

PODCAST 1: VANESSA

Vanessa: Hi, um, I'm Vanessa , I'm from China

Kailey: What part of China?

Vanessa: Uh, Hainan, it's a island. Uh...

*laughter

Karen: Okay, I guess I could ask the first question that we have for you. What made you decide to study abroad?

Vanessa: Uh, my parents sent me, so...

Kailey: Yeah?

Vanessa: Yeah, I study at Singapore before and then I transfer to here.

Karen: Is there anything that, like, specifically made you want to come study here at Western?

Vanessa: Uh, it's just a personal preference here, and then I am a transfer student, I transfer from Whatcom Community College

Kailey: What was one of the driving factors for you to study abroad?

Karen: Was it, like, mainly your parents that wanted you to study abroad or did you also find interest in wanting to study abroad?

Vanessa: Yeah, uh, my parents want me to study abroad because they want me to learn English and they say English is, uh, important and then I can find a better job with English

Sunny: Do you like Bellingham?

Vanessa: Um, yeah, I mean it's safe

*murmurs of agreement

Vanessa: I like big city but, I mean, here is cheaper. Cheaper and safe.

Kailey: yeah

Vanessa: Yeah, that's why I love Bellingham.

Gabriel: What's one thing that you don't like about Western?

Vanessa: Uh, it's boring

*laughter

Gabriel: It's boring? How so? How so?

Vanessa: Bellingham's boring and, and I, I don't own a car so...

*overlapping comments of agreement

Kailey: Get a car guys!

Karen: Transit's pretty hard

Gabriel: Do you use the transit system?

Vanessa: Bus

*general agreement

Kailey: How has that worked out for you? Have you gotten off campus a little bit at least?

Vanessa: Yeah, um, yeah because I live in downtown so it only takes twenty minutes to get to the campus, so...

Kailey: So what would you do for fun back home?

Vanessa: I watch a lot of movie and drama

Kailey: Yeah?

Vanessa: I cook, uh, I like cooking

Kailey: Oh cool, what's a food that you've eaten at home that we probably wouldn't know about living here?

Vanessa: Uh, Chinese food?

Kailey: Yeah, like is there anything specific?

Vanessa: Yeah there's a lot, I mean...

Sunny: hong shao rou!

*laughter

Gabriel: So what's that dish?

Vanessa: it's, uh, fried pork

Gabriel: Oh nice, okay

Vanessa: Uh, with oyster sauce, soy sauce, sugar, uh, yeah

Kailey: You've had this before too, Sunny?

Sunny: I always cook

*laughter

Kailey: were there any hard transitions for you coming to Western, or being an exchange student, or to Bellingham?

Vanessa: at first, I think the language mostly, and then the culture.

Kailey: What was one of the biggest differences that you saw?

Vanessa: Uh, like when I walk along the street and strangers like to say hi to me, that's very different from China. At first I feel weird.

Kailey: At first you felt weird? Have you gotten, has that changed for you at all?

Vanessa: Mmhm, Yeah it's, uh, changed

Karen: How would say, like, finding resources is on campus? Like, is it easy, do you know, like, do you know what's offered here on campus for you?

Vanessa: No it's not easy

Karen: Not easy?

Gabriel: Like what?

Vanessa: Because, back to when I was at Whatcom Community College I have my own ed adviser and there's a international office and when I have problem I always go to the office

Gabriel: Okay

Vanessa: So, I know who to contact

Gabriel: But here, you don't

Vanessa: But here, I don't... there is a international office but

Gabriel: right, but you don't use that?

Vanessa: I don't use it, I just use that for my visa

Karen: I can understand it's hard 'cause, like, even when I need to find things I have to go to a different websites

*general agreement

Karen: I got to go to different people

Gabriel: If only there was a website that had all the resources that one would need, would, would be really helpful for you

Vanessa: Probably the tutor, tutor center

Kailey & Gabriel: Tutoring center?

Gabriel: Yeah I have a link, okay

Kailey: What advice do you have for anybody who wants to go abroad and study another language or just study abroad?

Vanessa: Maybe, uh, learn the language first

Gabriel: Did Western help you out at all, uh, before you transitioned here to the states?

Vanessa: No

Gabriel: No? No

Kailey: When you first got here, was there anybody who, like, took you on a tour or...

Vanessa: Yeah, uh, orientations

Gabriel: okay

Vanessa: yeah

Gabriel and Kailey: You didn't have an orientation?

Vanessa: I have a orientation

Gabriel: and then after that did they ever try to contact you again and support you or check ups or anything, or

Sunny: I think the international office always sends

Gabriel: international office sends a bunch of emails to

Sunny: always sending emails

Gabriel: always, always they're sending emails! Do you find those helpful at all?

Vanessa: *laughing* I don't know about those emails

Gabriel: if you don't know about the emails, then that's, that's good, yeah. Okay thank you so much for your time. You're awesome. Everybody clap, except for Sunny

*laughter

Kailey: Thank you