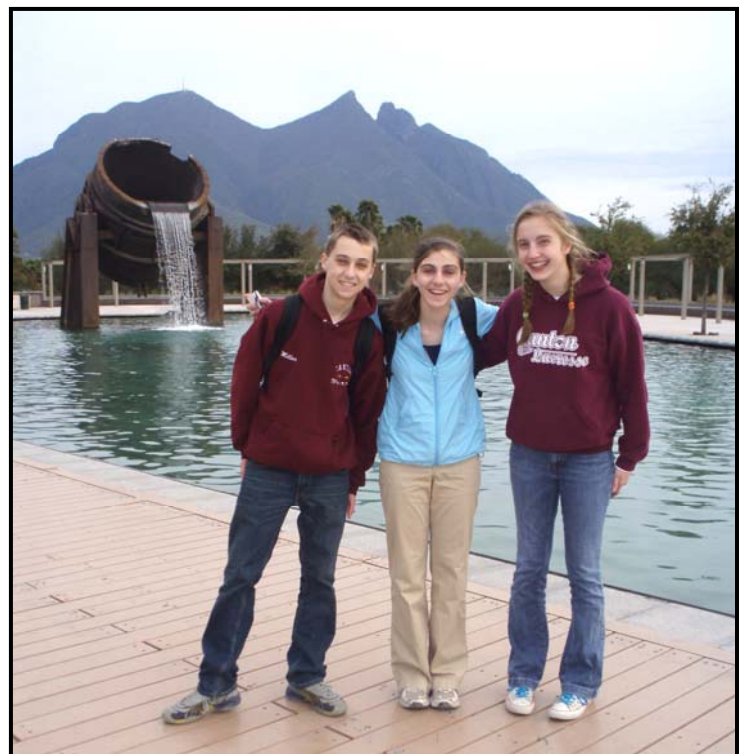


Los Estudiantes Nuevos del Intercambio,

So, you're headed to Mexico. I think I'll say that again to let it sink in. You are finally headed to Mexico. All that waiting has led up to this, the adventure of a lifetime. When you step off this plane, the United States (and English) are behind you; Mexico and the Spanish Language await you. I believe that to understand a culture, one must immerse oneself in it and earn its intricacies, some of which you might find extraneous. For example, I know that *tope* is how to say speed bump, that cactuses are sold in Mexican supermarkets by the pound, and the selection of beverage available at the local Oxxo station. While these might seem foolish to others, these memories evoke my



memories of my time in Mexico. This is what I want you all to do; make your memories and make them last. Take it all in and bond with the Mexican culture, and be bold. Talk to the Mexican merchants in the *mercado* yourself and learn from the many museums you are likely to visit. Open yourself up to their culture and embrace it all; make friends and don't hesitate for a second. Buy your souvenirs and make sure they fit. Talk to your families and take pictures. Stop and take a deep breath and look around. By the end of this trip, you will have a new *mama*, a new *papa*, and even new *hermanos y hermanas*, both Mexican and American. Value that relationship, and never let it die. However, it is up to you to forge your relationships, and experience the exchange for all it is. I can't tell you



what to expect on this sheet of paper,
because each experience is different.
Make it your own. Now go out there
and learn! *Buenos Suerte!*

~ Ned Furtney

