

Two worlds collide through French exchange program

New Trier welcomes 16 students from Notre-Dame de Sion in Paris

by May Paddor

Giselle and Antoine agreed that the main reason they came to Chicago from Paris through the French exchange program was for the “food and Bulls t-shirts.”

Sitting in our student cafeteria, the two French students stared nervously as they took in their surroundings. Antoine and Giselle remarked that students at New Trier “always wear shorts with high socks” and how all students seem to have “big bags.”

It seems crazy to say goodbye to France for Illinois, but on April 8, Giselle and Antoine were two of the sixteen French students that came to Chicago from Notre-Dame de Sion, in Paris, to immerse themselves in the American culture.

Junior Nicki Alston, Antoine’s host, thought that the coolest thing about hosting is “realizing the connections you have in your life.” Alston said, “I feel like everything for them is so new here, but then when you find something that he does there that we also do here, it’s really cool for the both of us.”

Giselle’s host, junior Anna Der-



While visiting, exchange students participate in various activities in and around Chicago | Notre Dame de Sion

rick, said, “I like just seeing the different culture and the way that they do things differently or the way they do things the same.”

During their thirteen-day stay, the French students will “have two days of shadowing with their hosts and in the library to spend a little time researching Chicago and the aspects of the architecture,” exchange coordinator and French teacher, Liette Brisebois, said.

On Friday, April 15, they “[took] a tour with the Student Ambassadors and shadow[ed]. They’ll be here for a full day on April 21, shadowing, doing homework and interviews. They’ll interview teach-

ers. They’ll interview students. They have to construct a little film,” Brisebois said.

Since the exchange students are the only shadowing for two days, the other eleven days will consist of “the usually suspects”: Millennium Park, cultural center, Water Tower Place and Northwestern. They visit the Willis Tower and take a guided trolley tour.

“We try to provide them with a variety of experiences,” Brisebois said.

“The exchange is very special, it’s kind of old world in that way. It’s connecting with people, getting out of your comfort zone, exploring

differences and similarities, making connections, and that’s what we want them to experience,” Brisebois explained. “We promise an experience.”

Derrick and Alston’s old world experience started through social media. Alston said, “We used Facebook Messenger to keep in touch, then Snapchat and Instagram as well.”

It isn’t just the communication and friendships that makes this trip interesting. “I just think it’s really cool, having somebody in your home and showing them everything and having it be so new to them and so exciting. It makes you proud of

where you live,” Alston said.

Sophomore Allie Caldwell, the host of French exchange student, Isaure, said, “You get to do things for the first time again. I thought it would be a lot of fun and it is.”

The fun experience isn’t one-sided. Isaure raved about the buildings in Chicago, how America is “awesome,” and how all the students are “really welcoming and excited.” She was drawn to this Chicago exchange because she “loves traveling and missed America” since she lived in the US prior to moving to Paris.

The best part of the exchange program seems to be forming these connections and being able to be an outlet for your culture to an outsider.

Derrick said, “When I go to Paris, I’m going to want to experience the culture there, so it’s cool to give someone else that experience.”

Fifteen of the sixteen hosts will be traveling to Paris for two weeks to stay with their host students on May 27-June 12. “We’ll be spending some time in the school. But mostly it will be exploring the city and probably doing some reflection, some journaling, some video blogs. Keeping track of the experience,” Brisebois said.

The French exchange is a way for students to broaden their horizons and views of the world. Brisebois reflected, “It’s full of unpredictability, challenges, and also great joys and pleasures.”

New Trier has a dress code?

The dress code is often overlooked and rarely enforced

by Emily Roemer

A perk that comes with a public school education is the ability to dress freely. While there’s no specific uniform, there are still dress-code do’s and don’t’s. Many New Trier students are unaware that there are actual rules in place because they constantly come to school dressed tastefully. Students who wear clothes that are not appropriate for a school environment tend to run into some trouble.

At the beginning of the school year every New Trier student signs a contract called the “Student Acknowledgments of School Policies.” Rule number 13 refers to appropriate dress, beginning with “I understand that the appearance of students should reflect the atmosphere of a learning environment.”

The basis of this policy is to dress tastefully in a school setting and to make sure your clothing, (or lack of), will not be a distraction to others. A further explanation of the

dress rules and regulations can be found in the handbook. Even though every student is required to sign this contract, majority of students are still unaware of any specific dress code rules/regulations.

