

## STUDENT STORIES

# ADAPTING TO A NEW CULTURE

By Leticia Usberti Elias, Sofia Labarca, Paula Rojas

### How international students handle culture shock

One of the things that we believe almost all international students can agree on is that none of us were expecting that living in the United States would be so different from where we grew up. Apart from having to learn how to be an 'adult' and a 'college student,' we also had to learn how to adapt to and overcome certain situations in a different country and culture.

Our first culture shock experience happened very early on at Bentley. As Latin Americans, in our culture, we associate 'dinner time' with not only literally sitting down and eating food, but also with a sense of unity and a feeling of home and family. Although we know that this exists here in the United States, we have felt that the whole concept of 'dinner time' is a bit different from what we had perceived, especially because of the time at which people eat. We have a hard

time getting used to the idea of eating dinner at 5pm, especially during orientation week when we joined our American friends for early dinners. By 9pm, we were already starving again. Eventually, and fortunately, we learned how to trick the system. Now, we wait to arrive to the dining hall until around 7 PM, get all the food we want to eat, and then we just stay there eating and talking about life. If we are ever lost in the dining hall and need to find the 'Latino table,' all we have to do



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# 5 TIPS FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

By Celia Schurman

Advice from a first-year student



Adjusting to life at Bentley, and college in general, can be a difficult task. With a different living situation, brand new school, and hitting the social reset button, the transition process can be extremely taxing. Maybe you're finding it difficult to make friends, challenging to juggle classes and clubs, or maybe you just really want to be back in your own bed back home. However you're experiencing this change, remember that you are not alone and that there are tools available to help you through this process. Here are five tips for making the transition go smoothly and for taking care of yourself in this exciting period of change.

**1. Take a little extra time to make your dorm room feel more like home.** One of the most difficult changes for freshmen is getting accustomed to living with a roommate in a tiny dorm. One way to adjust to this is to put some effort into your space to make it feel more comfort-

able. During a time where you don't have class or any pressing obligations, dedicate some time to show your room some love. Clean up your space and organize your belongings and clothes. Put up some decorations, make your bed, and do (and fold!) your laundry. While your dorm may never feel perfect compared to back home, taking the time to make your space feel more inviting for yourself can help you feel more comfortable on campus.

**2. Be honest and talk freely with your family, but don't go home every weekend.** For some, being far away from family for a long period of time can be extremely difficult. Set a time or schedule to make phone calls, or text them updates on how you're doing periodically. If you are really suffering on campus and need to get away, be honest with your parents and tell them that you think it would be beneficial for you to go home for a weekend, if that's a possibility. How-

ever, remember that you're only really going to feel at home on campus if you spend more time getting acclimated. Don't run from the issue; feel free to visit your family or have them visit you if homesickness is holding you back. Just remember that this is the time to push yourself outside of your comfort zone. If you're unable to go home or don't want to miss out being on campus, set up video calling through FaceTime or Skype and agree to chat at least twice a week. And if you are really struggling, be open with your parents about the situation. Sometimes talking to a loved one is all you really need to begin feeling better.

**3. Stay active and healthy.** This one is surely easier said than done, especially when sometimes it feels like your best dinner option in the dining hall is the soft serve machine, but staying healthy will help you feel better both physically and mentally. Try choosing some healthier meal options, and if need be, limit dessert to only a few times a week. For exercise, the late afternoon is a great time to work out because you're awake from all your classes, most people have down-time, and it's before dinnertime. And if you're like me and the idea of going to the fitness center is too daunting, there are lots of other



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## STUDENT STORIES

# JOINING THE TEAM By Grace Bennett

How playing tennis at Bentley helped me find my new home

If you had told me on the first day I picked up a racquet that I would be playing tennis in college, I most likely would have laughed directly in your face. I was always the typical fifth grade girl who would fake a stomachache so that I could get out of gym class and read a book in the nurse's office instead. To this day, I still find most sports about as interesting as my forty-five-year-old aunt's Facebook posts (in her defense, her recipe for pumpkin bread is very popular among the other suburban moms, so maybe I shouldn't be so quick to criticize). I won't sugarcoat it – becoming a competitive tennis player wasn't easy. Adapting to a new sport took time and perseverance. In a similar sense, joining a new team and starting classes at Bentley will have its fair share of challenges, but I know that with adequate practice I will be able to

come out on top in my most important match yet.

