We pay homage to the family

Mother preserves family, culture in a new world
By Silvia Vega
With many barriers that my mother had to overcome when they decided to bring our family to the United States, I am very proud to say that she did a great job of raising six of us in a different country, with a different culture and a different language.

Socorro came from Mexico to Wisconsin in the 1990’s not knowing how to speak English. She worked along with my father to get a job and be able to put us in school and still have enough food on the table.

Even though we were going to be growing up in a different world than what they had been brought up in, she made sure to maintain our own culture. They still made sure to celebrate and teach us their traditions and to stay united as a family.

For all the sacrifices that they had to make, I am what I am now and have what I have now. And I will be able to teach my children the values and morals that they taught us.

Just one look, that’s all it took
By El Khanssa Tmiri
He was born Angel Adam Nusez on September 20, 2003 in Libertyville, Illinois at Condell Medical Center. It was my first and last baby and the first grandchild in my family. Everyone was shocked, but they wanted to move on and enjoy the little one.

It was hard going through the nine months of pregnancy, and giving birth is so hard, but once I took a first look at my son, it was all forgotten.

I am a proud mother with one wish, that my son will grow to be a better person and make the right choices. He makes my life easy, and he is my everyday inspiration. I want him to be proud of me and look up to me someday. I love him so much that I pray God day and night to keep him and return him safe to me again.

Father stands like a rock for his family
By Farrah Lott
Alexander Lott III was a dedicated, courageous, strong and honorable man. Friends and family call him “The Rock.” He worked for the Chicago Heights police department and was the chief of security at St. James Hospital for 20 years.

One day “The Rock” had a hard fall. His blood pressure had gotten up so high that his kidneys failed. For a hardworking father of six children, this was a tragedy. He fought for 15 years, transplant after transplant, none successful, all failing, one after another. Still he stood as if he had no disability, standing 6’1” and strong. Renal failure didn’t stop his constant dedication to his family, his strength overcoming being weakened.

He generously shared his love with everyone and most of all his glorious walk with God. He taught us to never give up. Your life should be peaceful, he said, not filled with chaos and conclusion, and most of all, you should treat others as you want to be treated.

He was wise and humble to the day we buried him in the ground. He was the true glue in our family. All his children and grandchildren still know him as Dad.

He always said, “If God can bring you to it, He can bring you through it.”

All eyes are on ...
My friend
By Aaron Blakc
Charlotte was a very special friend, the mother of my two children. Although we're no longer together in a monogamous relationship, we're definitely cool with each other.
Charlotte has a seizure disorder, and last summer she went through two brain surgeries. The last time she came home she was rushed back to the UW hospital for emergency care and ended up in a coma for five and a half weeks. That was hard on the family, especially our girls. Charlotte had so many wires and needles in her, she looked like someone from a sci-fi movie. It would have scared the girls to see her like that for sure. Even though she was unconscious, I still would talk to her and reassure her that we all loved her and expected her to come home, and she did.
I had to speak to nine neurologists before they released her. They needed to be reassured that she'd take her meds and be properly taken care of. I found out very quickly that taking on that additional responsibility was more than I could handle. She needs help with everything from balancing her checkbook to doing laundry to being driven from A to B.
Charlotte's doing so much better now, but she still has seizures, so all the operations didn't isolate and stop what they were supposed to. She's such a trooper, she mentioned to me that although she felt as if they were using her in an experiment, at least maybe because of the failure of her operation they wouldn't try the same procedure on anyone else.
She called me one day after purchasing a kid's book for her grandson. It was a book of pictures that you look at with a child and tell them what they're seeing. There was one picture that she tried to read to me on the phone, but I just couldn't make sense of what she was saying. I drove to her apartment to see what the picture was, since it bothered her so much, and was stunned to see that the thing she had so much trouble identifying was a shoe. She's learning the ABC's, and other things she used to do still come naturally. The doc said it will always be a struggle for her in certain areas, but that's okay, because she's not only the mother of my children; she's my good friend.

