

Caribbean Chronicle

CIPLC:
COLEGIO INTERNACIONAL
DE PUERTO LA CRUZ
Barcelona, Venezuela

February 2013, Issue # 4

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Venezuela: A Diamond Lost in a Million Oil Barrels

By: Jessica Duque

Although one tries to stay out of the topic, somehow the radio, the newspapers, the people, and all your surroundings remind you of the nightmare this country continues to face every morning.

So far we stand in the situation of knowing that things might not get any better until the day president Chavez steps back into the country, or eventually, the day we know he is not ever coming back. And who is here to represent us? (*Update: this article was written before the death of Chavez.*)

So we stay here with our hands crossed. Hoping that some leader will come and finally handle all our problems, when in reality the solution is within us. We like to blame that sole leader who seemed to abandon the nation, but really the traitors are us. We, who did not stand up to the issues, but instead preferred not to vote on December 16th, 2012 in the government elections, which automatically granted the red party a greater control over the nation. Venezuelans don't seem to understand that the country's future lies in them more than any other leader.

Today, Venezuela pays the price. Venezuelans have become witnesses of corruption and calumny. While our corrupt leaders continue to assure his health is continuously improving, back here we hear nor see nothing from him. When half of Venezuelans awaited the change that was stolen from them that October 7th, a change that seemed so close, today the only thing that seems possible is surrender.

His absence, definite or not, shakes the entire nation and the political stigma becomes a greater question mark. The true fact is that Venezuela is not ready for



Hugo
Chavez

elections, neither the current government nor the opposition. While the opposition would fight for justice and clean elections, the current government would debate over the presidential position: Maduro or Cabello... Who could be better? Or who could be worse?

With a completely violated constitution, and the will of a nation completely out-turned, one has no other expectation but to ask oneself: How much longer? With a nation that is more interested in individual welfare than that of the nation, freedom and equality for all seems to be further away than possible.

Venezuelans, we need to know that the world is different. Every nation is the construction of its own path by the hand of a worthy leadership. A leadership that can assure a common path, a mirror where a whole nation can reflect itself and see a common image, with no hatred but comprehension for our differences.



CIPLC Diplomats In Philadelphia

By: Melissa Rodriguez

As one of the head organizers of ILMUNC said, when you get hundreds of people- diverse people- in a room and get them to talk about some of the most controversial problems of the world, what you get is either World War III, or a chance to come together and create something amazing. This conference trip, filled with unexpected events such as 9 hours straight in below freezing temperature at Obama's second term inauguration and Head Chairs dancing to Hollywood tunes and "twerking," was an experience that, in the end, led to a gratifying understanding of the world and enlightenment of issues and solutions.

This 9 day trip began with a visit to the USA's capital, where a group of 11 (Mr. Ski, Mr. Munroe, Melissa and Samantha Rodriguez, Jesus Guevara, Alfredo Quilarquez, Omar Rojas, Carolina Franco, Arturo Seijas, Alejandro Reyes, and Lama Jaber) stood 9 hours (waking up at 3 AM and spending 5 AM to 3 PM) outside in -3, (felt like -11) degrees Celsius. But at the point that we were almost ready to give up and beg to find warmth, the inauguration began at approximately 12 PM and we truly did experience history. After the inauguration, monuments such as the Abe Lincoln Memorial, The White House, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial were all visited.

The days to follow consisted of traveling to Philadelphia where the 4-day Ivy League Model United Nation conference would take place. With over 3,000 students at the conference, we didn't expect there to be much involvement on CIPLC's part in individual committees, but we were wrong.

Although the committees did prove to be up to 270 people in some cases, students from CIPLC found it easy to participate and felt extremely comfortable with the many different students representing different schools. Not to mention bits of humor such as the widely inappropriate messages that could be bought and sent along with a rose from committee to committee to be read aloud helped everyone enjoy the experience that much more.

In addition to the lively committees and hilarious Rose Grams, delegates could enjoy UPenn's events that had been organized such as "Delegate Fest," where students appreciated the music of a band from New York, and the "Delegate Dance," where a DJ played remixes of some of America's favorite songs.

