

Making the Most of Her Time in America

By ASSE FLEX Scholarship Student Aizirek from Kyrgyzstan who is enjoying her exchange year in Little Rock, Arkansas



Aizirek from Kyrgyzstan

Aizirek lost her sight when she was only 8 years old, but it never stopped her from dreaming big. She decided to apply for the FLEX program because of her love of America and wish to “get into the American style of life”.

Placed in a specialized school for the blind, Aizirek says: “I feel more like myself, and I feel comfortable here because other students have low vision or (are) blind.” At this unique school, our student has the opportunity to learn how to read braille and walk with a cane, which was not possible in her home country.

While thriving in school, Aizirek also developed a strong bond with her host mother who enjoys taking her shopping. Since Aizirek has sight memory, her host mother enjoys picking out clothing by telling her what color it is so they can match the pieces together.

According to her host mother “Aizirek wanted to do three things when she came to America: ride a roller coaster, play the guitar and learn to swim,”. As of today, Aizirek’s host sister has started teaching her how to play the guitar, and she also took a swimming lesson. Her host mother shared that “within an hour and a half, she was swimming!”. Although the roller coasters weren’t running when she went to Magic Springs, she did get to experience the Log Flume. There is still time to add dreams on her bucket list, as her exchange year is still far from being over!

We want to thank the Babberl Family for opening up their hearts to this fearless student, and accompanying her in every new adventure she decides to go on!

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Giving Back to the Community

By Umaima from Pakistan who is enjoying her exchange year in Panama City Beach, Florida

Umaima never turns down an opportunity to get involved. She is enjoying her experience in an American high school and is excelling with A+ grades. Volunteering has been a very important part of Umaima’s experience. She has already volunteered over 50 hours!

She is particularly active in several clubs at her high school including, Junior Optimist Club, Human Society, and International Thespians Society (ITS). Umaima actually attended a local competition with her ITS club, and she was awarded the tops scores of “Superior” for her monologue performance, which she performed in her native language, Urdu. Because of her superior performance, she has been invited to attend the State of Florida ITS competition this Spring. What an honor!

Umaima volunteered over 20 hours for a charity event to benefit children in her community. The “Reel Ladies of PCB” put on a charity fashion show. She spent several nights helping the participants organize the show and hold practice sessions. On the day of the event Umaima assisted the models with their wardrobe changes.

This altruistic student also volunteered at the “Reel Kids Fishing Rodeo” charity event, where children were given the opportunity to fish and receive free fishing equipment. Her job for the day was “Media Specialist”. She followed around the Fishing Rodeo Ambassador, taking photos and conducting interviews. Some of the interviews were live streamed around the world on the “The Laws of Life with Blanca” platform.

Because Umaima did such a wonderful job, she was appointed Self-Empowered Entrepreneur Ambassador for her country, and awarded 100 scholarships for Pakistani citizens to take

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Umaima in the middle with her host mother on the right

Editor’s Box

Many thanks to all of you who have contributed your wonderful articles and photographs. Without you, there would not be any ASSE News! Tell us about yourself and you may possibly find yourself highlighted in the next newsletter or posted on the ASSE or World Heritage Facebook page. Pictures are encouraged to be sent by email. Let us know the fun things you are doing as a student, host family or Area Representative.

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Until next edition,
Breeana Page, ASSE News Editor

Fun Activities During the Holiday Season



Umaima from Pakistan got to experience many new and fun activities such as pumpkin carving and going to Disney World!



Sophie, German CBYX participant placed in Pennsylvania, decided to volunteer at her Christmas market where she did crafts with the children and helped sell hot chocolate, coffee and cookies. Of course, Santa Claus was present... Sophie seized the opportunity for a very cute picture with Santa and her little host sister!



Kirill from Kyrgyzstan, placed in Missouri, had the wonderful idea to make customized 'Best Host Dad' and 'Best Host Mom' shirts for his host parents for Christmas!



