



December, 2013

Dear Students,

Congratulations on a successful Fall semester! Now that you've finished up your finals and are preparing to go home, travel, or hang around here for the winter break, we hope you take time for a well-deserved break. Relax! You've earned it!

If you are planning on traveling this winter break, please remember to be safe! Winter weather (especially in this part of the country) can make travel conditions very dangerous, so you must be careful. (See page 5 for some safe driving tips!)

*The dormitory will re-open for move-in on **Sunday, January 5th** at noon. If you are returning to the dormitory, please adjust your travel plans accordingly.*

To those students who are not returning for the Winter Semester: we will miss you greatly! Especially to our Fall semester exchange students (Mari Osumi, Ana Marmaneu Gil, and Irene Bartoll Gonell), we have really enjoyed having you here, and we thank you for the time you've spent with us. As you return to your home countries, please remember your Madonna family!

Lastly, we are very proud of all your hard work this semester and we look forward to seeing you in January! Enjoy your holiday!

Merry Christmas and Best wishes for the New Year!
~ The International Students Office



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Thanksgiving with a host family

As Thanksgiving is a quintessential American holiday, Some of our students took the opportunity to spend Thanksgiving with generous Madonna staff and faculty and their families. Below are just a few of their experiences. Thank you again to all of our volunteer host families! If you missed this opportunity to host an international student, don't worry! We will be looking for Easter hosts next semester!

Maxx Han with Ms. Molly Funk

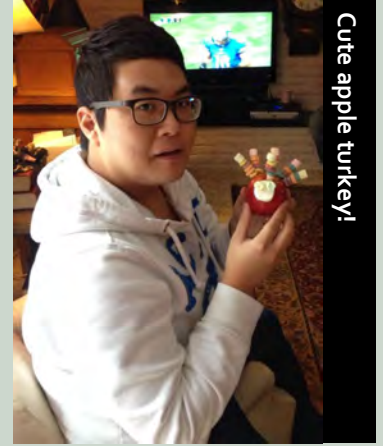
Hello my name is Minseok Han (Maxx). I'm from S. Korea. I'm transferred Marketing major student from Alabama. I lived in Alabama for 3years. I studied ESL and Business in the Gadsden State Community College in Gadsden, AL. I had many of experiences in AL.

[This year] I went to the American family house for Thanksgiving dinner. My host's name was Mrs. Molly Funk who is teacher in Madonna and other colleges. I visited her aunt's house in Troy. I met her family in the house. They brought traditional foods for the Thanksgiving.

The most of her family religion was Jewish. I never met Jewish people, because I'm Christian. I made an apple turkey and I saw a traditional game for Jewish people. I also ate delicious foods. The foods were different in AL. When I visited my friend house in AL last year I ate turkey, ham with mac and cheese. So I had a blast Thanksgiving dinner with a good family.

I wish I can come visit there next year too!

—Maxx Han



Cute apple turkey!



Learning to play Dreidel

Great Visiting at Thanksgiving - YeBin Choi with Ms. Bridget Mitchell

Thanks to Professor Bridget, I visited her house at Thanksgiving. This year is my first time to come to the United States, so I want to experience everything in here. This opportunity to visit an American's house and meet new American people made me excited, and I was looking forward to visiting. When I arrived at the house, the Professor Bridget introduced her family, and I also introduced myself briefly. We talked about many things, especially the differences between here and my home country [South Korea]. The differences like house structure and atmosphere in holiday are very interesting and her family is very friendly. Then, when all her family members gathered in her house, we had a nice dinner. Before we ate some food, we stood in a circle, and we took people by the hand and prayed for family and thanked for everything. This behavior is uncommon in my family, so it was very interesting. Then, I ate turkey, salad, and many foods. My host family introduced many foods that I have never eaten. The food was not bad for me, but I could not eat a lot because it is unfamiliar with me. However, the atmosphere and people in the house was very nice. This experience gave me deep and favorable impression on American holiday and family. Finally, I want to say "Thank you" to Professor Bridget and her family again.

—YeBin Choi

(Thanksgiving with a Host Family, cont.)



Qi Geng

Qi Geng and Fang Fang with Mr. Gary Dettore

On Thanksgiving Day, our school made a activity which is go to local family, chat with them and have a dinner.

Fang Fang and I went to the local family together, and we were happy to visit local family. When we arrived the local family, we can heard a dog was barking at their house. I came to the house and see around, it is a normal family in America. The dog which

barked when we were coming is clever, and the host told me the dog named Aiso. I think the dog was glad to see me because he always run to find me and let me touch him, he also licked my hand.

Family host chat with our about the life in China, and some difference between China and America. I was interested about the topic about the wedding. The host said in America the money to hold on a wedding, often half is from boy's family and half is from girl's family, I think it's good. In China, the money is often from boy's family, I think it's strict for boy's family because the wave in China is not cheaper.

Before we have dinner, I could see the host to cut the turkey, it not only used the knife, it had some thing to link to electric, and then the knife can moved to cut the turkey. The turkey is very delicious, I like it very much.

After we finished the dinner, we saw the movie which is tell about the comedy in Christmas Day. And the host's son came, he took his son and daughter to visited his father. The children are very cute, the boy liked to play with me, I was very happy about that.

In the final, we left the house and said goodbye to the family host. I'm very enjoy this day.

