

*On June 17th, in the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel on Magnificent Mile, the East/West University Class of 2023 had their Graduation Ceremony. Congratulations to all of you! What follows is excerpts from Christian Lopez's Valedictorian Speech, as well as some words from other graduates.*

## Christian Lopez

### Valedictorian of the Class of 2023

#### Major in Electronics Engineering

"Good morning to all distinguished guests, the chancellor, provost, convocation speaker, alumni speaker, faculty, staff, and fellow graduates, including the beautiful weather allowing us to have a wonderful graduation ceremony. On behalf of my fellow graduates, I'd like to thank you all for being with us today. As I look back at the past four years, I'm amazed at how fast they flew by. We've taken hundreds of tests, done presentations, and group projects where the hardest part was coordinating the schedules of four people...

I'd like to thank all the professors that helped us get to this point, who never gave up on us, and kept pushing us to be better. First off, I would like to thank the faculty in the electronics engineering department, and especially Professor Mirmira for being strict in all the courses he has taught. In spite of his strict approach and making us build state of the art circuits, he has bent himself backwards to motivate us to complete all the requirements needed to graduate. In spite of his own busy schedule, he was available after class hours to do extra work on Zoom on a regular basis. In spite of his rules, we are now ready to face the world.

Furthermore, I would also like to thank my computer science teachers, Dr. Julie and Dr. Injoo. Although my degree is in electronics engineering, they sparked my interest in computer science. Professor Mirmira gave us a clear picture of why computer science goes hand-in-hand with the field of electronics. Both of these are very lucrative areas, with new jobs being created as new technologies arise. For example, you can become a firmware engineer, which is a role that combines the knowledge of both electronics and computer science.

Next, I would also like to thank Dr. Polski in the English department for motivating us and constantly believing that we can achieve anything when we put our minds towards it. Dr. Polski pushed her students to become better public speakers so that they can give speeches with confidence, like this one!

My love for electronics began at a young age. My parents love to tell the story of how



once at a party, they couldn't find me anywhere. Everyone stopped what they were doing to look for me. Little did they know, three-year-old Christian was behind the tv. I noticed that the back of the tv wasn't secured properly, and I was really curious what all those wires were for. As I grew up, this curiosity stayed with me. To answer your question, yes, I eventually found out exactly what all those wires were for. And yes, my favorite store is Best Buy...

Once again, I want to congratulate all of us for all the hard work we put in to get to this point. Although this chapter of our lives is ending, a new one begins once we walk out of these doors. Congratulations, Class of 2023!

## Words from Our Graduates

**Ayana Higgins:** Since I started my freshman year of college it has been a roller coaster because I was having some health issues and it brought me to attending three different schools. The reason I chose to attend East-West is because my mama attended this school years ago, but she couldn't finish due to health reasons. Now being the first generation to get my degree makes me feel like I am unstoppable because I've had many times when I wanted to give up on everything. Years ago women were treated as maids and they couldn't do the same work as men, but they worked their butts off to get them an education. The movie that best shows that is called *Hidden Figures* and when I watch that movie it brings tears to my eyes. I had to remember that I wasn't only doing this for myself, I was also doing it for my mother because she can't go back to school to finish. I've always lived by a motto -- "can't stop won't stop" -- and it has brought me this far to the point where I'm going to walk across that stage to receive my bachelor in Criminal Justice. I'm glad to announce that I will be attending Loyola University for my masters in social work/child's law and policy because I want to help kids.



**Berha Salman:** To be continued! That is what I want the title of this article to be, even though I graduated, which I am proud of myself for as it is such an achievement while being grateful for the immense support around me, I am certainly not done. A part of me knows what I want since I was a little girl, and the other part is confused because I feel like I am changing every day: not in a creepy mutation way but emotionally and psychologically. I am evolving so much every day that sometimes even I do not know what I am looking for.



I am from Pakistan, a developing country with strict cultural restrictions, especially for women, but that is the same worldwide. Being a girl with big dreams anywhere is a struggle, especially in a third-world country. I love my country, but life for women who wish to have a career is almost impossible. People do not have many financial resources, so parents usually save money for their daughter's marriage because of dowry, which is a tradition there, rather





than spending money on education. I was born a little lucky; my mother, who is a single parent, understood that women should be independent so they can support their family but, more importantly, themselves. Even though I have a supportive family back home and here in the United States, I still had to face my fair share of discrimination. I work hard to get good grades and now focus on my job because I want to build a career, but my education is still considered a hobby, not a necessity. Almost every day, I get asked when I am getting married and settling down since I turned twenty-three, and I am closer to my expiry date of being a desirable wife, which is common in all cultures. Quite, young, delicate, proper, and well-behaved is what a girl is expected to be, and now, since I have already failed these expectations, I do not mind being expired too.

I have big dreams and expectations from myself and I am ready to work hard for them hence my title "To Be Continued" because no way this is the end, my story has just started I can't wait to go back to school and build who I am, get my masters and eventually my Ph.D. I wish to publish my research and travel worldwide. As I have said, I know that my dreams are big but I heard somewhere "What if your dreams do not come true but what if they do?" Since that day I have always kept that in my mind and tried to live by it and I can't even explain how many opportunities I have received by just trying and asking for what I deserve.

**Yuliia Sokolova:** Greetings, I am Yuliia from the picturesque and glorious country of Ukraine, city of Kyiv. My academic journey in the US started two years ago, when I enrolled in the Faculty of Computer Science at the East-West University. These past two years have been paradoxical: so long, but they have gone by so quickly at the same time. I am grateful to the university for its support during the tremendous times, when the war came to my homeland. The faculty members were a pillar of strength, providing me with the necessary guidance and motivation to navigate through the challenges. I am now proud to be a graduate, having my second higher education here in the USA. To all the aspiring students, I urge you to challenge yourself, work hard, and embrace the learning process. The rewards are truly worth the effort! May fortune smile upon you, and may peace reign over the skies.



**Shawnice Scott:** They say be the narrator of your story, and for a long time I was just a spectator. I was adopted when I was almost 2yrs old and raised by my elderly parents in Roseland. I was a challenged child who worked hard and in high school peaked in academics and honors. I graduated high school at 17 and went straight to college and had to grow up instantly. When we're young we crave to be adults so badly until we become one. Life hit me hard sophomore year and I had to give up my dreams to take care of my elderly parents. As time went on, I lived my life for them and when their time to transition came, I realized that I had to start over and learn to live for me and take better care of myself. I had lost the only people who breathed value and love into me. I've been in my moments of allowing my depression and anxiety to win over my potential to be a better me. Grieving and healing is a journey that we all experience, understand that no one's journey is the same but it's necessary to evolve. I made the choice in 2020 after being in therapy and meeting my mentor Shana Jackson, that it's time to finish what I started. During a pandemic and working to



live, I enrolled back into school and worked harder and smarter. It was never easy, and I had moments where I felt defeated, but my support system of friends and East West faculty kept me going. After blood, sweat and tears here I am graduating at 33, a week before my 34th birthday. I have a job that not only helps me be financially stable, it's one that allows me to see the world. Life is a cycle of full circle moments, and I'm living in the moments. I'm sharing my story to remind you that there is no time frame to accomplish your goals, and especially to find happiness, love, and appreciation of self. When it's difficult, know that there is a victory around the corner.