I was always the typical fifth grade girl who would fake a stomachache so that I could get out of gym class and read a book in the nurse's office instead. To this day, I still find most sports about as interesting as my forty-five-year-old aunt's Facebook posts (in her defense, her recipe for pumpkin bread is very popular among the other suburban moms, so maybe I shouldn't be so quick to criticize). I won't sugarcoat it – becoming a competitive tennis player wasn't easy. Adapting to a new sport took time and perseverance. In a similar sense, joining a new team and starting classes at Bentley will have its fair share of challenges, but I know that with adequate practice I will be able to come out on top in my most important match yet.

Love, fifteen, thirty, forty... the scoring in tennis is downright bizarre. But for all tennis players, this is our language; it is literally how we communicate exclusively among ourselves (when we are not swearing at each other over crappy line calls). The idea of joining a new team after four perfect, comfortable years on my high school tennis team was daunting, to say the least. Luckily, all that unease instantly drifted away the moment my first practice started. It's like when the pressure to win a match disappears after you take the first set 6-0. The girls on the team and the coach are, to put it simply, some of the kindest people I have ever met. I believe that we get along so well as a team because we know that we are a part of something greater than our individual goals and accomplishments. This symbiosis, our sense of mutual depen-



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## ADAPTING TO A NEW CULTURE *(Continued from page 1)*

is listen for the loudest table in the cafeteria, where we scream instead of talk and use our hands excessively to communicate. By 7:50 PM, you will also probably see us frantically running to fill our ice cream cones before the cafeteria closes its doors. Despite what you may think, this hectic rush is what reminds us of home, even when we are so far away from ours.

From a young age, we were taught to greet others with a kiss on the cheek, a hug, and maybe even a handshake if necessary. We quickly realized that our form of greeting one another was not going to work out very well here. Sometimes we even had people tell us that they were not “interested in us in a romantic way” because of the way we intended to greet them. Thankfully, the original and fun icebreakers during orientation week exposed us to this

different reality. We soon realized that in the United States, the farther away you are when greeting someone, the better. You see, the first time any of us had to greet someone, we did not know this, since our natural instinct is to lean in for a kiss on the cheek or a hug. Now, we are suddenly cut cold by a “firm handshake,” as Bentley faculty call it, or a simple wave and nod. We understand that in this professional environment, this is the norm, and we have gotten used to it, but it was and sometimes still continues to be an awkward situation that we have had to grow accustomed to.

A month has already gone by, and all we can say is that our first month of ‘adulting’ has been both interesting and exciting. We all remember our first trips to the supermarket and how amazing it was to see products that

do not exist back home. Our excitement could not be contained, so naturally a lot of screaming and jumping was our response. Our long rides to Boston have gotten a lot better. We can all confidently say that we know how to get to Harvard Square thanks to Google Maps, even though our first experience with public transport involved us having to come back to campus from the Waverly Express stop to get our Charlie Cards. To some degree, we now feel like Bostonians. In hindsight, all of these experiences have only brought us closer together and to our community, as we have learned to support one another. Our love for Bentley and its community has only grown since the minute we arrived on campus, and we cannot wait to see what new experiences we will have to adapt to over the upcoming years.

## 5 TIPS FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO COLLEGE *(Continued from page 2)*

ways to get some activity. The town area around Bentley is very walker and runner friendly, with sidewalks and good lighting so it’s a safe option. You can even go around campus if you don’t feel comfortable leaving. And let’s be honest, is there any better workout than the Smith and Adamian stairs? Put in the effort to take care of yourself physically and your mind and body will thank you for it.