Melody from Taiwan

Melody's host family shared how excited their exchange student was to decorate the Christmas tree with her host siblings. Host mother shared "While decorating, our son looked at Melody and said 'I'm glad we have you!' She just about cried she was so happy! She scooped him up and gave him a big hug".



Fun Karaoke gathering between Chomdong from Thailand, Elsa and Capucine from France and Endika from Spain right before the Christmas break!



The Brown Family in Nebraska is currently hosting Alessandro from Italy – their 22nd exchange student! Every year, they send out an annual family picture to their family and friends, and they make sure that their exchange student is part of it.



Yoen from France, placed in Texas, had the most wonderful time during the holidays! He enjoyed a night of snow sledding, Christmas lights and hot chocolate with his host family. He and his host brothers made a visit to Santa and then got matching pajamas as a gift when they returned home.



Experiencing New Hobbies While on Program

By Nigina from Georgia who is enjoying her exchange year in Elizabethton, Tennessee

There are students like Nigina who are all about trying new experiences and taking on new challenges by trying out a new hobby or sports.

"I was awarded this certificate for participation in the Lions Tennis Program for the 2022-2023 season. After arriving in America, I was given the opportunity to play tennis. I became a member of the school team and had the opportunity to learn tennis with the coaches for 3 months. I would like to thank my school and coaches for giving

me the opportunity to master this sport. I will definitely continue to play tennis in my country. I feel that this sport gave me a way to discover a new me."

Saying 'YES' to new opportunities is definitely the best way for exchange students to discover themselves and grow!

Nigina is pictured holding her certificate



World Heritage Students Highlights

By World Heritage Area Coordinator Tiffany Wilson who loves to interview and highlight World Heritage Students in the Midwest Region



Alessia

Meet ASSE Student Alessia from Belgium who is enjoying her exchange year in Unionville, Missouri

Alessia decided to become an exchange student due to her love of exploring new places! Alessia's favorite food is Meat Milanese, but while on program, Alessia plans to try a good ol' American corndog! So far, the experience that she was looking forward to the most was to spend Thanksgiving with her host family. We hope that there are many more items to her bucket list before the end of the school year! Thank you to the Garland Family in Unionville, Missouri for giving Alessia this opportunity and being part of Alessia's journey America!



Emilie

Meet ASSE Student Emilie from France who is enjoying her exchange year in Nixa, Missouri

Emilie was inspired to become an exchange student because her mom was an exchange student in 1994! With her interest in the American culture sparked, Emilie began to learn English by watching the TV show, Friends. While in the U.S.A., Emilie wants to experience football games and Cheetos! We want to thank the Yarckow Brown Family for opening up their home and their hearts to this adventurous student!

Our Students' Achievements

ASSE is very proud to see our students make great accomplishments while on program - whether it is art or sport-related

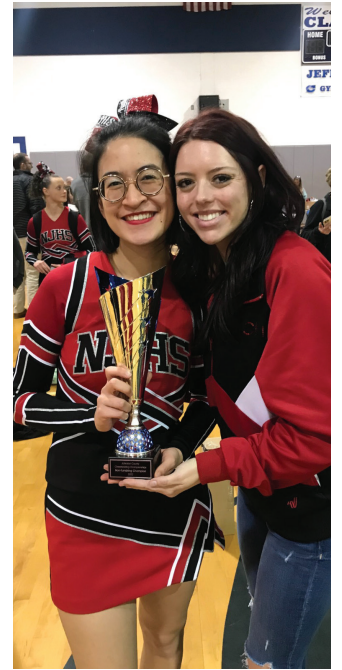


Umama dressed as the Queen's Courtier

Umama from Pakistan was selected to perform in the production of "Alice in Wonderland" at Arnold High School. She played the part of the Queen's courtier. After many hours of rehearsals, she got to take part in four performances.

Luka, ASSE Student from Georgia was selected to represent his high school at the states scholastic broadcasting competition. In October, his team competed on the Missouri state competition which was hosted in Springfield, MO. His mission was to 'edit a movie scene'. Luka shared: "They provided the raw unedited footage and the script upon which I had to edit the movie. Starting at 8:00 AM and ending at 7:00 PM I was editing the scene intensively. The results came in today and out of approximately 20 high schools which were represented from all of Missouri, I held the third place in 'edit the scene' criteria." What an accomplishment!