A special thanks to Mr. Cooper, Dr. Carnes and Dr. Polski, you all reminded me to never let my light dim.

**Olena Yelschina:** When I started looking for universities to try myself in the new field – Computer Science – my friend suggested East-West University. I immediately liked the friendly students, the great location of the university and qualified professors. I found myself surrounded by fun, kindness and understanding. One of the best things that East-West gave me was my friend Yuliia, who I met on the first day of school. These two years past too quickly and I can say with confidence that it was a fun ride! I am graduating with a lot of new knowledge and skills. Thank you, East-West University!



**Mateo Watson:** EWU is a great school. So many smart and good people come through this school and achieve their best here. This school gave me a chance when I was messing up and allowed me to be the best I could be here. The teachers work with you individually and give you the attention you need.

In the year 2020, when everything had gone bad for almost every human living on the earth, I was not planning on going back to school because I just gave up on myself and was going to attend college. My cousin had just passed away and life was too hard for me. Dr. Polski sent me a message that said "Oh Mateo, I empathize so much. Of course, Practical financial needs are important. A lot of people take a long time to get through school

precisely because they need to worry about bills. This doesn't mean it's the end of your dream! You have the abilities of course as you know, and I'm sure you will find a way. East West is not going anywhere :-)) we'll be here for you when you come back and will support you academically and psychologically as much as we can." No teacher had ever done that for me before. East-West University does care about the student and watching their student succeed. Knowing that you get so much support from your advisor, they care about us, I feel like I would have never got this at any other college. It is about where you go and making the best of it. They say you only get one chance but at





East-West, you get as many until you complete your goal.

I was going to play football in Ohio but no scholarship could be given to me and I did not want to put my mom through that struggle of having to pay up on my bills, I chose East-West to continue and keep my dream alive about making out of struggle and being successful in life. When I was a freshman, we had to write what made us come to East-West. Spending time here at East-West taught me so much. I became patient and learned how to become the man I want to be. Through all my struggle this school has stood by me and accommodated me so I can have the chance to graduate and walk the stage.

Came here with a goal and East-West made sure I wasn't going to leave without completing it. Now I'm going to walk the stage and make my mother proud because of the support from East-West as a whole. Once I thought it was the biggest mistake I made, turned into the best decision I ever made for my future!

**Whittney Wright:** One thing that is important to me is to always believe in yourself and never give up on nothing. After ten years I finally finished college. This journey



was not easy, but I did it. I thought I would never see the day I would graduate from college. I wanted to give up so many times, but something in my heart kept telling me I could do it.

Another reason I kept going is because graduating from college was always one of my goals and I don't start nothing I can't finish. I also kept going because I didn't want to become a person who is bitter and miserable because I didn't go after my goals and dreams. I also

didn't want to regret not going after my goals and dreams. I met people who are literally bitter and angry because they didn't go after their goals and dreams. After meeting people like that, I always told myself that would never be me. I first started college in the fall of 2012, after I graduated from highschool.

The first college I attended was Harold Washington. I was trying to get my Associates Degree at the time. They told me it only took two years and I would finish in 2014, but it didn't happen that way. I didn't have a good experience at Harold Washington because my advisors kept giving me classes I didn't need instead of giving me the classes I did need. I didn't know the advisors were giving me classes I didn't need at first. I was basically taking those classes for nothing. Another problem I had was I kept failing Math. Math has always been my weakest subject. I have a learning disability, it kicks in when I'm doing Math. I don't learn certain things as fast as others. I kept getting bad teachers for Math. They were either moving too fast or I didn't understand them. I failed Math 98 three times. Every time I thought it would get better, it got worse. I explained to all my Math teachers that I have a learning disability and it happens when I'm trying to learn Math. But they didn't care. My Math teachers weren't very supportive. I went to Harold Washington for three and a half years and I was not getting closer to graduating. My advisor made it seem like I needed to take so many classes in order to graduate and I didn't need half of those classes. I left Harold Washington after the spring semester in 2016. I took a break from school.

I went to Malcolm X in the winter of 2017. I didn't have a good experience there either. I kept failing Math. The teachers at Malcolm X weren't supportive either. I also kept failing Biology and Physical Science. I went back in the fall of 2017. I took Math 98 for the fourth time and I decided to take Nutrition Biology since other students told me that was easier than the regular Biology, so I did, but that was an online class. I thought

I was going to finally pass Math 98 and Biology. But I didn't. My Math teacher got mad at me one day and acted like he wanted to fight me all because I asked him for help. I tried to report to the person that was in charge of the Math department, but she sided with him. She made it seem like I expected teachers to pass me because of my learning disability and that was not the case. I never tried to use my learning disability to get the easy way out, I just wanted teachers to understand I don't learn fast when it comes to Math, but she didn't care, so I dropped the class. I also dropped the Biology class: that teacher was also a bad teacher. I took another break from college.

In the spring of 2018, I went to Kennedy King. That was the best city college I went to. The teachers were more supportive. I finally passed Math, Biology, and Physical Science. I received my Associates degree in the fall of 2019. I was so happy because I had finally accomplished something I had been trying to accomplish for a long time.

After I received my Associates degree, I came to East-West University in the spring of 2021. I had a wonderful experience at East-West. The teachers were more helpful and supportive. I didn't fail any classes at East-West. All the teachers I had were great. They weren't just supportive when it came to school. They were supportive in other ways too.

For example, one of my criminal justice teachers Dr. Haynes helped me get through my last semester. I lost my nephew in March of this year, due to gun violence. She was so supportive. If it wasn't for her, I would have not got through my last semester. Another teacher that supported me was Dr. Polski. Any time I was struggling with school work, she always made time to help me. She would even stay after school with me at times to help me with homework. She is also the reason I graduated. They were saying I didn't have enough credits to graduate. She found out that wasn't true and I was able to graduate. She also gave me an internship so I can get all my credits. She is one of my favorite teachers at East-West. She is like my fairy godmother. She solved all my problems I had at East-West. I went to three schools before I came to East-West. East-West is the best college I went to. It's only been three days since I graduated and I already miss being at school and I miss Dr. Polski.

If I could go back in time I would have gone to East-West when I first started college. Even though it took me ten years to graduate from college, the journey was definitely worth it. With that being said: always believe in yourself and never give up. If I can do it, anybody can do it.

**Natalie Zavala:** I transferred to East-West University from Harold Washington College back in April of 2021. I remember being nervous and scared to start at a new school. Thankfully, I



was able to go about the whole school easily without getting lost. There are also lots of friendly people and professors to help you out. My time at East-West felt like a blink of an eye. I remember being frustrated and feeling overwhelmed sometimes, but thankfully I had a group of friends that helped me get through it. My professors were also very helpful and understanding. They always made sure that their students were passing and understanding the material. If you are feeling overwhelmed, however, do not hesitate to go to the third floor on the west building and talk to the counselors there. If I could give the freshman advice it would be to enjoy your time at East West and get involved! Join clubs and sports teams, meet new people, and network with them. If there is a sport or club you would like to join, but they don't have it, talk to professors about creating a club or a sports team. Make the most out of your college experience and don't give up. It won't be easy, but it will be worth it! Good luck and see you at the top.