**4. Join a club just for the fun of it.** Sure, we all want to join various clubs for professional education and networking. However, it’s important to not lose sight of personal interests. If you’re looking to make friends or just develop a hobby, join a club that’s more focused on having fun. For instance, you can devote a lot of energy to the Bentley Investment Group to further your financial knowledge, and you can also join the BEAR Outdoors Club for some fun experi-

ences with other students interesting in hiking and kayaking. College is about working hard and having fun, so feel encouraged to pursue non-academic interests. It’s proven that feeling good in your personal life will help you become better in your professional life, so don’t be afraid to be well-rounded and pursue your passions.

**5. Take some time for yourself.** For most people, living with a roommate is a new experience. Whether you and your roommate(s) are best friends or not, it’s likely that you don’t receive much alone time. Maybe you’ve never even eaten a meal alone! Whatever your situation is, it’s important to take some time for yourself. If you know you have your room alone for a bit of time, make a date with yourself to relax, watch some Netflix, and decompress. If you’re truly unable to have the room to yourself, go for a

walk or find a secluded study place to be alone. Sometimes it can feel like you’re constantly surrounded by people, so it’s always a good idea to work in some alone time into your schedule. It will improve your mental clarity and can bring some much-needed peace.

No matter how you’re handling the transition to Bentley, make it a priority to take care of yourself and reach out for help if you need it. Campus resources like the counseling center are always available if you need help, and there are lots of people who can listen or guide you. Remember that we’re in this together, and you can always find friends to make your struggles feel a little less cumbersome. Campus will begin to feel like home more and more each day, so give it time and don’t sweat the small stuff. Take care of yourself, work hard, and live well.

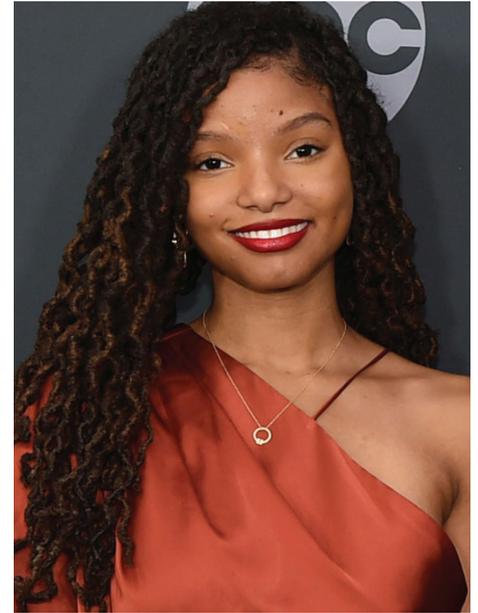
# A PROBLEM UNDER THE SEA By Caroline Choi

## The (re)makes of Disney characters

Disney has become obsessed with recreating classic Disney films into live-action movies. Just this summer, Disney released live-action remakes of *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*, two classic Disney tales that were extremely well-received when they first premiered as animated movies. Currently, Jasmine is the fourth Disney Princess to be reimagined, a fate awaiting the rest of the Princesses in the franchise. In fact, Disney announced earlier this year that live-action remakes for *Mulan*, *The Little Mermaid*, and a sequel to *Maleficent* are in the works.

Unfortunately, Disney's live-action remakes haven't been well-received by the general public. This is mostly due to the remakes' inability to meet viewers' expectations that derive from the animated original, a consequence commonly referred to as the nostalgia effect. When *The Lion King* remake was released, it was met with a lot of criticism due to the extreme authenticity of the animals – viewers claimed that emotions were hardly recognizable in the animals because they looked too realistic. However, a majority of Disney's remakes have involved human casts rather than CGI animals. And for such remakes, Disney faces potential casting issues.