However, without a doubt, one of the best experiences was simply making new friends and getting to know those who represented CIPLC on the trip better by having large group dinners with them and coffee with new friends at Starbucks. Everyone left with their Facebook page stating, "You are now friends with...10 other people," because so many acquaintances were made with people from China to India to Brazil to the USA, along with numerous inside jokes between the 11 delegates from CIPLC.

All in all, most on the trip would agree that it was a great *first* international conference trip for the freshman and a few others, and the best MUN trip in general for the veterans of MUN.

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Hope In a Changing World

By: Jessica Duque

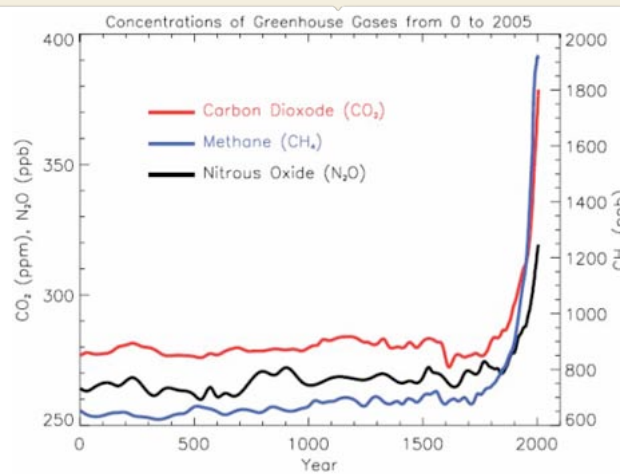
We like to think that today we are living the dream. With technology, making our lives what we call easier, we classify this as the era of progress. Competition, corporations, and profit are consequently leading to the most innovative discoveries, convincing us that we are living the best of the modern world. However, if we look at the world through a closer lens, we find that everyday conditions continue to get worse. Just as Apple releases their new iPad, and doctors discover the cure to cancer, on one side our world continues in a consecutive decay. So, is this what we call progress? As I go through life, I see people living in misery, slums, and hunger; I see children with no education, and I wonder how we can stand on the other side glorifying how amazingly “smart” our generation continues to become.

Corporations are the ones to take credit for incredible inventions and technologies that go out

on the market but we must consider that they run their systems for their own benefit. Just as we have seen in each of our global issues class reflections, they are ignorant about solving anything that does not involve maximizing their own profit. In the documentary “Tapped,” for example, we saw how the Nestle Corporation continues to pump 400,000 gallons of water a day from a community who is in drought because of them. Worse than that, the community is then paying for its own water that is now polluted by the toxic compounds that come from the petrochemical plants where plastic bottles are made. But Nestle wouldn’t stop; it was their profit that was at play. We see the same happening with global warming, degraded land, poverty, endangered species, etc.... it is money at play... and the consequences don’t seem to matter... yet.



Measure of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere



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But, what profit will we gain from a destroyed world? Where can we go with a planet in ruins? That is where we are heading. And just as all these issues connect through what seems the most important factor (money) they also all connect on the other side to the greater factor: environment.

The degradation of the environment has become the most critical and urgent of all issues because it is coming up quickly as we continue to damage the living ecosystems and the atmosphere's composition without stop. As populations continue to grow and civilizations continue to demand more food, water, and technology, we continue to put further pressure on the earth. Making mistakes in our dealings with nature is beginning to have its greater consequences.

We keep destroying green life. We are closing our eyes to its magnificent benefits. The issue persists because we are not conscious of our careless use of nature's resources. Deforestation is happening at an incredible rate, and even though we know that trees are our best carbon sequesters, we do nothing to stop the demolition of trees. Instead, we continue to demand more. As we learned in the documentary "An Inconvenient Truth," the earth's thin layer of atmosphere is thin enough that we are capable of changing its composition. This thin layer of atmosphere is being thickened by the increasing level of carbon dioxide emissions we are imposing. As a result, more of the infrared is caught in the earth as greenhouse gases keep the infrared trapped in the earth. However, we continue to build more and more coal industries. As we saw in the documentary, both China and USA, who have outstanding economies, are the highest contributors to global warming. Because today, to us, everything is about a leading economy, no matter how much we are harming the environment that we regard a secondary issue. However, this

issue will soon become too late to solve and will ultimately destroy everything human nature has achieved.