—Qi Geng

Gloria Zhao and Lily Wen with Ms. Peggy Finnigan-Jessup



We were so excited that we could join the traditional Thanksgiving party with professor Peggy. It was the first time we had an opportunity to know about the real Thanksgiving. Everyone in professor Peggy's family is so nice that they made us felt like at home. We really appreciate it. Especially, the food prepared by Peggy's family was amazing and fantastic. That is the best Western food we have eaten. We want to thank school for holding this activity, and thank professor Peggy for providing an unforgettable dinner. We really had a happy time.

—Gloria Zhao



Fang with Gary's adorable grandson!

Thank you to all of our participants!!

Meet Your Professor Over Lunch

ISO program that brings international students together with faculty and staff members for free lunch!

Helen Dai, Fei Zhao, and Ms. Lara Dilley

I had lunch with Xiaoqian Dai (Helen) and Fei Zhao on Thursday, October 10. I taught Helen and Fei in my ESL 4040 Advanced Academic Grammar course during this past spring/summer semester. I had not seen either one of them since that time, so it was great to be able to sit down with them, have lunch, and catch up. We discussed their current classes, daily schedules, and living situation. Because they take their classes in the evening, they are able to have time in the day to either work (Helen works on campus), relax, or do homework. They told me about how their classes are going and how they compare to the experience they had in the ESL program. We also discussed my family and my new baby (due February 2014). It was interesting to talk about the different traditions surrounding the birth of babies in the United States and China. I learned a lot of new things.

I really appreciate this new lunch program and the chance it gave me to interact with students. Thanks so much!

—Lara

Fei and I just had a happy lunch time with Professor Dilley. We talked about every thing we were interested in, the differences in tradition between China and the U.S , and interesting news. We are all very happy that Lara will have her second child!

—Helen Dai



Helen Dai, Fei Zhao, and Lara Dilley

Jae-Won Chang, Young Cho, Yebin Choi, Yeon Ju Park, and Ms. Pat De Guia

I had a wonderful time at lunch with the students – Jae-Won Chang, Young Cho, Yeon Ju Park, and Yebin Choi. We had great conversations about dorm life, how they are finding and adjusting to American way of life, ESL classes, going to the mall, shopping and groceries, Madonna life, and missing home cooked food.

Jae Won is such a great person to help and support them and be a role model. I made sure that I recognized that and thanked him.

We enjoyed the lunch at Siam Spice Restaurant. I initially went to the other Thai restaurant Thai Basil so Jae Won had to come and get me. It all worked out well.

Thank you for this opportunity to connect with the students in a very relaxed environment outside the academic setting. Everyone was at ease and just enjoyed the meal and the company. What a great bunch of young adults!

—Pat DG



From left: Yeon Ju Park, YeBin Choi, Pat De Guia, Jae-Won Chang and Young Cho

Students can get more information and participate in this program by following the instructions located on the ISO webpage!

Click here: [MYPOL](#)

AAA winter driving tips: (Courtesy of www.aaa.com)

- Avoid driving while you're fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces driving risks.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated. (Check often. Tires deflate easily in cold temps.)
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
- If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).
- Always look and steer where you want to go.
- Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle.

Tips for long-distance winter trips:

- Watch weather reports prior to a long-distance drive. Delay trips when especially bad weather is expected. If you must leave, let others know your route, destination and arrival time.
- Always make sure your vehicle is in peak operating condition.
- Keep at least half a tank of gasoline in your vehicle at all times.
- Pack a cell phone, blankets, gloves, hats, boots, food, water and any needed medication in your vehicle.
- If you become snow-bound, stay with your vehicle. It provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you. Don't try to walk in a severe storm. It's easy to lose sight of your vehicle in blowing snow and become lost.
- Don't over exert yourself if you try to push or dig your vehicle out of the snow.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna or place a cloth at the top of a rolled up window to signal distress. At night, keep the dome light on if possible. It only uses a small amount of electricity and will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe isn't clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust could cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment with the engine running.
- Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps.
- If possible run the engine and heater just long enough to remove the chill and to conserve gas.

Tips for driving in the snow:

- Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the gas slowly to accelerate is the best method for regaining traction and avoiding skids. Don't try to get moving in a hurry. And take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, turning – nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- Increase following distance (distance between cars).
- Know your brakes. Whether you have antilock brakes or not, the best way to stop is threshold breaking. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- Don't stop if you can avoid it. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- Don't power up hills. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed down hill as slowly as possible.
- Don't stop going up a hill. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.
- Stay home if you really don't have to go out. Don't tempt fate with bad weather.

Things to keep in your car during winter:

- ◆ Ice Scraper (for windows)
- ◆ Warm clothes (coat, blanket, boots, hat, gloves) in case you get stuck or have to walk
- ◆ Emergency food (like granola bars or beef jerky)
- ◆ Flashlight
- ◆ Extra batteries
- ◆ Extra cell battery
- ◆ Tire Pressure Gauge (Tires deflate in cold weather, you should check your pressure often)
- ◆ Jumper cables (especially if you have an older car)
- ◆ Small car tool kit
- ◆ First aid kit
- ◆ Bag of kitty litter (cat litter can stuck cars gain traction. The weight of the bag will also weigh down your car to provide traction while driving)
- ◆ Road Flare
- ◆ Road map



For more information on winter driving visit:

<http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/roadway-safety/winter-driving-tips/>

Click on the "How to Go on Ice and Snow" and "Get a Grip" brochure at the bottom for more winter tips and driving techniques!