Remakes like *Beauty and the Beast*, *Maleficent*, and *Mulan* are movies that depend on human casting. For these movies, Disney found it critical to cast actors and actresses that "accurately portrayed" the characters they were given. However, the criteria for accurate portrayal was never clearly defined, with many simply assuming that physical appearance, including race, was the deciding factor of whether someone was cast or not. This assumption was thrown



into the air when Disney announced this summer that Halle Bailey, an African American actress, was cast to play Ariel in the upcoming live-action remake of *The Little Mermaid*.

This is the first time that Disney has cast a woman of color to portray the role of a traditionally white princess, a choice that received an immense amount of criticism. Many fans were extremely upset about this decision, going on social media to direct racist comments to Bailey about how they felt that the casting was a serious mistake. However, there were many supporters that came to protect Disney's decision, arguing that the most important part of *The Little Mermaid* was its message, something that didn't change because the race of the main character had been altered. Prompted by the extreme backlash, Rob Marshall, the director of *The Little Mermaid* live-action remake, gave some insight as to what the criteria for accurate portrayal meant, stating that Bailey "possesses that rare combination of spirit, heart, youth, innocence,

and substance – plus a glorious singing voice – all intrinsic qualities necessary to play this iconic role" (Yasharoff). In short, Bailey had the perfect amount of talent and personality to accurately portray Ariel.

However, this incident calls into question how important it actually is to cast someone who physically appears similar to the original animated character that they are portraying. Currently, Disney has cast Liu Yifei, a Chinese-American actress, to portray *Mulan*. Before the casting announcement, many were quick to state that if the actress portraying *Mulan* in the live-action remake was not Asian, Disney would face dire consequences and retaliation from the general public because such an act would be deemed inappropriate and unacceptable. But what sets apart *Mulan* from *The Little Mermaid*? Most will argue that it's because culture and race are crucial and essential for the story in *Mulan*; without it, the movie would not be what it is today. The Disney Princess movies such as *Mulan*, *Pocahontas*, and *Aladdin* were

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# UNDERSTANDING THE U.S. IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

By Debayan Sen

The complex process of coming to America

Over six months ago, the government shutdown occurred as a result of a stalemate in Congress concerning border wall funding, which in turn led to thousands of federal workers losing pay for over two months. Immigration has been a cornerstone of America's growth, and every year more people come into the country for the prospect of a better life. The Trump administration used immigration as a focal point to win the election back in 2016. Now, we are seeing the term "immigration crisis" being frequently thrown around. But what exactly does the United States immigration system constitute? Immigration is much more than refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented immigrants. How does someone who wants to live in the United States do so? This ques-

tion burns in many immigrants' minds as they must navigate our intricate system of immigration.

Imagine you are an immigrant coming from another country. Obviously, coming to the United States requires a "visa", but what does that exactly mean? There are four ways for immigrants to legally enter the United States: immigrant visas, nonimmigrant visas, refugee, and adjustment of status. The Immigration Nationality Act (INA) has different quotas set for all of these forms of immigration.

Immigrant visas are split into three categories, the first of which is family-based immigration. This sets a cap on the number of immigrants that are spouses, adult children, brothers, and sisters of immigrants living in the

United States. The second category is employment-based immigration, which brings in workers who will economically benefit the United States. For example, EB-3 visas bring in skilled workers and professionals. The last category is diversity visas, which is a lottery program that immigrants get selected from to enter the country.

Nonimmigrant visas are given to people who will work for a temporary period of time. They are not given legal permanent residence (often referred to as LPR) and these persons need to prove they have no intent to stay. There are many types of nonimmigrant visas, ranging from H1-B's, which are for specialty occupations, to B-1 visas, which are for athletes, and F-1 visas for students.



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## JOINING THE TEAM *(Continued from page 3)*

dence, united our team before the first yellow-green ball even cleared one of the nets. It created my new family.

Perhaps more important than tennis (if it's even possible for something to be *more important*) is my new role as a student at Bentley University. Becoming a Falcon is a little bit more involved than your typical three sets of smacking a fuzzy ball at some-

one. As a tennis player, your position is assigned: you play in the singles lineup, the doubles, or both. But my role at Bentley is undefined, with lots of room to develop as I go through my experience here.