On the other hand, the documentary "Hope in a Changing Climate" gave me the chance to see the impact agriculture has had on our land. 640 thousand square km, exploited by thousands of years of agriculture, became dry, plantless hills: another form of environmental degradation. Grazing has prevented any trees or shrubs to grow and rainfall simply pushed down the hillsides taking the soil with it, therefore destroying the region's fertility. Progressive degradation of the environment depletes fertility and what you often find are extremely poor farmers insisting on this infertile land, which further impoverishes themselves.

With this documentary I learned that there are connections between a worsening environment and increasing poverty. This directly links to cultural habits that should be changed for a bettering environment and bettering of society. If people think for the long term, the restoration of vegetation will bring significant impacts. With restored fields, now when it rains the water is no longer washed down the hills, instead it is trapped and retained into the soil to gently irrigate the land. With irrigated fields, vegetation thrived providing farmers with a secure source of food. With thriving fields in China, for example, local markets were bringing an abundant variety of vegetables, which increased local incomes up to three-fourths. This is proof that with a rehabilitated environment, people can live themselves out of poverty. If we impose that all the dry land be restored into irrigated vegetation, not only will we pull many societies out of poverty, but also work for a bettering environment. If we teach lower classes that they can repair the land for their own benefit, we will be effective carbon sequesters. This is a perfect option

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to solve the problem locally.

“If people are the problem, they can also be the solution” said John Liu in his documentary. And if we think about it, we are the only solution. We need to take nature by the hand and understand that restoring natural ecosystems benefits everyone. Human activity has valued the monetary value of agriculture. But we haven’t valued the natural system itself.

Vegetation reduces the greenhouse effect. We just saw that we are the cause for increasing global warming. We were also just given a solution that could more than sequester carbon, but also help those farmers out of poverty. We humans are helpless in the subject of climate change. We don’t currently have any replacement for the photosynthetic activity plants that remove carbon from our air. Therefore, the degradation of land directly links to global warming because the restoration of the vegetation can reduce the greenhouse effect. Organic material (plant root leftovers) is left on the soil that holds moisture and creates a living soil. Carbon sequestration occurs in this moisturized soil.

I feel, like Al Gore from “An Inconvenient

Truth,” that this is becoming more of a moral issue. We have to use our political democracies to act together to solve these problems. Strong voices make smart calls and right now we are sitting here waiting for matters to get worse. There is now an urge to change to renewable energy resources. No matter how expensive they may be, countries need to help one another, this is about saving the same place, the same home: EARTH!

Many of the services we simply take for granted from nature are secured with the rehabilitation of these lands. Countries should recognize the enormous potential of restoration. It is possible. Empower the local people to restore their own environment and we will see enormous benefits. Rehabilitation will sequester carbon (reducing global warming risk), reduce biodiversity loss, food security (reducing starvation), bring higher variation to markets (creating higher incomes and less poverty).

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This graph outlines the different methods of action that can have positive impacts on the environment.

We as human beings have to make sure that the warnings are heard and considered. We are carelessly destroying our home; instead let's ask ourselves what is our mission in this world. We may be surprised to know that maybe we are the ones to impose change. What we take for granted might not be here for our children, as Gore stated in his documentary. We have a responsibility to take action. Once this place is gone, there will be none other left. We can't buy a new home, not even with all the money in the world. But we don't seem to realize that.

We must start little by little. My global issues class has slowly made me more and more aware of the issues. It is allowing me to understand that even though we like to consider every global issue individually, they all interconnect. I already talk about them at home, something I did not do before. I feel like there is something we must do. And not only am I becoming aware of the problem, but also of solutions. Why not try it out now? Solutions are already popping. There are billions of humans on earth today, if we unite and make sure everyone is aware of the importance, we can make real progress.

