

# Immigrants share their experiences

**Global Issues talk invites immigrants to discuss American experiences**

BY ANDI WATKINS DAVIS  
Staff Reporter

Axel Fuentes' goal for next Thursday's presentation at the Global Issues Colloquium is to educate the community about issues immigrants face in the Kirksville area when natives and non-natives come together.

Fuentes, a representative from the Center for New Community in Milan, Mo., and several Latino immigrants from the Kirksville and Milan areas will speak at the forum. Fuentes will translate for the other speakers as they tell their stories about immigrating to the United States.

The Latino immigrant population in the Kirksville area is between 400 and 500 people, Fuentes said. In Milan, the Latino immigrant population is about 50 percent of the city population because of the meat packing plant where many of the immigrants work, he said.

Fuentes said it is important people in the Kirksville and Milan communities are educated about the misconceptions about immigrants.

"I'm not talking about the people without proper documentation," Fuentes said. "I'm talking about the people in general, even the people with visas or are permanent residents."

Fuentes said he often talks to people who think all immigrants, legal and illegal, don't pay taxes and are taking all the jobs. He said this is not true. The immigrant community members he works with pay taxes and most are employed in jobs that are dangerous and demeaning, he said. Those false ideas negatively affect the immigrant population as a whole and their relationship with the rest of the community, Fuentes said.

One of the speakers, Milan resident Martha De Trejo, will share her experiences since im-

migrating to the United States, Fuentes said.

De Trejo said it has been difficult living in America and not speaking English. Going to the doctor is one of the hardest things about not speaking English because there isn't always someone who can translate, she said.

De Trejo said sometimes she feels like Americans think she is disposable and that she isn't a part of the culture. However, there are times she is treated well by Americans, she said.

The colloquium is one way of educating people about the truths and hardships of immigration, Fuentes said. He said that during his free time he speaks to health science classes at Truman about issues related to health care and immigration, such as work site wellness. He uses real-life examples from his work with the Latino population in Milan to show the classes what they might face in professional fields, Health Science professor Meagan Hilton said.

Fuentes said health and safety problems involving places of employment are a large concern for the Latino immigrant population in this area.

Fuentes said he works with several organizations on campus. Hablantes Unidos and HALO are just a few organizations that volunteer at the community center in Milan and work with Fuentes.

Freshman Norma Castro said she volunteers with Hablantes Unidos and works closely with the immigrant population in Milan. She said the organization focuses on helping the immigrants of that community assimilate into American and English-speaking culture.

Castro said Hablantes Unidos members volunteer at the Health Action Center in Milan, which provides resources for immigrants to help them with their day-to-day lives.

"Our biggest goal is to create a resource guide by getting information from neighboring towns about resources for social services," Castro said.



Submitted photo  
Axel Fuentes, left, speaks at the opening of the Health Action Center in Milan, Mo., last September. The Center is a project on which Hablantes Unidos and Fuentes collaborated.

The resource guide will allow center volunteers to direct community members to the assistance they need, Castro said. The guide includes food banks,

lawyers, tax agents and health insurance providers.

Castro said Hablantes Unidos also works toward educating non-immigrant community

members about the needs of the immigrant population. She said it is important for both parts of the population to work together to be more unified.



Submitted photo  
Health Science secretary Brenda Embree hikes in the Devil's garden of Arches National Park in Moab, Utah, as part of the TruAdventure scouting experiences last summer.

## Program gets students, residents out in nature

BY HUONG TRAN  
Staff Reporter

Truman State is focusing more on adult learners who are 21 years or older by creating a new traveling and learning program called TruAdventure.

Jennifer Hurst, a health and exercise science professor who organized TruAdventure, said this program is aimed toward Truman alumni, faculty, staff and other community members. The mission is to encourage and create liberal learners who learn throughout their life, she said.

"As adults, we should seek opportunities to learn and constantly try to grow and develop ourselves throughout our lifetime in different ways," Hurst said.

Truman Institute Director Kevin Minch said TruAdventure is a wilderness excursion educational program. Participants will have a chance to explore natural sites in Colorado and Utah, Minch said.

He said some of the summer-long trip's destinations will be Arches National Park and Canyonlands National Park.

She said participants will hike and learn geological features and the history of national parks.