Just like joining a new team was an adjustment, transitioning to a new school has been as well. Much like there is a sense of unity among the

women's tennis players, Bentley students must stick together and support each other. When I arrived at Bentley, I knew I was joining a sports team. But, in a larger sense, I am becoming a member of an even bigger team as well, and I can't wait to find out what being a Falcon means for me.

## A PROBLEM UNDER THE SEA *(Continued from page 5)*

created to represent different cultures, ethnicities, and races, and to shed light on these communities.

It should also be noted that for such movies, the princess is a person of color. In fact, most of the supporting characters in these movies are also people of color. Take for instance the title character of *Moana* or Tiana from *The Princess and the Frog* – both protagonists are people of color,

and most of the supporting characters are also people of color. Disney creates these animated films and casts racially accurate individuals for live-action remakes because they want to create representation and relatability.

Many generations, especially young children, look up to Disney princesses and view them as role models. However, many are unable to relate to

them because they don't physically look like the princesses depicted, be it because they have different hair, different facial features, different body structures, or a different skin color. Disney's decision to cast Halle Bailey was an attempt to create even more representation and relatability; to show people that anyone can be any Disney princess regardless of how they look.

## UNDERSTANDING THE U.S. IMMIGRATION SYSTEM *(Continued from page 6)*

What about refugees? Refugees are defined as a person outside their home country who is unwilling to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution based upon either race, religion, nationality, group membership, or political opinion. We see this all across the media headlines, such as the Syrian refugee crisis. There are refugees across the globe fleeing violence from countries such as Myanmar, South Sudan, Yemen, and more.

In addition to certain caps and classifications of visas, there are overall restrictions on immigration. There are two types of restrictions on immigration: qualitative restrictions and quantitative restrictions. The former refers to certain grounds of inadmissibility, which determine eligibility to enter the United States. This can include immigrants who have criminal

charges, public charges, and physical or mental illnesses. The latter sets caps on certain types of visas. For example, the INA states that no single country may account for more than 7% of the total number of immigrants in any given year.

This has important implications for how the Trump administration is tackling immigration right now. One such change is the public charge rule, in which LPR's are being denied access to cash welfare for the first five years of residence. There was also the Travel Ban, which restricted travel from Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen. Finally, the Trump administration has implemented a zero tolerance policy that subjects everyone crossing the border illegally to criminal prosecution.

All of the above concerns legal immigration within the United States; however, the most contentious issue is that of undocumented immigrants. In recent years, there have been increased ICE raids in order to deport immigrants from the country. This has brought rallying cries to create a Pathway to Citizenship and promote DACA and the Dreamer act. How immigrants will be granted citizenship is a complex question that politicians are still attempting to answer. Understanding our immigration system is the first step in creating an informed opinion about how immigration should function in our country in order to come up with viable solutions for the many problems faced by immigrants today.

## CURRENT EVENTS

# CURBING GUN VIOLENCE THROUGH CORPORATE POLICY *By Emily Danielian*

Jordan and Andre Anchondo were shopping for school supplies for their five-year-old daughter; with them, they carried their infant son. Their shopping was interrupted when a gunman carrying an AK-47 opened fire on shoppers. Jordan jumped in front of her son and Andre ran in front of Jordan to protect her. Moments later, their son was left parentless, and the gunman continued his massacre.

This is just one of the stories that occurred in August of this year, when a 21-year-old gunman wearing a “stone-cold look” terrorized an El Paso Walmart, taking 22 lives and injuring dozens.

A month after the tragedy, Walmart, the nation’s largest retailer, discontinued its sale of assault rifle and handgun ammunition. It took this step as a deliberate attempt to promote gun reform and call for attention from Washington.

Just days after Walmart’s ban, one of the nation’s largest supermarket chains, Kroger, followed in Walmart’s steps by enforcing a “no open carry” policy in their stores.