In his documentary, Gore makes a statement: "Future generations may well have occasion to ask themselves: 'What were our parents thinking? Why didn't they wake up when they had a chance?' We have to hear that question, from them, now."

While we are here thinking we are building a world of progress with new technologies and further advances, future generations will look back to us conclude that what we were really doing was diminishing this world to nothing. We call it progress now; in the future they will call it ruins.

Human activity continues to harm the environment as civilizations require more and more from the earth. More and more energy will be needed. Humans searching for profit leads them to make decisions based on the short-term outcomes, but never the long-term consequences. Humanity needs to understand that there is a greater need for the environment than for money. We can live without money, but not without oxygen. If we know that humans are capable of discovering, designing, and inventing, why not do this for the benefit of *all* our global issues and not for the benefit of a corporation or individual. How can we call this progress when we don't use these technological advances to our benefit but to our detriment?



Ice caps melting





Fernando Llorente Signs a 4-Year Contract with Juventus

By: Daniel Finco

Starting on July 1st, Fernando Llorente will play for the Italian famous “Vecchia Signora” as a mid forward. The contract, signed this past Thursday, explains that his contract with the Spanish Club Athletic de Bilbao ended and that he would join the Juventus until 2017. It was not specified how much money would he earn per season, but the Italian media rumored about 4.5 million.

Llorente’s 29 goals scored wearing Bilbao’s T-shirt and his past international titles such as the World Cup and the European Cup earned with

the Spanish national team has made him desirable to many international soccer clubs. Also, it ultimately caused many ruptures with his previous Basque team.

Juventus recognizes Llorente’s “powerful physique” and that he is “truly a ram in the small area and with athletic dowries that unifies his optimum technique.” His signing responds to the necessities of Antoni Conte, which seek to give the forward Mirko Vucinic a companion up front. Conte said that he would be very happy if Llorente chooses to play for the Juventus.

Fernando Llorente



“I would be very happy if he chooses to play for the Juventus”
-Antoni Conte



Cubans and Their Music Laws

By: Alfredo Quilarquez

Yes! The Cuban government has prohibited a whole genre of music. Reggaeton is prohibited on the island. People can't listen to it in public places. Currently this is affecting every young person in the country because this type of music is the only Latin genre that is surging and in a way keeping up to the level of pop and rap in the rankings.

The Cuban government can't move their hips, I bet; therefore Reggaeton is banned. Their reasoning is that the language of the music is vulgar and many times sex-related. The government is totally against the corrupt and mentally sickening type of music.

Obviously, the type of lyrics and dancing that often accompany Reggaeton are not often grandma-friendly. On the other hand, you exist because she at one time did the deed. Therefore, is it so terribly wrong? The government in this case I feel doesn't have the power to tell people what they can and cannot listen to. Oops, I forgot. It's Cuba. This is another way the government oppresses the population of the island. Why can't they just listen to the music they wish? Many of these songs are eye-opening and simply invigorating for many of the people living on the country.



Kids Dancing Reggaeton

“The Cuban government can't move their hips, I bet; therefore Reggaeton is banned.”

In my opinion, people should be let free to do whatever they want. If they want to listen, sing or dance to a certain genre of music then that is in their power. I'd rather prohibit Santeria way before prohibiting Reggaeton. I'd rather prohibit Communism instead of a way to express one's feelings. Reggaeton doesn't kill people, nor mess up their life. It's something that if you want to listen to, you do, and if you don't, you ignore it. Just because one powerful person is against something, a whole population has to be affected by it??



People's Spotlight: *Ms. Amy Lingenfelter*

By: Baylee Carter

1. **Where are you originally from?**

Buffalo, New York

2. **What were some favorite hobbies you did as a teenager that you have not continued as an adult?**

I read a lot, painted, downhill skied, played piano, participated in musicals, ran 100-meter track and window-shopped at the mall. The regular hangout spot after school was Perkins and later an independent coffee shop, where I eventually I performed poetry and singing at open-microphone night.