## Academic Advisor Interviews

### Meet Professor Reginald Lomax!

by Diya Chaudhari, Dario Biaggi, and Joshua McNair

“When students come to me, it’s not just about academic planning,” Mr. Lomax began. “It’s about understanding their dreams and aspirations, and helping them navigate the challenges along the way. I see myself as a partner in their journey, supporting and empowering them to achieve their goals.”

Professor Lomax was born and brought up in Chicago, Illinois, and was schooled through high school there. His family and friends are also from the same place. Even though he was very connected to his birthplace, he moved to different parts of the U.S. to pursue better opportunities. Before becoming a professor at East-West, Mr. Lomax also taught at multiple different city colleges, including Malcolm X and Kennedy King. He also taught at Roosevelt University, his alma mater, and Prairie State Community College. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in business administration, and then with a masters degree in business administration with a concentration on management and finance.

When he talks about his opinion of our university, he says he loves the location in downtown Chicago. He also says that this is a very diverse university with lots of international students and all kinds of cultures. He is learning a lot about the different cultures, and especially likes the way international students spend their time, and help each other as a family.

Mr. Lomax’s commitment to stu-

dents was unwavering. “I want them to know that their dreams matter,” he said. “I strive to provide a holistic approach to their education. It’s about preparing them not just for a job but for a fulfilling life beyond university.” In addition to being an instructor and a business owner, Mr. Lomax’s favorite hobbies include cooking, listening to music, entertaining and spending time



with his friends and family. His favorite food has always been soul food because it was a family tradition in his family to cook family meals every Sunday and their go to was soul food. “In my free time I like to read, mostly about history, cooking and obviously, love the fall. It’s not too cold and the leaves look all nice outside. Currently, I am reading the 1619 Project (by Nikole Hannah-Jones). It analyzes and investigates the origins of the slave trade in the United States, and how it has shaped what the country would become.”

As our conversation neared its end, Mr. Lomax shared his belief in the power of resilience and triumph. “I’ve seen students overcome tremendous challenges and obstacles,” he said with pride. “These experiences shape them, make them stronger, and contribute to his success. It’s about instilling that fighting spirit and empowering them to persevere.”

### Meet Dr. Injoo Kim! by Srushtiben Chaudhari

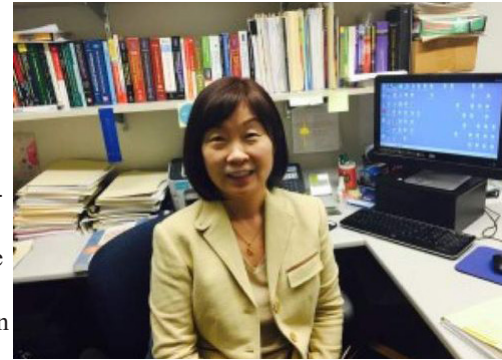
Dr. Injoo Kim. I have heard this name since I joined this college. But I never got an opportunity to meet her and talk with her. After a while, I got an assignment from my Speech Class to interview my academic advisor, who is Dr. Injoo Kim. So, I made an appointment with her for an interview on November 28th.

Dr. Kim was born and raised in South Korea. After finishing high school, she moved to the USA with her family in 1980. She attended IIT in Chicago, where she earned her PhD in Information Technology. She got a job at Samsung Electronics in Korea, and after working there for a few years, she returned to the United States. When I asked her why she left the job with such a good company to come back to the US, she replied that her daughter was only 2 years old, and she wanted to be with her daughter. After coming to the USA, she applied to East-West University.

Dr. Kim joined the East-West University in 1998. She is a professor and academic advisor, and Director of the Computer Science Program. She is teaching CIS 101, CIS 221, CIS 246, and CIS 492. With 24 years of teaching experience, Dr. Kim is very talented in her field. In regard to the university, she told me that East-West is always challenging students to move toward success. She told me that you find the best professors and teachers at this university.

Dr. Kim also talked about her personal life, what she likes to do, and how she spends her free time. She told me that she loves to watch movies. She likes action and science fiction movies. She prefers to watch movies with her family. She also likes to read

books. She is a morning person who likes to wake up early in the morning. She said your brain is 100% active in the morning. Her favorite season is fall.



I spent almost a half hour with Dr. Kim and it was a great time. I learned lots of things from her and it was a good academic meeting. I got so much information about the university and about my major. I am very thankful for that. And thank you to Dr. Adams, who arranged this wonderful assignment.

### Meet Dr. Maria Polski! by Cynthia Medina

I had the opportunity to speak and get to know Dr. Polski. Maria Vladimirovna Polski is my advisor. Dr. Polski was born in Russia, but went back and forth from Russia and Ukraine. Dr. Polski is married with three children -- 22-year-old twin sons and a 19-year-old daughter. I asked Dr. Polski what drew her to work at East-West University. “It was a happy accident. I had just immigrated from Russia, and there was an opening and I needed a job and money, so I took it. I did not realize that it was such a great choice!” Dr. Polski has been working at East-West for 21 years. She has a PhD in Linguistics and a Masters Degree in

English and Linguistics. She has had a passion for teaching since she was a young child when she told her parents what she was going to be when she grew up.

East-West changed Dr. Polski by making her open-minded and open to more human diversity and background. When asked about her role model, Dr. Polski said she didn’t really have one at the time, but sees in retrospect how her grandmothers and mother inspired her. She hopes that she is like them but in a different way. When asked what two words Dr. Polski thinks people will use to describe her, she said “bossy and dominating”. She said bossy because she tells people what to do and it has to be done in a specific time and way.

When watching Dr. Polski teach her class, I noticed that she helps every one of her students on an individual basis.

After talking with Dr. Polski, I noticed that she talks about East-West not as a job, but as a place she can be herself, like a home to her with her family. She has a joyful personality that makes the room she is in light up and be cheerful. Dr. Polski is my advisor and she has checked up on me and communicated with me throughout the entire semester, asking me how it is going or asking if I’m comfortable in my classes and in school. In the 11 weeks I’ve known her, she has been a great teacher and advisor to me and has helped me. She has my full respect and trust.

Dr. Polski is happy to be at East-West and is grateful for all of the opportunities she has been and is given. I am grateful to have talked to Dr. Polski to get to know her more, and to be able to hear her story.





# Piercings

by Brianna Nevarez

Piercings, a form of body modification, have been a part of human culture for thousands of years. Across various civilizations and continents, piercings have served cultural, spiritual, and personal purposes. This essay explores the rich history of piercings and their significance throughout different periods.

## The Origins of Piercings:

Piercing is not a recent trend but rather an ancient practice dating back to prehistoric times. Archaeological findings have revealed evidence of piercings on mummified bodies from ancient Egypt, suggesting that piercing was prevalent as early as 4000 BCE. It is believed that these early piercings were primarily worn as symbols of wealth, status, and religious devotion.



## Cultural Significance:

Piercings have held various cultural meanings throughout history. In some African tribes, specific piercings denoted social hierarchy or marked important life events such as marriage or coming of age. Native American tribes incorporated piercings as part of spiritual rituals and ceremonial practices. Each piercing had a unique significance, connecting individuals to their tribe's beliefs and traditions.