Amira from Germany, placed in Selma, North Carolina, was very proud to win a Cheerleading competition her high school team. She was happy to pose with her coach after the event, and says that 'It was amazing!'



Amira on the left with her cheerleading coach

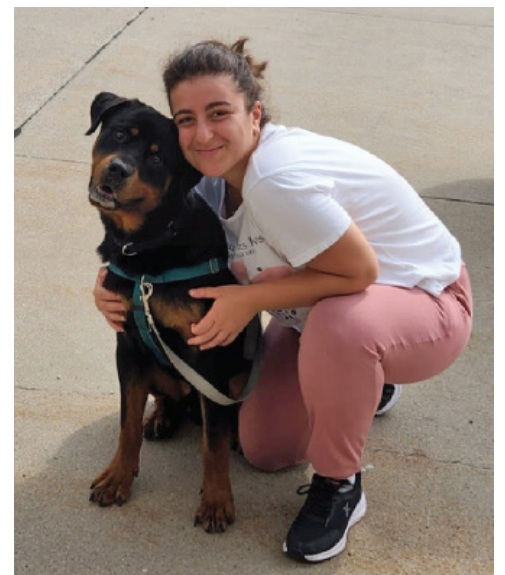
Liza from Georgia was Selected as FLEX Student of the Month

By ASSE FLEX Scholarship Student Liza from Georgia who is enjoying her exchange year in Harrison Township, Michigan

We are so proud that ASSE student Liza, hosted in Harrison Township, MI was selected among all the FLEX students in the USA as the Student of the Month in October 2022! By that time, she has already completed 40 service hours volunteering at a local animal shelter and as a teaching assistant in an art-focused class for children.

Additionally, Liza is very active at school. She did five country presentations and has joined many clubs including the swim team, DECA club and the student council.

Among of all her accomplishments, we especially remember the interactive workshop that she led to engage her school peers to think about peacebuilding in the world.



Liza from Georgia

Cultural Exchange Under All Its Aspects in Kansas

By World Heritage Students Angela from Spain, Anastasiia from Ukraine and Julienne from Mali who are enjoying their exchange year in Kansas

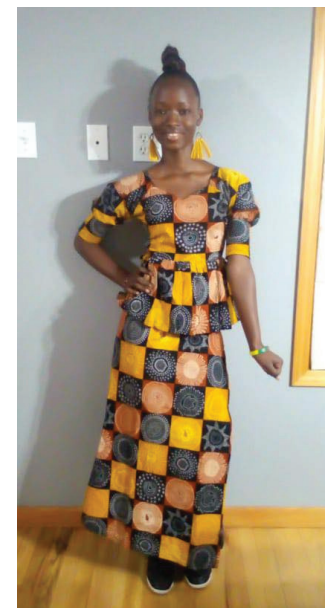


Angela and Anastasiia and their host mother at their cotillion

Who would have thought that clothing has so much to do with culture? Sometimes cultural exchange includes aspects we would never imagine! While our students discover the way American teenagers tend to dress like, they can also share about traditional clothing from their home country.

For a cotillion event, World Heritage students Angela from Spain and Anastasiia from Ukraine wore beautiful gala dresses alongside their host mother in Kansas.

In the meantime, World Heritage student Julienne from Mali decided to dress in traditional clothing from her home country for her country presentations at Colby High School for International Education Week.



Julienne wearing traditional clothing from Mali

When Creativity Meets Kindness

By ASSE Exchange Student Simon from Germany who is enjoying his exchange year in Hudson, OH

After only a few months on program, Simon has reached over 85 hours of volunteering within his host community! As part of his Leadership and Community Service class, he came up with an individual

community service project. Simon used his creativity to make 26 handmade pop-up cards to donate to a Retirement Community. He shared "They even allowed me to hand out some of my cards directly to the residents and seeing how happy they were definitely made all the efforts worth it."