Hurst said the program focuses on helping people develop skills to be safe outdoors.

"The goal is to get them interested

enough in exploring these places that they are going to want to be active and go do that in other places too," Hurst said.

She said the program is designed not only to provide people with knowledge about nature, but also to bring them health and exercise benefits. In addition, participants will have a chance to meet new people.

Hurst said the program can have up to 25 people. Four people have signed up, two of which are Truman alumni and the other two are local residents, she said.

"So far we've gotten a lot of positive reactions in terms of the concept," Minch said. "People are saying that this is definitely something that, if they're free and have the time, they'd be interested in pursuing."

Hurst said she organized a similar program last summer specifically for students. Last summer's program introduced information about the national parks' background and helped students learn about camping and hiking, she said.

"My focus on the national parks came from my love for them," she said.

Minch said Hurst submitted a formal proposal last June and has been developing her idea since then with the University's help.

The proposal was approved within a couple of months, Minch said. He said the University needed to re-

search what the course would be like before it was approved.

"When we're dealing with non-Truman students, our main concern is producing a product that serves the interest of lifelong learners and that people continue to learn after they've left college," Minch said.

Hurst said she went on a scouting trip to look for some possible activities they could do for the trip last summer.

Hurst said the most important thing is to be physically ready for the trip. She wants participants to think of this trip as a motivation to become more active, she said.

"I had never gone hiking before," said senior Carmen Holahan, a student who went on last summer's program. "I've done some hikes but never intense, up mountains, and so I really wanted to try this."

"I imagine that eventually we'll have to change locations and go to different places, so that people who are interested in repeating the experience can do something different," Minch said.

Minch said the program fee is \$1,600 for double occupancy rooms and \$2,000 for single occupancy rooms, which covers housing, transportation and meals. Participants will stay in local hotels and use buses for transportation, he said.

For more information, please visit <http://institute.truman.edu/truadventure.asp>.

## Minor Detail progresses to quarter finals

**Members of a capella group add choreography to their singing routine**

BY CHRISTA DECLUE  
Staff Reporter

Only the second time competing with choreography, Truman's all-girl, a capella singing group Minor Detail, sang its way to quarter finals for the International Collegiate A Cappella Competition on Saturday in DeKalb, Ill.

In the next round, the only all-girl team in the competition, competed against 10 other teams, but didn't place in the top three spots to earn a seat in the next round.

Minor Detail president junior Sarah Berman said the group typically only sings, but the competition required incorporating choreography — something new to the group.

In addition to the choreography, the judges score based on the arrangements of the song, intonation and stage presence, she said.

"The choreography is a challenge," Berman said. "One of our own girls does choreography."

Usually the groups that move on to nationals have professional choreographers, so Minor Detail performed in front of the other a cappella groups at Truman to hear feedback, she said.

The member who choreographed songs, Jenny Zweifel, said each song's choreography was a different challenge.

"Singing and dancing is like trying to pat your head while rubbing your stomach," Zweifel said.

The most difficult song to choreograph was "Cosmic Love" because it did not have lyrics one easily could pair with actions, she said. Zweifel said the choreography was inspired by videos from YouTube and the television show "The Sing Off."

"It's always a disadvantage to not have outside help, but I think we did very well for being singers not coming from dance backgrounds," Zweifel said. "Singing along with choreography is difficult to accomplish, and they all struggled, but it was fun and a lot of hard work but it paid off."

Another difficult part is ensuring everything sounds as close to perfection as possible, said sophomore Kaitlyn Daniels, Minor Detail member. The group works hard to sing with dynamic volumes, which makes certain parts stand out, she said.

Minor Detail performed three songs at the competition — "Rolling in the Deep" by Adele, "Cosmic Love" by Florence + the Machine and "Party Rock Anthem" by LMFAO, said senior Delaney Schlake, Minor Detail musical director. Minor Detail members vote on song choices, Schlake said.

"We talk about songs we would be interested in," she said. "We like soulful, groovy songs."

Schlake said all the women in Minor Detail are good singers, but a combination of singing and dancing is what is judged in the competition, Schlake said.

They sing because they love it and are good at it, Schlake said. The next step for Minor Detail is participating in a high school tour, Berman said.

Any students interested in joining Minor Detail can attend auditions Feb. 16, in the third floor of the SUB, Daniels said.