## Piercings in Ancient Civilizations:

In ancient civilizations, piercings were not only associated with aesthetics but also served practical purposes. Sailors often wore earrings to symbolize successful voyages and as a form of insurance against drowning. Additionally, piercing the ears or nose was believed to



have medicinal benefits, with certain pressure points associated with pain relief and improved health.

## Religious and Spiritual Significance:

Piercings have played a significant role in religious and spiritual practices across different cultures. In Hinduism, nose piercings, specifically the "nath," are considered sacred and symbolize the connection between earthly existence and spiritual realms. In Buddhism, earrings were believed to enhance spiritual well-being and enlightenment. Similarly, various tribal societies incorporated piercings as a means to communicate with spirits or appease deities.

## Modern Evolution of Piercings:

Piercings have experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent decades, becoming a form of self-expression and personal style. The punk and alternative subcultures of the 1970s and 1980s embraced piercings as a symbol of rebellion and nonconformity. Today, pierc-

ings have become mainstream and are embraced by people of diverse backgrounds, often chosen for their aesthetic appeal or to express individuality.

## Conclusion:

In the realm of self-expression, where the past perfect intertwines with the present, the art of tattooing emerges as a powerful medium. Through the passive voice of ink and needle, parallel stories are etched onto the skin, each stroke a punctuation mark in the book of a person's life.

## Piercings & Grammar:

A colon separates the before and after: a moment of decision, a juncture where modal verbs whisper promises of transformation. It is here, within this threshold of possibility, that individuals explore the vast canvas of their bodies, seeking a negative emphasis on conformity and a positive emphasis on individuality.

In the realm of tattoo parlors, where the scent of ink permeates the air, an encounter unfolds between artist and canvas, giving birth to a tapestry of desires and dreams. The artist's skill, honed to perfection through years of dedication, merges with the client's complex subject, their innermost self yearning to be immortalized.

With utmost care, the artist poses a conditional question: "What if we were to embrace your innermost passions through ink?" It is a question that invokes the subjunctive, a call to delve into the realm of possibilities, to shed inhibitions and unlock the potential hidden within.

As the needle hovers, anticipation intertwines with apprehension. A moment of decision hangs in the balance, where the path not taken beckons from the periphery. Will they succumb to fear or embrace the artful dance between pain and liberation? With a resolute breath, the client embarks on a transformative journey. The complex subject of their identity is laid bare, their body now a living canvas for self-expression. Each stroke becomes a declaration, a chapter that weaves their story into a larger tapestry of human experience.



In the wake of the tattooing process, the pain subsides, leaving behind a permanent reminder of personal growth. The past perfect takes its rightful place, as scars and mistakes find redemption within the artistry of ink. It becomes a testament to resilience, a symbol of the strength to overcome and evolve.

In the realm of tattooed individuals, a community emerges, connected by their inked narratives. They wear their stories proudly, honoring the marks that define them. Through the interplay of past and present, passive voices and active choices, tattoos transcend the realm of art, becoming a map of identity, etched onto the skin for all to see.

So, the artful journey continues, as more souls embrace the power of tattoos. In this realm of self-expression, where the language of ink and the human spirit intertwine, narratives are written, rewritten, and rediscovered, a testament to the enduring power of the human story.

## Meet Cortez Thomas A Student Success

**Cortez, you had a rough beginning to the spring term. You were not attending classes, and in danger of being dropped. What turned it around for you?**

What turned it around for me was my mom constantly being on me, constantly reminding me that we didn't come so far for nothing. And after I heard those words from my mom, I didn't need to hear anything else.

**What would you tell another student in your situation? What would be your advice?**

I would tell another student that no matter what the circumstances, is to finish what you started, and try to finish off as strong as you can. And remember, you didn't come all this way for nothing.

**What future goal do you have for yourself that keeps you going?**

Besides wanting to go pro for basketball, I think my future goal that keeps me going is I want a career in sports management.

**What three qualities do you think are important to succeed in college?**

Work ethic, will power, and confidence.





*As part of a Public Relations Class this semester, groups of students worked with different organizations to create public relations plans for them. Here are those projects.*

## Planned Parenthood

Mateo Watson, Milagros Ramires-Reyes

When most people hear about planned parenthood, they automatically think abortions or a clinic just for women and children, but the organization offers more than that. Planned parenthood has a lot of resources and services for people and not just for women, they also provide resources for men and teens.

A non-profit organization that provides reproductive health care services in the United States and globally, Planned Parenthood was founded in 1916 by Margaret Sanger and her sister, Ethel Byrne, in Brooklyn, New York. One of the services they provide is Sex Ed and it has been providing "quality sex education" since 1963 and there are many free resources for people to learn and gain more knowledge on sex education.

You can request Planned Parenthood to speak at an event you are having or at school to teach and give out information on sex ed. They also provide breast exams, cervical cancer screenings (Pap tests), mammogram referrals, testicular cancer testing, ovarian cancer testing, colon cancer testing, and HPV testing. They offer education and resources on cancer prevention and treatment options. Recognizing the importance of mental health to our overall health, Planned Parenthood provides resources for individuals seeking mental health services, including information on how to

find a mental health provider, hotlines for immediate support, and educational materials on mental health. Planned Parenthood is also committed to providing inclusive and affirming health-care services to transgender and gender nonconforming individuals, including access to mental health services. Transgender men may benefit from therapy to address a range of issues related to gender identity, including coping with gender dysphoria, exploring options for gender-affirming medical care, and addressing mental health concerns such as depression or anxiety.

Another resource that planned parenthood offers is birth control information. The most common forms of birth control or contraceptives are condoms, birth control pills, and IUDs. Many of the FAQs that people have are about birth control and sex situations, but can also be questions about the female body, sexual orientations, fact checking, Sex ed, fertility, and much more.



One can find more information on a specific topic on the Planned Parenthood website, either by filtering by date, category, or to search for the topic specifically. The website even gives you an option to write a question and "Ask the Experts". Planned Parenthood is a great resource for informing yourself or others about contraceptives and all the details needed to know about them. If you still have questions go ahead and ask them or search

## PR Class Projects

in the blog to see if anyone has asked something similar.

As you can see, Panned Parenthood provides a lot of resources and information for everyone, not just for women. If you wanna know more information, you can go to their website and they provide a lot of more resources..

### City of Hope Chicago

Isabelle Martinez, Mishelle Trejo, Malissa Lewis, Marshea Echols, Saadia Khan and Troy Cobb

City of Hope is a world renowned research and treatment center that is dedicated to finding new and innovative ways to treat and cure cancer. The Center is staffed by leading Healthcare Professionals who are committed to providing the highest quality of care to their patients.



This campaign will be centered around social media content and targeted media outreach. We will work directly with City of Hope Chicago: Division of Neurosurgery and testimonies to share a immersive view of what makes them stand out. We will also make a social media content calendar that includes educational posts, testimonies and user generated "trends" to catch attention. Our target audience is the people near City of Hope locations in Chicago, Atlanta, Goodyear, and across California. We hope that the closer people are to these locations, the more likely they are to check them out. Our overarching goal is to raise

awareness of City of Hope Chicago, but this comes many steps. Those smaller goals are to increase media presence, inform people of City of Hope and what it encompasses, increase support for affected people and their families, increase funding for research and treatment, and showcase success stories.

