

Jessica German – Friendship love story winner

My best friend & I became best friends because of Black Hawk College. We were both enrolled in the Nursing program and unfortunately did not pass by less than a percent in the first level! At that time, we didn't know each other. When we didn't give up and re-enrolled in the class, we started a study group together. We have been getting excellent grades, and are basically inseparable. We talk every day, day and night, and study our tails off. Now we are less than a semester away from passing nursing school! She is my long lost bestfriend, and I love her so much! We couldn't do it without each other.

Jessica (on right) and her best friend, Brianna Brooks.



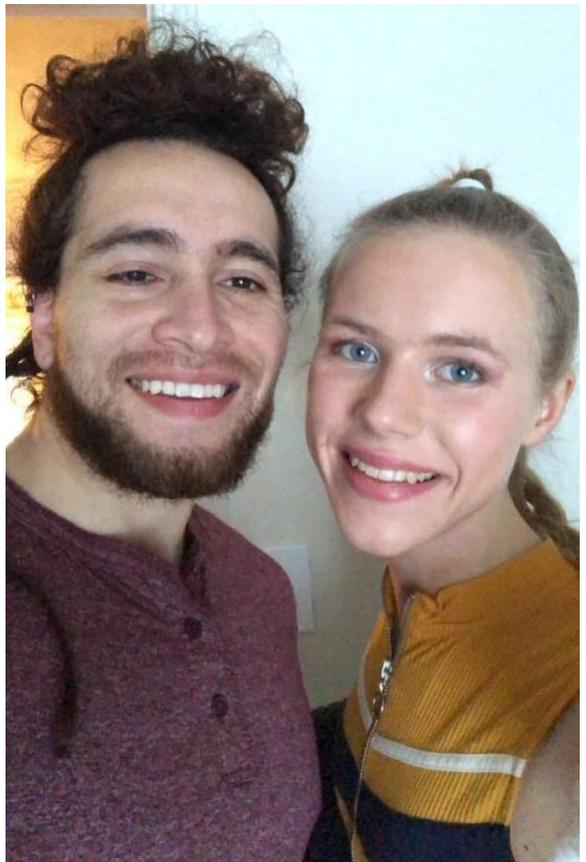
Edgardo Gonzalez Diaz – Romantic love story winner

I call this the “the unprovable 5000 miles” since it is a story about two people who met each other even though one was from USA and the other from Chile.

This happened about 5 years ago. She was studying abroad in Chile, my native country, and I happened to be enrolled in the law program of the same university that she was attending there. We met each other during a culture/language exchange activity where international and local students had the opportunity to practice informal conversations both in Spanish and in the native language of the foreign students. The funny thing is that she, at the time, spoke very little Spanish... and I had zero knowledge of English; in fact, I was there just out of curiosity. Of course, we did not really speak a lot during that encounter because of the big language difference, but somehow, we noticed each other. Once the activity was over, we parted ways without knowing that there was a great adventure waiting for us.

It was a week or two after that first encounter that we saw each other again, and it was once more, by mere coincidence (the truth is that I was... skipping class – but don't tell anyone) For some reason, we just looked to each other directly in the eyes without saying a word; well, it was probably because we didn't speak each other's languageahaha. By impulse, I wrote “Hello!” in one piece of paper and showed it to her, she smiled and pointed to my pencil, then grabbed it and used the same paper to write back to me. That day, we ended exchanging our phone numbers and began chatting by text – it was a lot easier than trying to speak.

Eventually, we began going out together. She was curious about this strange foreign place, and I was happy to walk around my beloved city, Valparaiso. Then, we started dating. The thing is that, by then, she had only three weeks left on her program, and was soon going back to United States. We promised to keep our relationship and



wait until we could see each other again; we communicated through social media almost every day. Soon, a year had passed since she departed from my country.

I decided to come to United States during her birthday, to see her once more. I still didn't know English, but my resolution was bigger than any language barrier after all that time away from each other. When she saw me, we both cried. It was the most exacerbated happiness that I have feel in my entire life, and it's because it isn't the same to see who you love only by a camera than to be able to finally hug them after all that time away.

And well, after a year and 5000 miles, she is now my wife.