

I Am Still Alive...by Bader Khalil, Libya

After six months of blockade, I am still alive. Everyone has a story in his life that is joyous or amusing. Life is many stations where either you are happy or sad. In 2014, my country was in a war. The president of Libya wanted to kill people because people demonstrated to ask for freedom and a better life. People went out to the streets to demand a correction for their life's track, but people were killed in the streets and blood flowed everywhere. Thereafter, Gaddafi gave orders to the Libyan army to besiege my city Misurata from all directions. I was ready to die for six months. Many reasons made me a strong person. I made the decision to be a volunteer to help the people who were affected by the war and was exposed to high risk during the civil war. I was impacted by psychological, material, and political harm. The warfare contributed to the birth of a new personality for me.

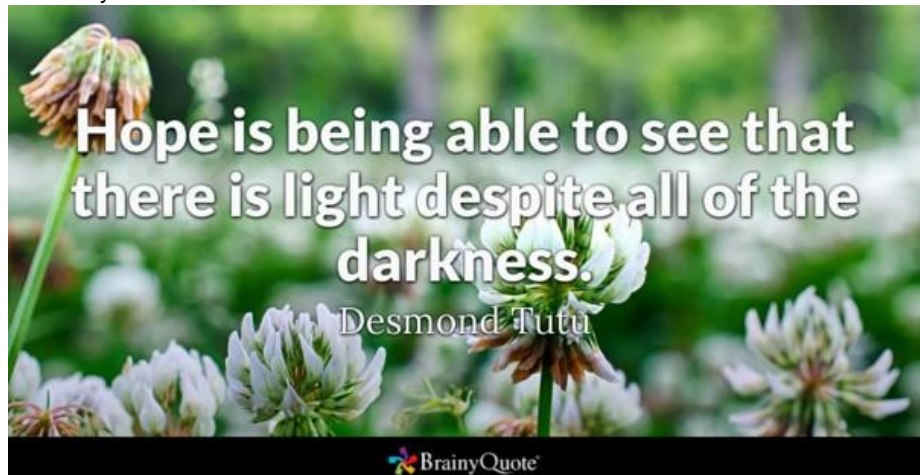
The first reason why I am still alive is because I made the decision to be a volunteer to work to help the affected individuals. During the war, everyone had an important task to do. For 6 months, I worked to help people and provide food and shelter for them. The days were very difficult. People were extremely scared and terrified, and they thought they would die. There was shortage of electricity, water, and food. People were fleeing from the areas of clashes to the safe areas of my city, where every home had many families. I went with my team to look at people in houses who needed help and gave them food and water. This was all under bombardment and danger, but thanks to God for saving us from death. Volunteer work made me gain experience in wars and emergency situations.

The second reason why I am still alive is because I was exposed to very high risk. One day I was transporting a patient to a ship to leave my country for treatment and a projectile almost fell on me. So death became closer to us, and Allah saved us by his astonishing protection. Furthermore, every day, the bullets were close to me and flying over my head, but I was determined to help the people in the battalions. Every day was worse than the day before and every moment was dangerous for anyone's movement, but people were going to die if I stopped helping them. I remember one day when I was sleeping because I was very tired; I heard a loud noise in my house. It was a thermal missile penetrating the house to burn everything, and my whole family and I managed to get out of our house. I felt very happy that my family was safe. However, we realized that my little infant niece who was 1 month old was sick and had been left alone at home. We rescued her and, praise Allah, she was fine.

The third reason, I am still alive is the psychological, physical and psychological impact of warfare. In 6 months, I lost 60 pounds. I was extremely worried about my family, and my health was deteriorating day by day. I always woke up hearing the news of the death of my friends, neighbors, or one of my relatives. I felt a difficult psychological feeling and I felt like I was dying slowly from the inside. I waited for death to come, but I knew that Allah protects one from war to live once again. It was not easy to forget what we had lost so quickly.

The final reason I am still alive is the birth of a new personality. I learned a lot from this war and gained knowledge to deal with crises and the future. I have met many people and introduced new people to those whom I had known before. In addition, after the war I became the president of the best organization in my city, and I continued to help people for seven years. I got an important job in the Libyan government to help young people in development. I worked on developing myself a lot by taking courses outside of Libya. I also got a prize for my volunteer work.

In conclusion, the war has been bad but has made me stronger than before because I made the decision to volunteer to work to help the affected people. I was exposed to all the risks of warfare, and I was born for the second time. I believe this experience gave me many opportunities, like coming to the U.S. to pursue my graduate education and contributing to building the future of Libya. I wish that one day I would wake up in the morning hearing that the whole world lives in peace and safety everywhere, and war stops forever.