All of this is done via a few different tactics. Online advertising -- simply running paid ads on various social media platforms -- is the simplest. We feel as though a strong social media presence

makeover was also necessary, simply to bring appeal via the fresher feel a business would offer through it. Visual content creation,

such as infographics, videos, or other similar media, would also be necessary. And all of this would be distributed via platforms such as LinkedIn, YouTube, and Meta Advertising (across both Facebook and Instagram).

If you wanted to help City of Hope Chicago out, you can simply donate to them to help fund



support, research, and treatment. Thank you!

## Greater Chicago Food Depository

Cris Padilla, Elgin Bowen, Kurt Shannon, Mario Guzman, Destyne Adell, Alexandria Jarmon, Amiya Lyke  
The Greater Chicago Food Depository is a food bank for Chicago and Cook County. Their mission is to end hunger. Working with a number of other organizations, they offer support via healthy food, lift their voices, and try to address the root causes of hunger -- poverty, systemic inequality, and structural racism.

The food depository was created in 1979 by its six founders -- Tom O'Connell, Robert W. Strube, Father Philip, Gertrude Snodgrass, Ann Connor and Ed Sunshine. In 1984, they moved to their new home at 4501 South Tripp Avenue, a 91,000-square-foot facility. The first Meals on Wheels food trucks started responding to hungry families on nights and weekends in 2001. In 2010, they began distributing to schools. In the years since, they've donated to schools and universities across Chicago.

The current social media for The Greater Chicago Food Depository is a bit lacking. We believe it could offer more consistency and quality, as well as offering a support system for both individuals and different cultures. Our

solutions are to have more reels posted, increase engagement, and post more frequently. Additionally, we would like to see more diverse content, and for the social media account



to provide more background.

As a whole, we want to increase awareness at a younger age range (specifically, 16-26), boost customer satisfaction, build partnerships and collaborations, show a different perspective on the cause, and show how easy it is to donate. We wanted to do this by expanding video and image content, such as offering behind the scenes content, and improved usage of social media accounts.



## International Students of EWU

Marina Morcillo **Martinez**,  
Keonte **Space**, Bryce **Burnett**,  
Syeda Fatima **Sunenan**,  
Tybrys **Lambs**, Wendy **Sims**,  
Joey **Vanga**

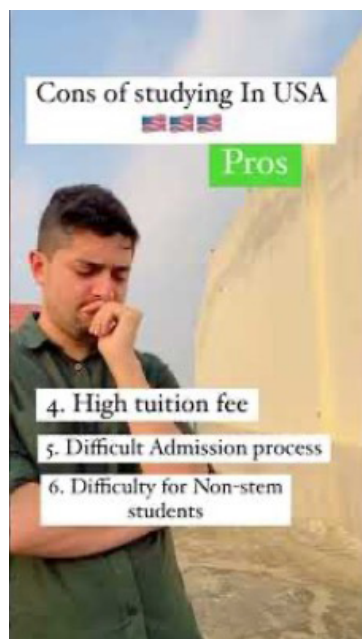
Studying in the United States comes with some pros and cons for international students. For one, some of the best universities, research and training facilities are in the United States. However, that also comes with a lack of job security, higher costs of living and tuition, and a difficult admission process, especially for non-STEM students.

Our Mission is to represent, support, and empower international students at our university, promoting an inclusive and enriching educational experience. We are committed to fostering an environment of respect, tolerance, and cultural diversity, while providing resources and services to facilitate the transition and

adaptation of international students to university life in the United States. We work in collaboration with the university and other student groups to advocate for fair and equitable policies and practices that benefit the international community.

Ultimately, our aim is to build a strong and united intercultural community in which all students, regardless of their background, can thrive academically and personally.

By celebrating diversity, promoting intercultural belonging, and cultivating a sense of belonging, we hope to create a vibrant and inclusive community that can empower and support international students. We aim to create an enriching and transformative experience for every international student on campus. Together,



we aspire to create a global network of students who are empowered to thrive, make lasting connections, and become global citizens equipped to contribute positively to society. Values such as inclusivity, cultural exchange, the building of communities, and support for academic and personal development are central to that vision.

To fulfill our goals, our tactics are to teach out to international students, recruit members and volunteers, plan events and activities, partner with the university, and build a strong online presence. Focusing on that last point, we hoped to increase converged media presence by 30% over the next 18 months, beginning with research into both finding the target audience, as well as to develop a comprehensive analysis of the successes and shortfalls of those social media accounts. That would be followed up with a comprehensive development of a content strategy; for instance, building a diverse range of informative content.

As social media content became released, we wanted to be able to develop relationships with individuals and organizations in the international education industry, which could help us create new content and gather more support as a whole. In addition, we want to increase audience interaction by engaging with them through things such as comments. On a longer scale, we also want our content plans to be able to adapt to the latest trends and technologies, based on the ever-changing

landscape of social media.

## East-West University Plan and Proposal

Phillip Taylor, Imani Walker,  
Ashley Vasquez, Warren  
Agnew, Cecelia Smith

East-West University is a private liberal arts and sciences university, founded in 1980 by M. Wasiullah Khan. The university's mission statement views education as a means to extend opportunity, believes in the equality of all human beings, seeks to promote a global and multicultural perspective, reaches out to students from under-served communities, is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in academics, and pushes for commitment to community service and engagement.

As the University is now, there's a number of challenges, strengths, and opportunities for improvement. **Mental health support**, such as the Student Success Center, is an incredible strength, and one that could be used to help and support students struggling with a variety of things. In addition, **increased campus events and speakers** could also further engagement with the student body.

Mental health services at East-West University as they are now can help a student cope with stress, overcome procrastination, improve their relationships,

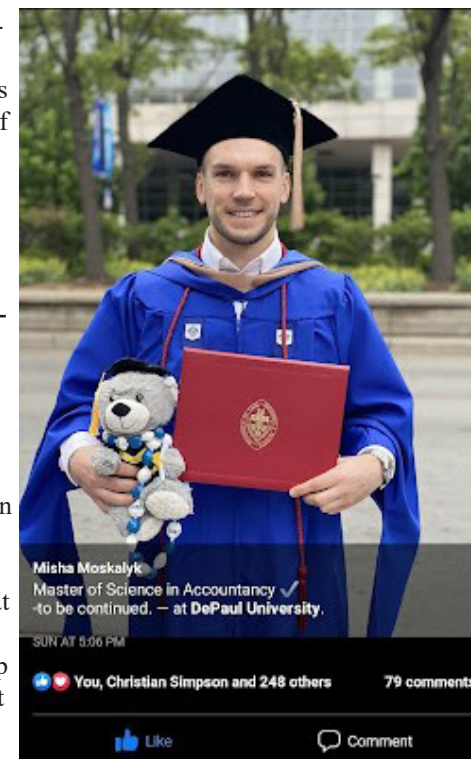
increase their self-confidence, understand their sexuality, and help deal with eating and sleeping issues. On top of that, those services are free to students, and remain strictly confidential.

On the other hand, we see social media as an opportunity. As is, **social media engagement** with the student body is lackluster, and we see this as a great way to improve.

To increase social media engagement, we begin by wanting to create engagement on each of a number of platforms. Notably, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn, as those should cover a large majority of students and demographics.