Through these actions, these retailers have created momentum. Increasing numbers of private corporations are releasing statements on where they stand in the gun debate – and it’s having an impact. American businesses are pushing the bounds of what their responsibilities are. Through an organized attempt, these corporations could drastically change the nature of the gun market for the protection and benefit of the people.

After the shooting, Walmart’s CEO, Doug McMillon, was the target of an

open letter asking him to take a stand on gun violence in America. The letter argued that in light of what happened, Walmart is in a position where they have leverage over what happens next. This letter encouraged Walmart to use this leverage, and eventually, it did.

Walmart has released a statement instating new rules and regulations surrounding its production and sale of guns. Arguably the most notable among these regulations was one stating that the company would cease the sale of ammunition for handguns and assault rifles. Before the ban, Walmart was estimated to provide 20% of all ammunition in the bullet market; now this number is expected to drop to 6-9% after the change. On top of this, Walmart called for lawmakers to reconsider an assault weapon ban. It also called for the

government to continue funding and discussing gun control.

On a similar note, major grocery retailer Kroger asked its customers to stop openly carrying firearms in their stores. Kroger also advocated strengthening laws around background checks to take weapons from people who may be at risk of causing violence.

Even though these changes are impactful, bans like these are nothing new. After the Parkland mass shooting in February of 2018, many Dick’s Sporting Goods stores stopped selling automatic weapons. Other companies, including banks like Citigroup and Bank of America, have stopped financing gun manufacturers. Goldman Sachs was about to take a similar step until the SEC threatened to withdraw aid if the company makes this change. Change has been made



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## CURBING GUN VIOLENCE THROUGH CORPORATE POLICY *(Continued from page 8)*

in the past because of mass shootings, but over time, that change dies down and, essentially, everything goes back to what it once was.

However, to cause indefinite change, we must reconsider who affects the gun market. The scope of who impacts this market moves beyond those directly tied to it. *New York Times* journalist Andrew Sorkin describes an entire neglected “ecosystem” that enables the gun market. This ecosystem consists of privately-owned suppliers, distributors, credit card companies, and banks that are all fueling the market. However, most of them refuse to consider that they are feeding the gun industry. No one is willing to take accountability; no party wants to consider that their actions are indirectly enabling mass shootings. Yet, time and time again, cases arise where a shooting could have been prevented by one or more of these parties. For example, the most recent mass shootings have been financed by credit cards. Meaning that the shooters could not have afforded the guns if not for the credit cards.

There are processes in place to combat internet abuses for illegal or violent activity. For example, we have intricate and fortified systems for tracking potential drug markets. To prevent domestic terrorism, we established Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act which allows the government to hand over any “tangible thing,” even if remotely deemed relevant to terrorism. So, the question arises, why don’t we have this system in place for the purchase of guns if it might reduce the number of mass shootings? The answer is largely political. Supporters of the NRA believe that any surveillance of gun sales through credit card companies or banks is “chilling to anyone who cherishes their privacy.” Other parties believe that this sort of monitoring is largely what could prevent mass shootings from occurring. These polarized parties are at a political deadlock that’s stopping any progress. This is where it becomes important for corporations to act.

Corporations have a moral and ethical responsibility to act when faced with challenges such as these. Companies decide the product they produce, who

they sell to, and who they invest in, among other things. They are active with the parties involved with their business, so many argue that they should not be inactive when the time comes to take a stand on gun violence. In an ideal world, the government would have acted to attempt to fix this, but unfortunately, not much is being done, and the problem persists.

Unfortunately, these bans are not a one-and-done solution, and there’s still a lot left to consider. To what extent companies should have a say in this debate, if at all, and how much action they should take to prevent these incidents is up to interpretation. However, one thing is clear: our nation is facing an epidemic and something must be done. If the government and our courts are not changing anything, the responsibility of the people and private corporations to act becomes more prevalent. These are human issues that we are facing, and there is no excuse to disregard and deny the problem at hand.



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