The Importance of Leap Year...by Gabriel P. Mendoza, Peru

Near a small town in a valley, there was a girl who was friendly with everyone: the people, the animals, and plants. She always treated everyone equally, from the biggest animal to the smallest plant. All living beings respected her as if she were a divinity. She lived in a small cave, surrounded by flowers of all colors and animals of different species. Once an unexpected visitor appeared and asked for the owner of the house. He said he had to talk about something important before it was too late. The little girl poked her head out, dropping her long green hair and with a soft and warm voice, said, "I'm Lily, the owner of this place. What are you looking for?" When the visitor heard the voice, he bowed his head and said, "I'm late again." Lily asked the man, "Late? What does that mean? Who are you?" The child was asking so many questions, but he only said, "I'm YR, and we'll meet again," while he left the cave.

The days passed and it was summer, and Lily was no longer a little kid; she was tall and beautiful; her brown skin was shining when she was exposed to the great sun, and all the flowers and animals were full of happiness when Lily was awake. Autumn was coming, and the weather was changing. The flowers grew old, and when people and animals from different parts of the valley wanted to visit Lily, she was a mature adult.

Every time people visited her, they left offerings at the entrance of the cave. She always heard the people speak, but she never understood them. Their languages were different, but she always enjoyed their visits and gifts. Once she asked herself, "Why can't I understand them if I could understand what that man said in the past?" She never forgot him, and every day that passed she remembered things, beautiful memories that he was in.

Winter came, and her green hair was white. She remembered everything about herself and the man, her husband. She could barely move, her cave was cold, and the flowers dead. Nobody visited her because of the cold; she felt alone. The winter was running out of time and she, too, but at the last day of the season, a shadow appeared. It was YR. With tears in her eyes, she said, "Darling." He hugged her, and letting out a sigh, he said, "I've been waiting so long. It was 1460 days working for this day, and I'd do it again if I need to."

The sun began to shine, and she started to shine by the first rays of spring light. He hugged her harder and said, "Thanks for remembering me." With a smile on her face, Lily changed her shape by becoming a little girl and slowly she raised her head, saw the man, and asked him "Who are you?" He said, "I'm YR, and I need to go to my job. We will see each other again in a year." And he left her to start his job again to be able to have a day with his beloved, a job that consisted of moving the threads of time, sending flowers and animals as gifts for the next four years.

Food, Wonderful Food!

Fried Rice: When I was a child, I was often hungry. My mom liked to cook fried rice for lunch and dinner for me because it was quick and easy. My mom taught me how to make fried rice. First, you prepare an egg, some shrimp, some pork and a bowl of rice. After you turn on the fire, put some oil in a stock pot. Then, cook the eggs for three minutes. Next, take the egg out of the pot. After that, cook the pork and shrimp and sometimes chicken for five minutes. Then you put in the egg and rice and mix it together. Finally, you should add some salt and sauce, and your fried rice is finished. Now when I am hungry, I can cook fried rice for myself. ***Chen Han Chuang, Taiwan***

Chocolate Chip Cookies: When I lived in Thailand, my sister and I usually found new activities to do together. We grew plants, sang songs, played video games, cooked food, and baked cookies. One of the best activities was baking cookies. I would like to explain how to bake our special cookies.

First, heat the oven to 375 degrees. Second, mix sugar, butter, vanilla and egg in a large bowl. Then stir in flour, baking soda, and chocolate chips, and mix again. After that, drop dough by rounded tablespoonful onto a cookie sheet, or you can use a mold. Sometimes, my sister strewed almond seeds or dried fruit onto the cookies. Finally, bake the cookies 8-10 minutes or until the cookies are light brown.

Baking cookies is fun, and it makes me happy because it builds family relationships. If you are interested, you can make them with your parents on the weekend because it is easy and it is a social activity too. ***Kanatip Isarakul, Thailand***

A Rice Experience: When I first made rice, it was very bad. The rice was very salty. My husband ate the rice, and he said it was too salty. He did not eat any of it. Then, I cooked rice with meat. My husband said the rice was better than the first time. After that, I cooked with my mother, and I watched my big sister while she was cooking. The first time I cooked rice, it was very salty because I added too much salt and too much water. Finally, I can cook everything very well for my lovely family. It takes time to learn how to do new things. ***Sawsan Alnasser, Saudi Arabia***