Another opportunity for engagement comes through our **alumni**. Focusing or calling attention to alumni of EWU, both on social media and around campus, could bolster morale. The Chief Staff of Former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel is an EWU alumni, for instance. Or look at East-

West graduate Misha Moskalyk, who recently got his Masters in Accounting at DePaul University. Calling attention to these and other notable alumni for students around campus, especially juniors and seniors, could aid in solving many of those challenges we face.







# Intercultural Day 2023

by Tyan Walker

On May 11th, 2023, we held our second Intercultural Day here at East-West University. It was founded by the students in Group Dynamics class in Winter 2022: Class of 2024 seniors April Pesina and Keonte Space, and Class of 2023 graduating senior Mateo Watson. Intercultural day is a celebration of the diversity of different cultures and traditions where people share food, music, dance, and art from their cultures. It's a great way to learn about and appreciate different backgrounds. Intercultural day was great because it promoted understanding and appreciation of different cultures. It helps to break down stereotypes and built connections between people from different backgrounds.

This year it was held on the 17th floor in the SLC building. Many students and staff wore their traditional clothing: Dr. Polski wore traditional Russian kosovorotka and valenki, many south Asian students wore their traditional garments like the saree, the lehenga choli, dhoti, and kurta pajama. Dr. Gorman exhibited books by Irish authors; Dr. Hillmann exhibited his books about bullfighting in Spain, Mary Agness Nassuuna made a poster about her native Uganda, and Mazidatou Abogourin made a poster about Benin.



There were many ethnic foods, desserts, and maps that displayed the different cultures that represented us. We finished the day with doing the Bhangra, a high energy folk dance that is usually performed in a group.





## Traveling

by Kwyanna Hargrays

One of the most important things to me is traveling. I love traveling, visiting different places, seeing new things, experiencing new ways of life and partying in a new town. I didn't travel much



when I was younger but I had been on family vacations to other cities. But it was never anything big, always going to visit family. Now I travel to see family, but I also travel to explore. When I go to other cities, I fly now, which is something I never did with my family when I was a kid.

I began traveling on my own back in 2016 and I fell in love with flights. I do not mind taking train rides or driving but nothing over five hours. I actually hate road trips. Trips are now a mandatory thing for me. I must go on at least four trips a year no matter how big or small. The smaller the trip the more I have to explore, because I try to do everything in such a small period of time. I make it so that my child goes on at least two of those trips with me. She loves traveling just as much as I do. This year I am getting a passport so that I can travel out of the country. I am a little afraid but I am also a daredevil.

One thing I learned about trips is sometimes you have to go it alone. I have been to many cities alone and I actually enjoy them

as much as if I was accompanied by others. Traveling is peaceful for me, I hate the chaos of an airport but when you get there at the right time and everything goes according to plan it will be perfect. I love the plane ride, the sight of the other airports and how they are so much different

than mine.

I love the restaurants, the parties, the hotels and sometimes the people.

Traveling always allows me to gather my thoughts and put me in a positive mind space.

Traveling

before I start a new job, return to school, or when I get stressed out always brings me back to a happy place and sometimes I never want to come back.

## School Shootings: National Tragedy

by Ra'kyiah Moore

School shootings have become an all too common occurrence in America. These tragic events have left many families and communities devastated. The recent school shootings in Parkland, Florida, and Santa Fe, Texas, have once again brought the issue of gun violence to the forefront of national conversation.



Schools should be a safe haven for children to learn and grow, but instead, they have become targets of senseless violence. The statistics are alarming. According to Everytown Research, there have been 336 school shootings

in America since 2013. This is unacceptable. The question is, what can be done to prevent school shootings? While there is no easy solution, there are steps that can be taken to reduce the risk. One of the most obvious is to implement stricter gun control laws. This could include universal background checks, bans on assault weapons, and a limit on the number of rounds in a magazine.

Another solution is to improve school security. This could include metal detectors, security cameras, and hiring more school resource officers. It is also important to have a plan in place in case of an emergency. Students and teachers should know what to do in the event of a shooting.

Finally, it is important to address the root causes of gun violence. This includes mental health issues and social isolation. We need to provide more resources for mental health treatment and work to create a more inclusive society.

In conclusion, school shootings are a national tragedy that must be addressed. We cannot continue to ignore this issue. It is time for action. We need to work together to create a safer society for our children.

## Life After 50: Story of My Life

by Wendy Sims

Life is great after 50 when you no longer have school-age children. I'll just introduce myself.

Hello, my name is Wendy and I'm a proud mom of three -- two girls and one son. I'm proud because my Job as a mother



came about at the young age of nineteen going on twenty. I started navigating this thing called life. The road wasn't so easy, I became a single mother when I decided that I would no longer stay in an abusive marriage, it was time for me to love myself to say enough.

I refused to have my children look at me and believe what they saw was what a marriage should be, I filed for an divorce and relocated back to Chicago where my friends, family, and support team help me pick up the pieces of myself and I began to make sure my children went to school. It was hard at first -- having to work two jobs while going to school for my degree, especially at the age of 51. I learned that I have dyscalculia, which is similar to dyslexia but for numbers and math.

To add to the pot, I began having medical issues; for instance, I found out I have vision loss. Before, I had 20/20 vision, yet one day I suddenly couldn't focus my eyes. I found out I had diabetes and I had to have a hysterectomy and change some eating habits. I was taken off all medications.

What I've learned the most as I turned 50 is that life is great, and to enjoy it while you can.

## Most Important Values

by Angelica Ballestros

I was asked a question by one of our fellow students who is graduating in SP-23. The question was: What are my most important values and why are they important ?

My most important values are Faith which is my church where I go and worship the lord and share amazing memories with my church brothers and sisters. Go to amazing conventions like for example National Youth Advance(NYA).



The second thing that I value is my family, they are the most important people in my life that I can ask god to have. My family is one of the most supportive people in my life, they are always there to give me advice, motivation, and support me every step of the way that I take in my journey of education.

The third thing that I value is education because I have been inspired by my family to do school as long as it takes me to get my degree, I want to get a degree in psychology to become a psychologist or Counselor. School has always been a big part of my values since I wanted to go to college.



## Reviews of Senior Student Research Poster Competition

by Anas Mohammed

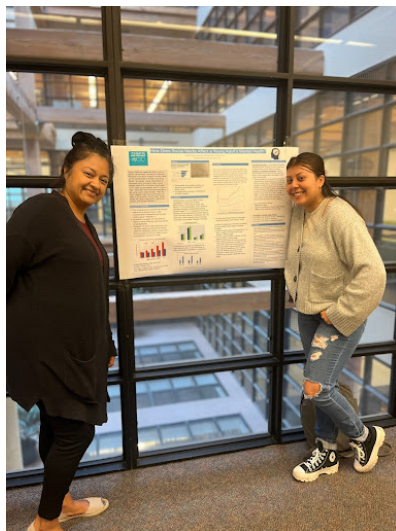
There were a lot of students choosing different types of topics to research. There were about ten students presenting their research and explaining what they learned. The research topic poster and presentation that interested me was: GOD AND SCIENCE: CAN SCIENCE AND RELIGIONS COEXIST? Religion is so much talked about these days and I think that this is important information to know and to think about.

