

[Speaker 1] Um basically International House is a opportunity for student's who come from different countries to come to the United States and live with an American resident um who can kind of share with them the cultures of America as well the student the foreign exchange student to share with them their culture from their own country. Our goal was to intermingle between cultures.

[Jessica Wynn] My name is Jessica Wynn, I used to be an RA in International House. My responsibilities were to maintain peace between all of our students also to make sure things ran smoothly um keep an eye out for the students make sure nothing is happening, people who are sneaking in and just the everybody was abiding by the rules. We had to be more on the alert because um residents from the same country from the United States don't have as many conflicts and there's a lot of conflicts maybe with religion with view points, things like that, that you had to be aware of being an RA in International House.

[Katelyn] I'm Katelyn and I'm from Australia and I live in I-House. It was my first preference just because it sort of made sense, so I just put it first because I'm an international student.

[Nunami] I'm Nunami I was born in Japan and I just came here about 2 years ago. Well I heard that they will pick an international student and an American student to be a you know roommate together so I thought it would be a good idea to you know live with someone who is little bit more understanding to international students than the you know the regular people, I guess.

[Laura] I'm Laura I picked the international dorms just to kind of I guess get a different experience from what I've already had um the first couple years of school, something new.

[Speaker 2] Since Long Beach State is known as a commuter campus most students have only their new classes, books and parking to worry about the start of each semester, but those who live on campus must prepare to meet a new roommate as well. And residents of International House have their own specific expectations and concerns.

[Nunami] I was a little bit nervous because I'm from Japan and uh every time I see people who are interested in Japan are kind of like crazy like uh they're into like anime stuff or like Samurai ninjas you know all those kind of crazy stuff and like I'm not really into them but I tell them I'm from Japan and they'd be like oh my god I've watched this anime blah blah blah and I'm like ok ok I'm not you know a big fan of anime.

[Katelyn] I didn't actually know I was going to be paired up with an American, we didn't not really get told that. I suppose the cultures aren't too different so I was you know like maybe someone from Europe or uh or Asia might have been different but I consider Americans pretty much the same so it was cool, it was fun.

[Nunami] I was um little bit scared maybe she uh wouldn't be like patient enough to be understanding my English I guess.

[Laura] I was not expecting her to speak English so well... that was, that was really good. I was actually looking forward to it you know because I wanted to know I mean I want to know like what, what they do, what they live like.

[Speaker 2] International students face unique challenges since in addition to meeting a new roommate and all the other stresses a new semester brings they must also adapt to a new country. The American roommate pairing is set to reduce the element of culture shock but there are still surprises.

[Nunami] The first big thing coming up uh coming up to the mind is probably like the characteristic of a Japanese people and American people because uh American people are like really individualistic so um it sounds kind of mean to say but um I well I think they're more like self-centered a little bit and like Japanese people are more um you know they're uh they care about people more than themselves so. For example when I'm talking to somebody um ok back in Japan they always um you know listen to other person first and then they will talk and then they'll you know pretty much wait until the other person stopped talking but here people are like you know me, me, me and I'm like you know blah, blah, blah they most of the time they don't even try to listen to the others so um that's like the I think the that's a pretty good example. I don't say it's a bad thing because like um you know those Japanese people can be really be sometimes really like um irritating to me because they never say their opinions clearly.

[Katelyn] The drinking age is kind of been a shock actually because at home I work uh at a liquor store and my job is to taste beer and wine so coming here being 19 not being able to just like go out its like a social thing at home so that's, that's really different.

[Speaker 2] One of the goals of International House is to provide an active social setting for students to interact with each other and learn about different cultures from around the world. According to CSULB's website the International House provides a welcoming sanctuary for student from other countries as well as a great learning experience for domestic students or at least this is the hope.

[Nunami] I don't think its really succeeding or anything. Its kind of unfortunate but I see most of the time uh international students are hanging out with international student and American students are ending up hanging out with American students.

[Laura] International students all group themselves together so it's kind of hard for sort of Americans to break into that.

I think it's a little different because it isn't like, it's less people in a sweet and its less people I mean its not like the typical dorm style, so you just don't see everybody all the time.

[Katelyn] I don't think its as social as the other dorms from what I've heard from a few Americans that I've met in the other dorms like people seem to get together a lot more over there um people said to us from last semester that were the first people in I-House who have really like got a big group of friends going and actually started doing stuff around I-House and made it a bit noisier and things. We had a meeting the other day and we've been here for like 3 months and there were people who came to the meeting who I've never seen in I-House before so a lot of people stick to their rooms, people aren't really interactive here to be honest like yeah not at all really. I've met a quarter of the people who live here basically so we don't really and they haven't really setup anything for us to all get together and because we all don't obviously know anyone around here but yeah.

[Nunami] It's a good you know good opportunity definitely so they should probably try a little bit harder to interact with each other but um I'm pretty sure there's a limit kind of.

[Jessica Wynn] So stuck in their ways they don't really want to see anybody else's viewpoint. The conflict were more verbal disagreements on culture I think that's we had our problem with. Conflict resolution for me consists of sitting down and letting both hearing both people's sides of the story and try to come up with a way to kind of see something through each other's eyes and so that was my main thing would be just sit, just sit down let's have a conversation you need to say your piece, she needs to say her piece or he needs to say his piece type thing and once you hear everybody's side of the story then it kind of opens things up for people. Its like you have to be able to see yourself in somebody else's shoes, if you can't picture yourself in somebody else's shoes the conflict won't get resolved.