My Favorite Restaurant: My favorite restaurant is a Chinese restaurant. They have delicious food, and this restaurant is near DU. Sometimes you can see an old man sitting alone. This man is the restaurant's boss. He always stays here with other persons. In fact, he is a good man, and he is very helpful. This restaurant has seafood, meats, and vegetables. Sometimes Chinese guys come here, and they usually need to order one meal, like one fish or one seafood and two meats. Finally, they always need to order vegetables. This Chinese meal is delicious and good for your health. If you have never eaten Chinese food, I think it will be difficult for you to order something because this meal is very different from American meals, so you may need to visit the restaurant website on the phone. This will help you because this website has a lot of pictures. This restaurant is my favorite, so come here with me to eat delicious and healthy Chinese food. ***Yiping Ma, China***

New Experiences: Travel, Careers, Scares, Flying, and Music

Four years ago, I had a new experience. In the Spring, I went to Hong Kong with my family. We heard about the fastest and largest roller coast in Hong Kong. We would try it! Many people waited in line and prepared to ride the roller coaster. My family and I were in line, too. Then we sat on the roller coaster and fastened the safety lock. Everything was ready. I was excited and nervous. When the bell rang, the roller coaster started. At first, the speed was slow; then it became faster and faster. Finally, I just heard shouting. I was very worried. At that time, I just hoped the ride would finish quickly. I wanted to be back on the ground, and I wanted to go back home. I was worried, very worried. Finally, the roller coaster stopped. I couldn't move my feet. I found that I had lost my phone and my snack from my pocket. If you're going to ride a roller coaster, you'd better prepare yourself because this ride is really worrying, but it is exciting too. This was a new, scary experience for me.
Qiongying Chen "Joanna," China

Starting a new career is challenging and exciting. The time when this happened for me was November 2005 when I received my degree in human resources (RRHH). This began my career. Two weeks later, I went to my internship. My internship was at the Pepsi Cola company. This company gave me a lot of good experience but I stayed for only a short time. In December 2006, my son and I flew to the U.S.A. When we arrived in Colorado, I registered my son for school, and I also registered myself to learn English as a second language. After that, I applied for a job, and I started to work in different areas. In conclusion, if you have dreams, you need to work very hard to reach your dreams, It is not easy, but if you want to, you can.
Norelis Cadena, Venezuela

Five years ago, I helped my friend. His name is Ali. My friends and I were on a trip to a farm where we camped and relaxed. The last night, Ali took my car keys while we were sleeping because he always likes to do pranks. We woke up in the morning because we were going back home. We did not find Ali, and my car keys were gone. Finally, I found a spare key. Then on the way back to the city, we suddenly saw Ali on the side of the road. he was there for ten hours because his car broke down. Of course, I helped him, but I told him "What goes around comes around." **Abdullelah Almuhanha, Saudi Arabia**

My first solo flight was amazing! It was a good day to fly. I went to the aircraft, but I found a new instructor. He told me, "I will fly with you today because your instructor is sick today." Then I started the engine, and I started to do the check list. Finally we took off! It went well but there were some moments of touch and go. The instructor spoke to the tower to make a flight plan for a solo student. I took off and landed on my own. The crew cut my hair when I got back because this is customary. I hope to fly again because becoming a pilot is my dream. **Mohamed Almoghani, Qatar/Palestine**

When I was a child, I sometimes heard my mother's friend playing a harp, and I wanted to learn it. It was difficult the first time. I practiced for three hours, and I studied for eleven years. I would like to explain how to play the harp. First, you put the harp on your lap and hold it. Then put four fingers of each hand on the harp strings. Use your fingertips. After that, play it in order of ring finger middle finger, index finger, and thumb, and play it gently. In conclusion, the harp is fun to play. It also has a beautiful sound and you can relax and play. Also the harp protects you from disease because the harp's sound can make some people relax. If you want to play the harp, let's play it together! **Rie Hiraishi, Japan**

I remember a scary experience with my bike. One day I wanted to ride my bike, but I didn't know how. I tried many times but I fell every time. I was feeling afraid, and finally I could ride it. After that, I rode all around the neighborhood because it was easy for me. Suddenly, someone came and hit me with his car because he was driving too fast. I told him, "If you can give me \$300 you can go." My experience was scary, but I made a quick \$300. **Hassan Aleid, Saudi Arabia**

Three years ago, my wife and I were on our honeymoon and something funny happened. It was in Interlaken, Switzerland. In the morning, we woke up early, and we went to the top of a mountain. We tried to parachute. She was wearing her parachute. I looked at her, and she was very scared. After that, I pushed her from the top of the mountain because she didn't want to run and jump. I was laughing when she jumped. I did that because I wanted to break her fear barrier. It was funny for me, but she was angry. I was not surprised. **Yousef Alfahaid, Saudi Arabia**