Student Raymond Zhen was the researcher. He shared some of what he learned. Raymond said that even among scientists, there are a large number who appear to be spiritual. According to Elaine Howard Ecklund's study, a human being who is spiritual and who also believes in scientific facts, finds a way to reconcile these opposing ideas in his mind.



Religious institutions are more rigid in their belief systems and usually aren't as open minded about accepting certain scientific theories like Darwin's Theory of Evolution because it contradicts certain passages of the Bible or other belief systems.

Religion and Science can reconcile their differences if major religions were more open minded and perhaps, more willing to admit their ideologies and belief system are not the only way as their predecessors have tried to establish.



by Vaghela Mayanksinh

There were a lot of interesting research topics presented at the poster fair, but my favorite was Biology Major Taylor Harper's "How Does Media Coverage Affect Terrorism?" Taylor said that she chose this important research topic because terrorism affects everyone around the world.

According to Author and Experimental Psychologist Steven Pinker, Terrorists depend upon the public attention that they receive. When a

handful of people inflict violence directly on a relatively small number of people, and this news receives worldwide publicity and attention, this is advertise-

ment for the terrorist group and brings focus to its demands and ideology.

Pinker states that terrorism has grown stronger and more widespread from 1970 as media coverage has increased. Modern terrorism is a by-product of the vast reach of the media. The media will always be around and the media records everything. I feel this is very sad when you think about it.

## Self-care counts for finals week success

by Tyan Walker

Self-care is essential for students during the final weeks of school, as it helps to reduce stress, improve focus, and increase overall well-being. It can also help to prevent burnout and reduce the risk of physical and mental health problems. Self-care habits developed during the final weeks of school can be carried over into other areas of life, helping to maintain a healthy and balanced lifestyle beyond the classroom. Since self-care is vital, here are some tips:

1. Get enough sleep and rest.
2. Stay organized and manage your time.
3. Stay connected with friends and family.
4. Reach out to a counselor or mental health professional if needed. Remember to prioritize your physical and mental health during this time.



## To the Students at EWU

From your Student Success Center

Perseverance. That is the word that comes to my mind when I think of the students at EWU. As I serve my last few weeks as the onsite student therapist, I am constantly reminded of the strength that flows down these halls. Each student embodies a unique version of tenacity which they use to push past adversity.

It is evident that the students at EWU are determined to make their dreams a reality and they do so with full force. I have had the privilege of listening to their stories, most of which are heart wrenching but ultimately further prove the fact that they are endlessly resilient. In many instances, their strength motivated me to keep going. I have learned a great deal from the work we have done during sessions and I will cherish those lessons forever.

I too am a first generation student who dreamt of furthering my education and had to fight through the adversities to get here. I was the first in my family to get a bachelor's degree and the first in all my generations to get a master's degree. But being the first is not just an honor, it was also a lonely journey full of uncertainty. I knew what I wanted but not how to get there. All I knew was that I would not stop until I reached my goal. I have heard this same message in countless students here at EWU and I couldn't be more proud. I believe in each and every one of



you because I too was in your shoes.

The key is to never give up and to make your mental and physical health a priority. Eat, sleep, go to therapy, be physically active, and stay organized. Don't procrastinate and strive to be the best version of yourself every day. Be the person who your future self would be proud of. Continue to set a good example for your communities and find ways to help out. But most importantly, be kind to yourself. Carry your perseverance like a badge and don't ever give up.

Alondra, Student Therapist  
Student Success Center 319W





# Poetry Corner

*Psyche, a mortal woman, was so beautiful that the goddess Venus becomes jealous. She orders her son, Cupid, to curse Psyche. Instead, Cupid scratches himself with his arrow and fell in love with Psyche. They marry and suffer greatly when they get separated, leading to the tragedy we see here.*

## Cupid's Tragedy

Jederit Carrera

I cannot bear being withheld from you.

Though I know you are not here, if I shall,  
I insist on waiting upon your arrival.  
May you return thee.  
I beg of it.

How I wish you would return to me.  
I pray to the stars calling your name.  
I pray to our deities; yet I am refuted.

Must our devotion go to waste?

Cries, I have let out  
Cried to the darkness in vain  
Cry as my soul is no longer whole

"You are half my soul, as the poets say"

Lady Aphrodite must envy us:  
I do not believe  
nor will I ever think  
we were never meant to be.

I curse at thee.

Sensibility is no longer within me.

Shall I lay and rest my eyes?  
Ought you then to return to me?

Had the war not been declared,  
would we remain in arms?  
Had we never met or parted,  
would we have been better off?  
Had we loved too rigorously?  
Had we been too selfish?

May I?  
Could I?  
Shall I?  
If I ought to lay in my grave  
where my supposed heart  
continues to bleed up until your return,  
only then will I finally walk the earth with thee.  
Or never will I be conjoined with thee?

Destiny seems to be ill fated,  
perhaps it was never meant to be.  
Till we meet again, Mon Amour,  
may we reincarnate side by side.

*Bogs tend to be seen as muck-filled, disgusting places. Even those who like bogs would still expect them to be filled with leeches and witches. This poem depicts how a bog creature would feel about that assumption.*

## Bog-Dweller

Daniel Babenkov

i am the dweller of the bog.  
a creature born to hunt and prey.  
my skin too stiff for blade to pierce,  
my teeth like glass that rips and tears.

But I don't stalk the common man,  
though pitchforks rise up all the same.  
No, I sit beside my few true friends --  
salamanders, bugs and newts.

Aurus, a leech I've known for years,  
has found his family a catch for days.  
A deer that fell into our swamp and  
simply died  
(at least that's what he  
said)

Some nights they gather at the shore,  
this jeering mob that wants to drag me out  
and kill me.  
when they do, i curl up and hide.  
and wait for them to go away.

O glory! Listen to the gossip of the trees.  
the murmur and the quiet of the leaves.  
i hear the spirit of their whispers and each  
word they choose to breathe:  
The ecstasy when they can sense a storm.  
Their grief and pain as fellow saplings fall.  
Screams as screeching blades  
consume their souls.

It's quiet now. no leech. no muttering of  
trees.  
i'm left alone, with just my thoughts  
and nothing else.

mockery still ripples through my ears --  
the echoes of man's vicious lies.

They say I rise up to the sky,  
blotting out the caring sun.  
i barely reach their height.  
i always feel short.

But every lie contains a piece of truth.  
Are their jeers wrong if that's what I see  
too?

My eyes are ugly dots upon my face  
My claws like tools forged just to kill  
My skin a slimy, sickly green  
My voice.  
a soft yet twisted wail.

I am the monster to be feared, they say,  
made to kill their fellow men.  
i see myself and sometimes think:  
what if they're right?

with teeth and claws and all this pain,  
what can i do but maul and rage?

No

I say. I'm no such thing!  
I do not hunt. I do not prey.  
This awful, bitter mob does that them-  
selves.

And so their hate  
forms mine  
of me.

If only they would hear my plea.  
Do they understand my cries?

do they even try?

But here, and now, it matters not.  
Where they bring hate, I sense the truth.  
They see this muck-filled swamp and feel  
sick.  
I see in it a city full.  
Of "monsters"

living out their lives.