Strong woman bears heavy burdens
By LaToya Ward
Martha Noble is a strong, black, determined, fifty-nine-year-old woman. She's the oldest of eight sisters and brothers. She also has seven children of her own. Martha was born in St. Louis, Missouri. Her mom died when she was twenty-six, leaving her to care for her younger sisters and brothers.
Life for Martha was extremely hard. Raising my mom and the rest of my aunts and uncles was a lot of hard work. She had to work extra hours just to have enough money to support her family. As the second oldest sibling, she had to get a job to help out. She couldn't afford brand new clothes, so she would have to go to a second hand store.
During this time, she had three kids of her own to care for. All together she had to care for 11 children. All of them stayed in a three bedroom apartment. They had just enough food to eat. Being the strong woman that she is, she never gave up. She wanted to see all her sisters and brothers grow together.
When she thought things couldn't get any worse, she was diagnosed with diabetes. She was pragmatic about it; she didn't let it get her down. She just carried on as if nothing was wrong. She always said, "If it don't kill you, it will just make you stronger.

Lori shines at Daybreak
By Martha Grogen
You would never guess how shy and quiet Lori really is when you see her at work. She's petite and thin, with short brown hair, always dresses in jeans, and has an impish smile. She's the manager and lead cook of a small café named Daybreak. She knows the customers by name, teases them constantly, and has a great sense of humor. Lori shoulders a lot of responsibility and stress, but she feels most at home working in the café.
Lori dreams of owning her own café/restaurant one day where she knows every employee and can be a part of a team. She would love to travel to see the ocean on either coast and to one day adopt a child. She lives in a comfortable home with her domestic partner, Lynn, and Lynn's youngest son. She admires Lynn's tenacity, perseverance, and strength, qualities she also has.
She's an avid reader and enjoys gruesome crime stories and biographies of serial killers. She loves taking her dog, Frasie, for walks in any kind of weather. Lori is very good at taking care of the people in her life. She's full of compassion, affection and strength. I'm glad to be a part of her team at Daybreak.
Building a Paragraph on Walt Whitman:

Thesis sentence: Walt Whitman displayed a democratic outlook in both his life and writing.

He believed he spoke for all people in his poetry. His notions of democracy included women,
and he wrote in “Song of Myself,” “I am the poet of the woman the same as the man” (21.425).
Whitman wrote articles on the arts, civic affairs, and political questions. He stated his views
on slavery openly as an antislavery Democrat. Just as the U.S. got rid of kings and aristocrats,
Whitman needed to break free of existing models and create a new literature, a new poetry.

Martha Gorgan

Whitman was second of nine children and left public school to help take care of his family. At
twelve he started to learn the printer's trade and fell in love with the written and printed word.
Both these examples tell how Walt Whitman displayed an outlook that was “democratic,” defined by
The American Heritage Dictionary as displaying “principles of social equality and respect for
the individual within a community and people in general.” Whitman was a school teacher who
let the students call him by his first name. In “Song of Myself” he describes feeling part of nature
when he writes, “I am he that walks with the tender and growing sight, I call to the earth and sea
half-held by the night.” Denise Hardnett

He believed in the concept of the United States: that all people within a democracy had a voice
and that each had value. As a writer he pulled away from tradition in both his subject matter and
in the delivery of his ideas. Sometimes he spoke as an individual and other times as a member of
a democracy where every voice is given an opportunity to be heard. In “Song of Myself” he
draws parallels showing the relationship of we the many to I the one, showing the common
threads that bind all humans together within a democracy. He writes, “It is time to explain
myself—let us stand up.” Terry Fox

He worked in many places, from low-level carpenter to editor and many other jobs which helped
him understand the lives of human beings. He went to a lot of meetings about democracy to
learn and improve his knowledge. He became a famous person after his first edition, and he was
called “the greatest democrat.” Whitman always claimed to speak for each of us and wanted us
to change, to be different, for the good of all of us. He is the poet of potential, of power, and he
created his own rules in his own way. He writes, “every atom belongs to me as good belongs to
you” (p. 165, line 3). Abby Martinez