I remember a time three years ago when a neighbor woman was killed. When my husband and I were in Utah, one night at 10 p.m. there was a noise outside our apartment in the hallway. We were scared! Suddenly, someone knocked on the door. There were three police officers standing there. They told us that our neighbor's wife was killed in her apartment. They asked us some questions: "Did you hear any sound like someone screaming, or fighting, or any gun fire?" We told them that two days ago while we were sleeping, we heard some screaming and something hit the wall. They thanked us and left. Two days later, the police came back and asked, "Did you see her husband in the last two days?" We said, "No, we didn't see him." Then the police told us that her husband had killed her, and they were looking for him. From this experience, I learned that before I rent a house or apartment, I should do some research to be sure the location is safe. **Thani Alghamdi, Saudi Arabia**

One day I lost my daughter. My daughter was not in her bed! Suddenly, my phone rang and someone told me, "Your daughter is alone on a faraway island." While I was running, a taxi drove by me, but I walked the rest of the way. Then I arrived at the island at midnight. I was very scared, but I did not stop because I was worried about my daughter. It was dark, but I saw some snakes and bats. I ran quickly and screamed, "Yara...Yara..where is my daughter?" After that, I fell into a hole and fainted. Finally, my daughter woke me up. "Mom, I need some milk." I was happy because this was just a frightening nightmare. **Hissah Alhunaytah, Saudi Arabia**

Home Is More Than a Place

Home is not only where you can receive shelter, respect from your family, and freedom. Home is a country for refugees fleeing violent social and political problems. Growing up in a home is worthless if you cannot get love respect and freedom. I miss Ethiopia, but not just the house where I grew up, but I miss my village, friends, and all of my relatives. **Banchi Danbu, Ethiopia**

Many students suffer from homesickness. People always say “there is no place like home.” I grew up in Vietnam. When I was younger, I wanted to explore a new culture and live in a better place, so I moved to the U.S. Soon, I realized that it is not easy to live in a new home and I missed my Vietnamese home, culture, and friends. Home isn’t just a physical structure like a house or region. In a new place you have to learn new things to adapt, like food, housing, and so on. I felt homesick for my family of seven sisters and three brothers. I always felt comfortable with them in our warm, small house.

Even though I have been living for many years in the U.S., I still miss my culture and holidays such as Vietnamese New Year. I have so many memories from my childhood. When I started my own family here in the U.S., I watched my own children grow up with family and hang out with friends. These experiences brought back those memories of my own childhood at home in Vietnam. I’m sure many students far from home are homesick as I was and still am. However, someday when I have enough time, I will visit Vietnam again and see my family and the house where I grew up. **Lien Meyer, Vietnam**



Spring's Easter Egg Hunt was presided over by Easter Bunny Debbie.

Research Paper Presentations

Level six students breathe a sigh of relief when they finish their research writing task. But it’s not over yet because each student must present his paper at a meeting of all the upper level students and teachers. Last week’s Spring Term Research Conference included the following topics: E-Sports by Khuong (Kyle) Man; Adoption by Same Sex Couples by You Hwan Oh; Social Costs of Smoking by Amna Alolaiwat; Sexual Harassment by Veronica Uribe Pulido; Physician Assisted Suicide by Thi M Nguyen; Art Criticism by Laura Molina; Global Warming by Lu Cheng Wei; Coed Education by AbdulKhalik Saeed Al-Murait, and Tobacco Advertising by Rakan AlMansour. Graduation day on Thursday, May 17 awaits these students and others who completed level six research last term.

A Spring International Quiz: What Do You Know About Your School?



Spring International was founded in 1979, so we'll be 39 years old in June.

The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville also has a Spring International Language Center.

The name “Spring” means a time of new beginnings, opportunities to start over, change and growth.

We endeavor to understand and appreciate the students' cultural differences and to enhance their ability to function effectively across cultures. We believe in encouraging the language acquisition and personal progress of students through an atmosphere of support, openness, and understanding.

As the photo above shows, we connect with the community through Conversation Partners, Americans who come into classes and participate in weekly meetings with students. Our Homestay Program gives students the opportunity to live with American families while they study.

How old is Spring International Language Center?

Are there other Spring International's in the U.S.?

What does the school's name mean?

Besides teaching English, what is the school's mission or goal?

How is Spring connected to the Littleton community?

(See answers below photo)