And I, as them, just wish  
to live a life.

a dweller of the bog

*"For Delillo" is inspired by the 1985 book White Noise by the titular Don Delillo. The book follows Jack Gladney, a professor of "Hitler studies," and focuses on themes of death, academics, and consumer culture.*

## For Delillo

Zachary Arvind Swezy

the evolution of the Car  
crash-

ing Car-affirming values.  
elemental loud, high-  
spirited, light-  
hearted. American.

Aimless days, plaid,  
cable-knit. Station Wagons

glowing with  
documents that change  
hands, everything  
is a Car

and life is good and big and scattered.  
a red yawning mawmouth doddering tooth-  
less  
images.

plots in nature  
and narrative  
move deathward  
away from closeness  
and the heat of being.

we recognize allowable secrets  
like occult books in the attic.

scholars say  
both hitler and elvis  
loved their mothers.

[panting]  
crowds accumulate for the purpose  
of becoming crowds, shapeless growing.  
a chemical explosion: a feathery plume  
turned black billowing cloud a shapeless  
toxic growth.

actions may advance without a plan,  
people may show outdated symptoms,  
or start to imagine if reagan had been  
cast in casa blanca.

people are working on a computer,  
that tells you you're dying.  
many are hard at work,

and are  
modeling simulations based on real-  
life situations, reconciling the fact  
that the data here is real.

men ruminate that violence may be  
a rebirth. and that  
a Land Rover knows how to stay alive.  
features, sharp pores, the haunting look  
cathode ray tubes emit red news images  
from  
a man's lap into our eyes.

the neon supermarket never changes.  
how can the enormous die? and what of  
the white surrounding sound of death?

well there are now gleaming new  
equipments, little white  
pills, mountains upstate trickling snow-  
water downstream,  
classes on eating and drinking.

what is the uniqueness of night after  
night?

a canard,  
while private furtive pills looms on the  
psyche,

and who cares where you find  
the unknown? even if it's  
taped to a radiator.

unable to distinguish words from things  
or just forgetting. the grubby little corners  
of the heart, shame in a ski mask,  
hatred of entries, love of pills.  
a television aimed down on them  
from the ceiling. more cathode ray tubes.

a father tentatively scheduled to die  
wonders if it's enough to know a problem  
exists  
learns of medicine in the garbage, smashes  
through,  
he rids the fear,  
clears the grid.

and now a tiny gun and a tin can  
not quite full of bullets, a hitler scholar  
speaking german, the moon in the Dash  
elvis loved dogs.

peas in the shooter,  
and neon light in gutter-puddled water,  
the father and his Station Wagon  
drive to some climax.

then entering a room, haphazardly crush-  
ing  
strewn pills underfoot, asked if heart-  
sick or soul

"always chasing rainbows"  
plays "waiting to find  
that little blue bird in,  
vain," violence  
of men explodes.  
an unglued man who envies himself  
gutshot and thizzed out on a red toilet.

remorse leading predator and prey  
and prey and predator  
to a red neon hospital with nuns in  
blue habits with only  
two stretchers.

in their convalescence, the mother supe-  
rior  
lectures that heaven is for others,  
that people must appear to believe,  
though talk of angels that live in the sky  
is not tolerated.

she says hell is when no one believes  
in each other. apparently we are fragile  
creatures, embroiled in hostile facts and  
our own disaster.

queerly participating, we all wait  
in gleaming supermarkets.



## Congrats, Dean's List and Honors Students!

### Spring 2023 Dean's List

Mazidatou Abogourin	Wasey Mohammed Abdul
Sabeen Ahmed	Adrian Morales
Cindy Alonso	Natalie Morales
Siraj Ansari	Marina Morcillo Martinez
Fhernando Aviles	Emily Nemecio
Cesar Baltazar	Tania Ortega
Dario Biaggi Rossi	Vishrutiben Patel
Judith Bolanos	Meet Patel
Gulnaz Burinova	Dristy Patel
Mansiben Chaudhari	Ravikumar Patel
Srushtiben Chaudhari	Virang Patel
Brandon Compton	Milagros Ramirez-Reyes
Gisselle Conejo	Erika Ruiz
Hibret Deres	Giselle Serrano
Hannah	Saniya Siddiqui
Mordecai Gomez	Yuliia Sokolova
Arli Gonzalez	Shamsuddin Syed
Elvis Gosnet	Carlos Trejo
Omar Guzman	Maurice Truss
Khushi Jani	Mayanksinh Vaghela
Hanan	Mohammad
Mohammed Khan	Shoaib Vahora
Naila Khan	Mahammaduzer Vahora
Fnu Laiba	Arsilbhai Vahora
Christian Lopez	Joey Vanga
Abigail Mata	Jocelyn Velazquez
Kimberly Medina	Olena Yelshyna
Abdul Mirza	Raymond Zhen

### Spring 2023 Honors Roll

Guadalupe Aguilar  
Noori Arshia  
Joshua Bengochea  
Eulises Campos  
Ellie Chounlasa-Valdez  
Jasmine Eduards  
Aiman Fatima  
Joshua Hernandez  
Ayana Higgins  
Graciela Longoria  
Alexandra Magallanes  
Zuriel Margil  
Mary Nassuuna  
Eduardo Padilla  
Savankumar Patel  
Maitri Patel  
Naiyaben Patel  
Jeel Patel  
Cecilia Smith  
Viren Nimeshbhai Soni  
Bushra Fathima Sueda  
Mudassir Syed  
Bhumi Thakkar  
Amaanbhai Mogirabhai Vohra  
Dekyla Walker  
Jada Woodley  
Whittney Wright  
Natalie Zavala  
Yesenia Zendejas

## Commencement Speakers 2023

by Tyan Walker

The result of years of dedication and hard work, a commencement ceremony marks a significant milestone in the lives of graduates. East-West University's latest graduation ceremony was no different, as students and teachers gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of the graduating class. As the ceremony began, all eyes were on the graduates, their bright grins a tribute to their hard work. The air was charged with enthusiasm and a sense of accomplishment. It was evident that the boundaries they surpassed and the obstacles they overcame throughout their academic journey led them to this moment of achievement.

Alumna speaker Lushanda Johnson-Byrd serves as a shining example of the success achieved by East-West University alumni. Ms. Johnson-Byrd graduated from East-West University in 2005 in Business Administration, with a major in management. She now works as Director of Admissions at Lincoln Tech College in Melrose Park, Illinois.



Her accomplishments stand as a testament to the transformative power of higher education.



tion and the immense potential East-West University nurtures in its graduates. In her speech she repeatedly told the class "You are an unstoppable force", in which she reassured them they are great beyond their circumstances.

"To go on and serve" is the advice given to the graduating class by the uplifting keynote speaker Illinois State Representative Cyril Nichols, which was the highlight of the program. His visit was greatly anticipated, given his distinguished public service career and reputation as an influential and motivating speaker. Rep. Nichols shared his personal story, saying "no one would have predicted that this little black boy from Cabrini Green would be serving in Congress and voting on million-dollar budget decisions for our state". He also told the graduates to appreciate and value their opportunities, because they are not a given: "people have died for you to have these opportunities".



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East-West University's commencement ceremony served as an unforgettable day of celebration and inspiration. As they venture into the next chapter of their lives, armed with knowledge and inspired by Nichols' words, the graduates of East-West University are poised to make meaningful contributions to society, embodying the spirit of achievement and making their alma mater proud.