High School, has many international students compared to other schools. We have about 80 international students and more than 70% of them are from China. Those who are reading the article might think, "Oh, she would not have any difficulties with making friends." However, that wasn't true. I still can't forget the moment when I first entered the school cafeteria. I was literally looking at two separated cafeterias: one side with American students and the other with international students. Since I went there to study English, I decided to hang out with American students first. I was able to make various friends throughout the year and got used to the different environment, but I was still struggling with the fact that the school was separated into two big groups.

In the beginning, I thought there was some hatred between the two groups. However, hanging out with both of the groups taught me different things. They just didn't have any chance to understand each other or share their cultures. That was the time when I decided to become the bridge between International and American students. Luckily, my school president also had the same thought with me. So we got to work together, starting with a small lunch meeting. He was opened to listening to our ideas and tried to find solutions to

make a better school for us.

With these efforts, one of the school board members invited several international students and American students to her house last week. She wanted us to share our stories on how we can work together as a one group. We came up with several solutions such as having an international week, celebrating international holidays, and having mass in various languages. It's not a big change but I still believe that these little steps will lead to a better environment. I really want to tell everyone to try as hard as you can once you find something that you want to change. Please don't get afraid even before you start. Your little move might be able to help many people!

-15기 박지수



¡Hola Amigas!



¡Hola Amigas! Hoy, yo voy a hablar..... 4th period of the day, the time has arrived- oral presentation! How many times have I been practicing for today? My very first presentation for the AP Spanish class has been worrying me for almost two weeks. I have been taking Spanish since freshman year, but deciding to skip Spanish 4 and jump right into AP Spanish wasn't necessarily the best decision I have made this year. Small class with 8 seniors, I was always comparing myself with others.

Tests, I have been unsuccessful of; essays, I have been returned full of red marks; this presentation was the only chance for me to make up for my dropping average. When my teacher first informed us about the project, I was very excited. She said that we will have to invent a product and prepare 2 minutes commercial for it. Without hesitation, I enthusiastically began my project to make the innovative creation: time

stopper.

With help of my friend Elena, who is from Spain, I was able to facilitate the complicated and hard script writing of the commercial. She helped me revising the awkward wording of the sentences and corrected my pronunciation. Without her, I might have not been able to successfully present my product. Hard work paid off- I got a 100 on my presentation.



When I first came to Mount Saint Charles Academy freshman year, I had a choice to take either Spanish or French as my foreign language. While this requirement didn't apply to the international students, I was fascinated that I might be able to graduate knowing how to speak the third language. I couldn't easily decide whether to take Spanish or French but becoming friends with Elena, I began my love toward the language: Spanish. Elene has been a good friend of mine and I wanted to be able to understand her culture better and eventually have an experience of having a conversation in her native language. When you or your child is not sure whether he or she should take Spanish or not, I highly encourage to take it. Learning Spanish has not only abled me to understand the American

culture better, as there are a lot of Hispanic population within the country, but also enhanced my studying abroad experience with constantly challenging me with new things.



Taking Spanish has provided me with various opportunities throughout the high school career. I have not only been able to broaden my view towards things but also had an experience of having a number of authentic experiences such as going on a Costa Rica trip with my classmates, attending a traditional flamenco dance and Don Quixote show, and meeting Spanish friends and spending a night together. I am thinking of minoring in Spanish when I go to college; my passion for Spanish is serious. Even if you might not be interested in Spanish, I personally think learning your third language while studying abroad is a very special experience that only students who are participating in the Private School Program can enjoy. It is like catching a bird with two stones! No te pierdas esta oportunidad :)

-15기 정지우



Thanksgiving Party



People in America celebrate the thanksgiving day. Thanksgiving day was celebrated by the Pilgrims after their first harvest in the New World in October 1621. This is the origin of the thanksgiving day. Thanksgiving is one of the biggest holiday in America.

I spent the thanksgiving day with my host family. They were a really big family, so they had a huge party. We met at the host parent's daughter's house at 3 o'clock and we ate dinner at 5 o'clock. I couldn't have waited for the dinner time. The dinner was so good. Each family brought their foods. Some fam-

ily brought mashed potatoes, some brought turkeys, and other brought stuffing. The host parent's daughter baked the biscuit and we ate them with the gravy on. The gravy was so good for everything: turkey, mashed potatoes, biscuit, and stuffing.

After eating the dinner, everyone was watching the thanksgiving football game. Other people played the card games. The card games were so fun. We put on the head set and others have to explain the word on the card. Another game was the game using the poker cards. It was the "black jack"

The thanksgiving day was so fun. I had experienced American thanksgiving culture. It was a great experience of my life. I couldn't forget this event forever.

-15기 신원중

New Year's Resolution



2019 is just around the corner! It is almost here, a new year and new beginning. Each year, millions of people around the world come up with their own list of New Year's Resolution. Well, before I dig in too deep, here is the definition of New Year's Resolution. According to Wikipedia, New Year's Resolution is "a tradition in which a person resolves to change an undesired trait or behavior, to accomplish a personal goal or otherwise improve their life."

No one in this world is perfect. Whether it is in the way we act, talk, or dress, we are far from being perfect. However, we can always improve on our traits or behaviours in order to become a better person. There is no guarantee that coming up with a list of New Year's Resolution will make you a better person, but it will be an opportunity for you to look back and examine yourself and find things that might be dragging you away from becoming a better person.

According to a survey, most common New Year's resolutions included getting a healthier lifestyle, spending more time with friends and family, finding new hobbies and skills and quitting bad habits. For more ideas on things to put on your personal New Year's Resolution, you can look up online or even ask others around you for the things that they think you should work on.

On my personal New Year's Resolution list, I have some of more specific ideas. For example, joining a gym, lose 15lbs, laugh more and read one book each month. I have so many things that I want to put on my list. When I am done with it, it will probably be full ten pages long!

I am one of those people who love to plan everything, but never actually put into action. Hopefully, this year's New Year's Resolution won't be tossed into the bin.

As I become older, I want to make the best out of each and every day. I began to realize that time is very important. A New Year's Resolution will help you with your time management and organizing skills. As we look forward to a new year, I hope your 2018 was a fun and exciting one! Let us be happy and joyful!

-15기 박미성