

"Giving the inside scoop to CISL students, teachers, and staff since January 2013"

Derrick Soriano

By Daegeun Park (Jerry)



Students, instructors and teachers who go to CISL(Converse International School of Language) in San Francisco know who Derrick is. He always helps when students are in trouble. I'm sure that all students have talked with him. However, we don't know a lot about him. For example, what is he doing in our school or his private life. He talked honestly about himself in school and outside school with a little bit about his private life. He was always smiling while he was interviewing.

He was born in San Francisco in 1988 and He emphasized "I'm 24 years old". Here this job, He is the client services coordinator. When new students get here, he helps them with anything they need. He is also a school officer which means he works on students' F1 visas and produces the form I-20. He was hesitating to introduce about himself but he did naturally.

He always looks happy but he also has difficult things on this job. When he gets to very busy, he should do a lot of things at the same time. For example, his phone is ringing, answering all these E-mails besides, a few student come and need him for various reasons. He said "I have to juggle all of these tasks when that happen"

According to him, He has a close colleague in our school. This colleague is Sheron.(She is sales and marketing executive.) He said "she is pretty close to me because we like to joke around online. She likes to point out things I do strange. I also point out that she does strange so I would say that will be a close relation in school."

When I asked about his future after 10 years, He worried about his future but he had his goal clearly. He answered "I see myself. Maybe I'm in Japan I'm working in Nintendo (He was hesitating shortly.) I'm might not in Japan. I'm working in California in the Nintendo tree house (Nintendo tree house is a department in Nintendo company.) where they localize videogames from Japanese to English and I'm working either translator or localizer." Actually, He said that he can't speak Japanese fluently but everyday he is studying Japanese. He also hopes to go Japan in the next few years.

There were a lot of questions for him. I asked about many private questions For example, His private life outside school, what is his ideal type about women. He was a little bit awkward. He just answered "I do like to drink alcohol" but he just suggested me to drink alcohol outside. He promised to talk about his private life while we are drinking. He was always smiled while I was interviewing him. I realized why people like him.

Who helps us to realize our goals?

By Teppei Takeuchi



School Director Wanda Nichols

As a director of Converse International School of Language, Wanda.M.Nichols manages the school and teaches English for students. In a break time, we often see she talks to them with smiling. But most of them don't know how she has spent her time and how she became a director. But this time, you will know her life and how does she think about us. When I visited her office room to interview, she was leaning back in her chair and her hands were folded together with smiling.

Wanda was born in a small town in Massachusetts as a 5th of 5 child. About her home town, she says “it was a beautiful place to grow up, beautiful place to be a child, to go to school, a lot of family, beautiful nature... But as soon as I went to college it was time to go out to biggest city.” She went to NY and studied about mathematics for 3 years. After graduating from the college, she started to work in an insurance company in New Jersey. But almost 3 years later she quit the job. She says “I realized ‘I don’t like this.’ I didn’t like New Jersey, I didn’t like insurance...” Her face becomes severe. She continues. “So I got my car and I drove all the way across countries to Seattle. I had no job, no place to live. I lived with my girlfriend for couple of weeks and I found a job of advertising!” She lived in there for 16 years and met her husband in the advertising company.. “He works for me.” She laughs. “And he gave me an opportunity to live in such a beautiful city of San Francisco.” In 2007, she left the advertising company because of a recession, and became an English teacher in converse. In 2010, she became a director.

Can we realize our goals in Converse school?

About the most interesting students she ever met, she says. “ Oh my goodness. Let me see... There are so many interesting students...” She keeps silent. After a while, she started to speak slowly. “Well..ok. May be there was one who wanted to open his own restaurant, and he did! It’s right across the street.” Some people may have seen it. The name is Bamboo Asia. When I visited there, it was full of people. If you cross the Market street, you can see his goal. She keeps talking. “He is from Holland, and his goal was to open a restaurant that serves Japanese, Vietnamese and Indian food. And that’s exactly what his restraint does. He realized his goal. I was very proud of him. He was very happy, he works very hard to make it happen.” She says again. “Yeah, I’m proud of him.”



The restaurant he opened.

Being exposed the world in this school.

When asked her if her job is the best in her life, she says. “Yes it is. It is very very rewarding, very fulfilling to be able to see students like you learn English, and start to use it, start to feel confidence. That is so rewarding.” Her voice becomes loud. She has been to almost half states of America and Canada, Mexico, many countries in Europe, Venezuelan, Costa Rica. But she didn’t say it is enough. By making a conversation with students, she is affected something from them. “ Being exposed to the world through my students, I’m learning more about the world. More places I want to travel now, because of people like you!” She laughs. “I want to be surrounded by English and want to see how they change their life through studying English.” She has seen a lot of students as a teacher and director. So she may know many different types of lives. By talking with and listening to them, she is trying to help them to realize their goals. Her hands are still folded together.

WENDY'S SOFT SIDE

By Juliano Bracalente



Academic Director Wendy Hall

Even though I am a Brazilian and we are well known to be very outgoing, when I first walked into Wendy Hall's office to conduct this interview I was very apprehensive. Students normally go there when they have some kind of academic issue. Plus, Wendy has a reputation for being intimidating. However, this strange feeling vanished quickly at the moment she started to answer my questions with a tender smile. Then I realized how much interesting information about her I could learn.

She lived in France for 5 years – half of this time in the countryside and the other half in Paris. Why she went there remains a mystery because she refused to provide further information. However it was there where her passion for teaching English first bubbled to the surface and, as a result, she decided to become an ESL teacher.

Another amazing fact that corroborates the popular knowledge that "appearances deceive" is another mark that her life abroad left on her. Inside that thin and tall body there is a girl eager for cheese: "If there is only one food on the planet that I can eat for the rest of my life, would be cheese." And she completes: "Yes, I enjoy eating a lot, I'm a foody".

It may be well known that Wendy is a runner. But what about Burning Man, an annual event that takes place in Nevada where participants experiment in community, art and radical self-expression that is named after the burning of a large wooden effigy? Do you think she would be a fan? Well, indeed she is, and has been there several times. In her words: "The first time I went I was amazed how exciting it was, because people go and build incredible art pieces. Besides, you can go there and express yourself in any way you like without judgment". Quite shocking, isn't it?

When asked about her best quality she answered it in a blink of an eye: empathy. Although she couldn't find a worst quality that fast. When I asked her about it, she gazed the window for a while and reluctantly said: "Sometimes I can be prideful, and sometimes it makes me stubborn."

In a way or another, it is very clear that she is just a normal woman with a lot of talent, dreams and nice stories to tell. And after hearing it, she doesn't look so terrifying anymore.