3. **What are your favorite sport teams?**

I HATE the New England Patriots, but I have a soft spot for the

Buffalo Bills & Sabres because they're from my home town (although they haven't won a championship EVER). But in terms of teams that I respect, I like the Pittsburgh Steelers, the San Francisco Forty Niners, and the Spanish soccer team Real Madrid.

4. **What are all the places you've lived?**

Buffalo, New York for 23 years, the New York City area for four years, Japan for two years, Spain for one year and a half, and now Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela.

5. **What are the occupations that you have held before teaching?**

A marketing assistant and later editor for a Wall Street company, an Airborne

Express truck driver, a camp counselor at a summer camp, a public relations copy writer for Working Mother Magazine, a gift shop cashier for The Buffalo Zoo and "car-wiper" at a car wash (I made around \$100 a day in tips alone!).

6. **Top 5 movies?**

Forrest Gump, The Shawshank Redemption, Office Space, Clerks & Clerks II, Crash, Life is Beautiful, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, Rudy, A Beautiful Mind, American Beauty

7. **Where did you go to college?**

The University of Buffalo and the University of Valencia in Spain

8. **If you could change the world in one way, what would it be?**

First, I would change the mentality of other individuals, instead of being selfish, with a paycheck-to-paycheck or profit mindset, we should all be in it together for humanity in order to survive. I would also do the usual: make war, famine, abuse, pollution, illiteracy, and natural disasters non-existent. Finally, I would change the hypocrisy and artificiality of people.

9. **Favorite song of all time?** This is too much for me to handle- I like too many songs, from too many genres. Some that come to mind immediately are Led Zeppelin – Going to California, Zero 7- Destiny, Ani DiFranco- 32 Flavors, and 2Pac- Dear Mama

10. **Who was your role model growing up?** In some ways my own mother; she was a very strong woman that was

able to juggle a family and a demanding career, and make it all work out. In general, my role models are people who have broken convention and have been able to make a living pursuing a humanitarian passion that is often not monetarily valued by our society.

11. **Have you fulfilled your dreams so far in life?** Some of them yes, others no. Dreams are constantly evolving and being adjusted, but there are some core values that we usually develop when we are in our teens or even younger. As an adult, we should always stay true to those. My main dreams are 1) to open a school in South America that teaches English through visual arts and music, 2) write a fiction “teachable” novel based on my students’ travel experiences, 3) become perfectly bilingual in Spanish, and 4)

travel to every country in the world.

12. **What are your favorite cartoons?**
The Simpsons, Scooby Doo, Heath Cliff, Rainbow Bright, Family Guy, South Park, Futurama.
13. **If there were one place in the world you could live where would it be?** Valencia or Mallorca, Spain.
Second choice: Italy.



Ms. Amy Lingenfelter



Dear Sebbie:

What do I do when I feel like I am the only one who likes or wants something?

I believe this is quite a simple problem to solve since this is not much of a problem to start with. The problem is a matter of personal opinion and based on the fear of how others might react towards your desires.

In this situation, you must think to yourself what you truly like and desire and what makes you happy. If you are the only person interested in whatever the thing is and you feel embarrassed about telling others, then just keep it to yourself. There is no problem in doing something you enjoy; if others are annoyed by it, you simply don't have to share it with anybody. It's not bothering anybody and only you are seeing it. If you're talking about following trends and nobody wants to follow the one you are interested in, then I have to say that you should simply do whatever pleases you. Try not to feel too embarrassed in showing the things you like.

Something I would like to say is try to feel more secure about the things you like and desire. Try not to let peer pressure consume you too much, because if that's the case you'll find yourself doing things you do not enjoy. Surely your friends will understand your desires; if not, then don't mind them, or try to talk to them about the things you like and help them to understand the reason.

For example, liking a type of music genre that the majority of the population doesn't follow can be seen in many culture and societies. You identifying with a band that others just find appalling can happen anywhere. I personally have a few friends like that; however, they simply enjoy their own music and stop listening to what others say about it.

My advice is simple: Understand who you really are and what you enjoy doing. If people truly support you as friends they'll understand your feelings. In the end, what other people think towards you does not matter: what matters is your own opinion towards yourself. After all, nobody can fill in your shoes.