A common opinion amongst students is that often times people who face dress code violations are “coded when they shouldn’t be, and others aren’t when they should” said senior Sarah McAtamney. Many students think the dress code isn’t enforced enough, especially during warmer seasons. As the weather warms up girls tend to try and get away with wearing less and less clothing, which can lead to making other students around them feel uncomfortable. Junior Marissa Grief said, “I don’t think the administration is strict enough about enforcing a dress code because I see girls walking around in crop tops and it’s really gross”.

Both boys and girls advisors are asked to talk with their advisees about appropriate attire. Guys typically come across clothing violations when they wear t-shirts with inappropriate images and slogans. When girls come across dress violations it is typically an issue of exposure.

Sophomore girls advisor chair Julie Smith said, “Since this is a school environment the attire has to be appropriate for school. Things should be appropriate for the educational environment, and when it’s not appropriate we have to talk about it”.

Most of the conversations about appropriate dress happen between teachers or advisors and students. Chemistry teacher, Patricia Carlson said, “students are free to express themselves in the way they want to dress and the attire they choose to feel comfortable in.” But when a student in the classroom is dressed in a way that is distracting to others it is the teacher’s place to step in and set the boundaries for appropriate dress.

Assistant Principal Scott Williams said that “typically a consequence for violating the dress code would start with a conversation to address the problem.” If it is an excessive problem for a student then the consequences increase.

Although some students do not realize there are actual rules regarding appropriate dress, students who use their best judgment when getting dressed for school can, in most cases, avoid dress code violations.

Learning Center continued

that people either go there if they’re pregnant, or if they have problems at home, or they get sick all the time and they can’t go to school,” junior Sophia Pellar said. “It’s weird because nobody ever talks about it. Nobody really knows what it’s for.”

Freshman Meghan Dwyer echoed Pellar’s view. “I heard it’s for people who have, like, drug problems or are pregnant,” Dwyer said.

An anonymous junior who attends the Center said, “One of my family friends found out I was in ‘the Cage’ and asked me what horrible thing I had to do to get in there. They saw it as a punishment.”

At the root of these misconceptions are the frosted doors that mark the entrance to the Center. These doors were blurred with the intent of maintaining the privacy of the students within the program, according to Kind.

Tiffany Myers, the head of the

Social Work department, who also worked at the Learning Center for four years responded to the fallacies that have been spread about the Learning Center. “People saw things like the locked doors and assumed that students were locked inside, when really the doors are locked to keep freshmen out.”

“Any time you put a cloak on, people get weird ideas,” Kind said, “We’d like not to be this mysterious place, but the kids don’t want to be seen, so that makes it hard.”

Senior Lily Lyman believes that the misconceptions about the Learning Center will fade as students understand the purpose of the program. “Many students at New Trier aren’t sure what ‘the Cage’ really is and what it means to be in it. I don’t think we call it ‘the Cage’ to purposefully make fun of these students, but as we begin to know more about what it is, I think we will all rethink how we talk about it.”

Day of Silence continued

other than that, there was very little done to get the word out,” they said. “When I participated, there were multiple signs and students wearing shirts leading up to the day.”

Hess believed that the combined effort was the most they could do. “We try to do announcements, posters in the hallways and bulletins. We try a number of ways, but it’s hard to reach everyone,” Hess said.

For some students, the lack of participation is a fact of not being passionate on the issue. Junior Donna Kang honestly didn’t see the point in participating. “It’s just not an issue that

I’m super passionate about, so I chose not to participate,” Kang said.

While the day has obviously lacked in a student participation, reasons vary for why. Some students believe in the benefit of a conversational day, but Hess still believes in the core meaning of the day.

“The day was never meant to silence anyone. It’s a symbolic movement,” Hess said. “You’re supposed to notice who isn’t speaking because that’s representative of someone who’s invisible in our society.”

Anti-Gay laws continued

acknowledged the possible flaws brought up in the discussion of transgender bathroom use, Thabit said, “It’s not like those little pictures with one wearing a skirt and one wearing pants is a top notch defense topic. If they’re afraid of perverts or sexual harassment or whatever, they should think about that ‘man’ that is definitely

not a man, and how she would be treated going into a men’s room or vice versa.”

These issues have not only permeated the media, but have become integrated into students’ thoughts. “It is clear,” Zimmerman said, “no matter what your opinion is, the fight for LGBT+ rights is far from over.”