Surely, this altruistic student is on his way to reach his goal of 100 hours of volunteering while making a big impact on his host community!

Simon with a resident from the Retirement Community he volunteered at



Female Runner of the Year at Fuqua School in Farmville, VA

By ASSE Private High School Student Candela from Spain who is enjoying her exchange year in Farmville, VA

Spanish Private High School Student Candela was awarded the 2022 VCC female Runner of the Year at her school in Farmville, VA last Fall.

Since the season has started, and on top of repeatedly placing first in every contest she participated in, Candela has also improved her time by more than two minutes! A great accomplishment to say the least! Diane Stubbins, the school head said about our student, "Having exchange students like Candela among our student body enriches the global perspective of our students, and many keep in touch with their friends abroad after graduation. We are so glad she chose to join our Fuqua family this year."

Congratulations to Candela for her athletic accomplishments!



Candela after being elected Female Runner of the Year

Learning About the Indiana State Capitol

By Sina Petzold from Germany who is enjoying her exchange year in Batesville, Indiana



Sina from Germany went on a trip to the Indiana State Capitol in Indianapolis, where she visited the Indiana Supreme Court, House of Representatives and Senate. She had the amazing opportunity to meet with two Representatives of the House: Sheila Klinker and Blake Johnson.

Sina shared that "It was a great feeling being there. I adore the beautiful architecture. Our guide taught me a lot about Indiana's politics."

Sina with State Representative Sheila Klinker

'I Made it to the League Meets!'

By ASSE Exchange Student Ana from Georgia who is enjoying her exchange year in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

"Such an honor to be part of Bloomfield Hills swimming & diving Team. Joining Varsity Sport was one of the biggest challenges of my exchange year. I have never tried professional swimming back in my country, but I showed my highest effort and support to the team. I made great friends and gained unforgettable experience. Also, I should mention that I dropped my personal time on every meet. I had improvement more than 20 seconds in different events. As my coach says: "It is hard and painful, I never said it would be easy, but it is sweet in the end when you see the change in yourself and development." I really am grateful and happy to have a chance and experience Varsity sport pressure, learned swimming and made great connections. Go Black Hawks!"

Thank you to Bloomfield Hills High School for welcoming wonderful students like Ana, and giving them the chance to go beyond themselves and push their limits to grow.



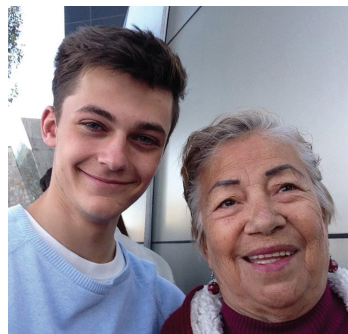
Ana in the middle with her swim & diving team

Exchange Year in Mexico

By Theo from France who loved his exchange year in Mexico

Theo's stay in Mexico was something truly unforgettable. To this day, Theo is still in communication with his host family and using the Spanish language every day, whether it be online, with classmates, or with Spanish-speaking in his home country of France (not to mention his favorite Spanish songs on constant replay on Spotify!)

Thank you to Theo's host family and Area Representative for making his exchange year such a success!



Theo pictured with his host grandma



Theo pictured with his host mom

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the online "Self-Empowered Entrepreneur" course.

Umaima also volunteered at a community event on Halloween where she helped decorate and fill up to 1,400 bags of candy. Dressed as Harry Potter, she spent 4 hours handing out the candy bags to the children who attended.

At the outdoor Festival at the Baker Heritage Museum, Umaima spent the day giving mini presentations about her country and answering the attendees' questions. This was also an opportunity for her to learn about the history of the small town. She even met a descendant of the founder of the town of Baker who told her the story of her family's history. Umaima also took part in the International Education Week by giving a Country Presentation to over 175 students at Arnold High School. We are amazed by Umaima's commitment to making a difference within her host community! Thank you to the Stem Family in Florida for welcoming her and giving her the chance to be active in her community.