Walt Whitman viewed poetry as freedom of expression and something natural. Whenever
Whitman stated “I” throughout his poetry, he spoke for all people—men, children, and women.
He believed that women are equal to men: “I am the poet of the woman the same as the man ...
And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man” (p. 179, lines 425-426). Although people
didn’t believe that Whitman’s writings were considered poetry, his honesty, creativity, and
strong-determined thoughts made poetry what it is today. LaShanda Rimson

Odyssey

Oracle

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Director

Emily Auerbach

262-3273
eascherbach@dux.wisc.edu

Founder

Jean Ferrara

263-3233
ferres@wisc.org

Coach

Marshall Cook

262-4911
mcook@daa.wisc.edu

Oracle 3
The life of Jack Roosevelt Robinson

You've been assigned to write a five-paragraph profile of Jackie Robinson, the first black man to play major league baseball in modern times. You find the following information.

1) Born January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia.
2) His father abandoned the family six months later.
3) His mother, Mallie, took her five children west to Pasadena, California in 1920 to seek a better life.
4) Robinson went to public schools and then to Pasadena Junior College, where he excelled in all sports.
5) He transferred to UCLA and became the first four-sports letterman in the school’s history, starring in football, basketball, track, and baseball. (Baseball was his fourth best sport.)
6) After Pearl Harbor, he was drafted into the Army and wound up a second lieutenant.
7) He was court-martialed for refusing to move to the back of an Army bus. All charges were dismissed, and he received an honorable discharge.
8) In 1945, he played shortstop for the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro League.
9) Brooklyn Dodger general manager Branch Rickey selected Robinson to integrate “professional” (meaning “white”) baseball and signed him in 1946 to play for the Montreal Royals, a Dodger farm team in the International League.
10) He led the league, hitting .349, with 40 stolen bases.
12) Played his first major league game—the first black man to do so since the turn of the century—on April 15, 1947.
13) His own teammates threatened to go on strike rather than play with a black. The St. Louis Cardinals also threatened to refuse to play against him.
14) Fans threw black cats on the field when he played. They yelled racist epithets and cursed him. He received numerous threats on his life.
15) He was named the National League Rookie of the Year.
16) Voted the Most Valuable Player in the National League, 1949, when he led the league in hitting at .342.
17) Selected as an All-Star every year between 1949-1954.
18) Retired in 1957, after 10 years in the major leagues. During those 10 years, his Dodgers won six pennants and one World Series.
19) Became a successful business executive and civil rights advocate.
20) Died October 24, 1972, at age 53.
21) Quote from JR: “A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”
22) Quote about JR: “Robinson could hit and bust and run. He had intimidation skills, and he burned with a dark fire. He wanted passionately to win. He bore the burden of a pioneer and the weight made him stronger. If one can be certain of anything in baseball, it is that we shall not look upon his like again.” — Roger Kahn, Boys of Summer
23) Quote about JR: His first major league game “was the most eagerly anticipated debut in the annals of the national pastime. It represented both the dream and the fear of equal opportunity, and it would change forever and complicate the game of the attitudes of Americans.” — Robert Lipsyte and Peter Levine, Idols of the Game.

Write your thesis statement about Jackie Robinson, including three assertions about him.

Drawing on his tenacity, his courage, and his unparalleled athletic ability, Jackie Robinson changed Major League Baseball forever.

Assertion one: Jackie Robinson was a tenacious fighter. (7, 13)

Assertion two: He faced danger with unflinching courage. (12, 14)

Assertion three: He was also one of the finest all-around athletes who ever lived. (4, 5, 10, 16)

Restate and extend the thesis in your conclusion:

By integrating Major League baseball, Jackie Robinson became the most important ballplayer in baseball history and a force for positive social change in America.