

INTERNATIONAL CENTER

Newsletter Vol. 82



Feb_Mar



Last September, 6 KIT students participated in a study tour to Toronto, Canada. They attended the Humber Institute of Technology to study English for 3 weeks. Please read the following essay by one of the participants, Honami Yokojima.

Study Tour to Toronto

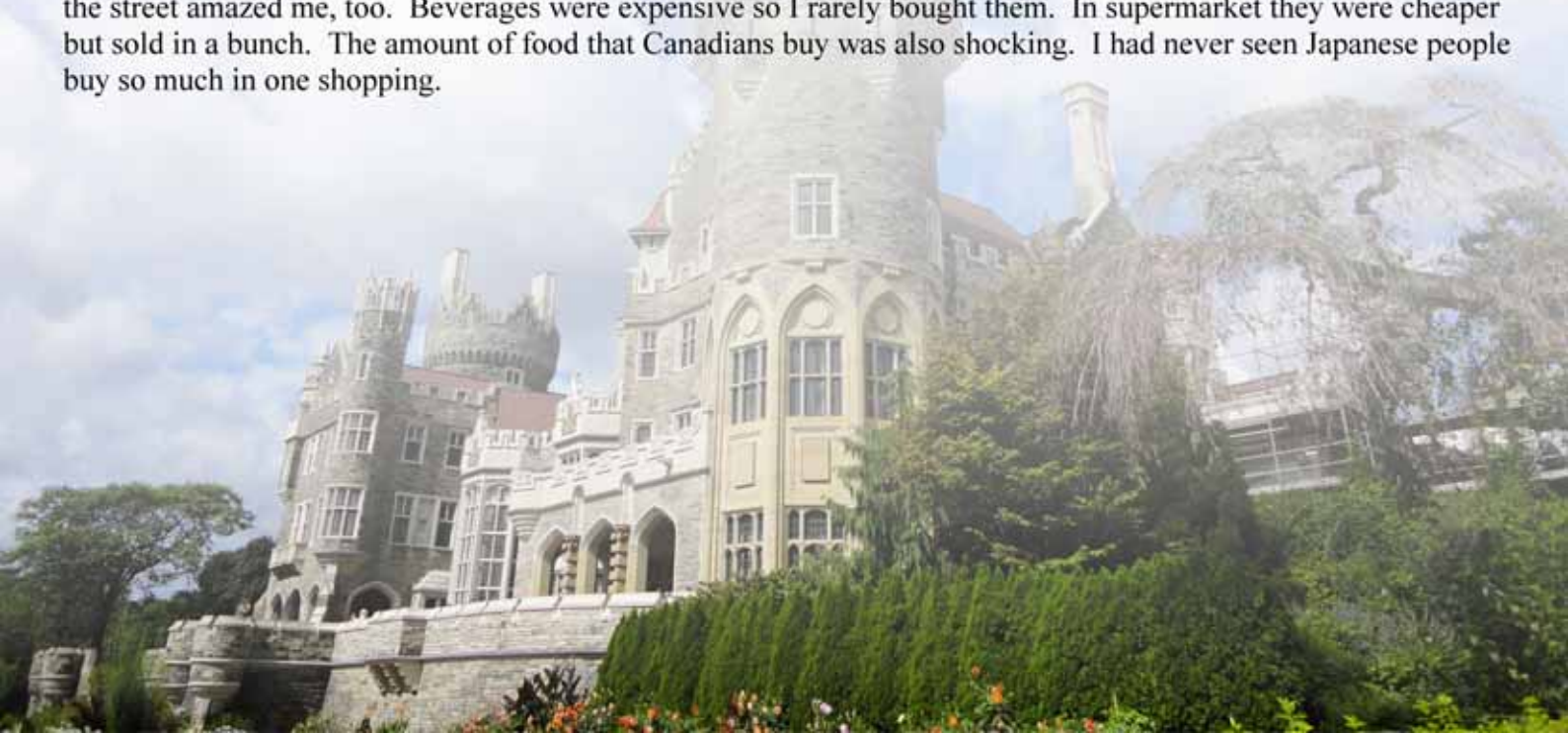
Honami Yokojima

1st year in bio-environmental materials

The 3 weeks that I spent in Canada were full of surprises, fun, and challenges. Everything was new, which made the experience very meaningful. Time passed so quickly, and I did not want to come home when it was over.

What awaited me there was life in English. It was well expected but when I arrived at my host family's home and started conversing in English, I realized that it was the reality. English was the only means of communication. I had to ask them to repeat many times and yet often could not make myself understood because of my poor pronunciation. My host family was all very kind, however, and so was the Chinese student who was also staying there. They patiently tried to understand what I meant, so I was able to communicate a lot with them. At school, my classmates, even though they were placed in the same level, spoke much better than I could. I got frustrated at times but since they were very friendly, I felt at ease in speaking to them. It was a great experience to share with people from many different countries things such as cultural difference and purpose of coming to Canada. Such conversation helped me to rapidly improve my listening skills in the short period of time.

I found surprise in little things in life. First of all, the bathroom - the toilet, bathtub, and sink were all in one place! Every morning my host family, the Chinese student and I needed to use the space at around the same time, which was inconvenient. In a bus they pull a string when they want to get off. When I got on a bus for the first time, I was quite unsure what I was supposed to do. Often buses did not come on time and I had wait for a long time at a bus stop, which does not usually happen in Japan. The number of people who drink and eat while they walk on the street amazed me, too. Beverages were expensive so I rarely bought them. In supermarket they were cheaper but sold in a bunch. The amount of food that Canadians buy was also shocking. I had never seen Japanese people buy so much in one shopping.





During the program I frequently thought about my future. Many of my classmates were studying in Canada in order to do what they wanted to do. Seeing them pursue their dreams made me wonder: What are my goals? What do I want to do with my life after all? I bitterly realized that I had spent the first 6 months of my college life without a goal or the diligence to achieve it. I earnestly thought about how to lead a meaningful college life and what I wanted to do after I graduate. If I had not gone to Canada I may have never thought about such a thing and may have spent lazy days until graduation. I do not want to waste the precious realization, experience and courage that I gained in Canada. I want to use them as driving power to accomplish what I want to and achieve the goals that I set. Many of the people that I met in Canada seemed to be aware of how to fulfill their lives. To me, they looked as if they were glowing.

The campus life, after-school excursions to downtown Toronto, the trip to Niagara Falls and the CN Tower, Major League Baseball, my homestay - I will treasure all these memories. If I have a chance, I want to participate in a study tour again. Three weeks is short, however. I want to go for a longer period of time after I improve my English. I am truly glad that I participated.



International "C" Hour

January 28 (Fri) at International Lounge

The participants of the International "C" Hour in January enjoyed pounding mochi, and of course, eating it, too. Mochi, rice cake, is traditionally eaten in at the beginning of a new year. Since people nowadays use an automatic pounding machine or, much more commonly, buy vacuum-packed mochi at stores, it was the first time even for most of the Japanese students to do it in the traditional way. One international student after another took the pestle and swung it down to knead the steamed sticky rice while two ladies from the community skillfully turned it over after each pounding. The pounded mochi was quickly consumed at the party that followed, with such toppings as ground sesame and sweat azuki bean paste. For Rosyadi Marwan, a doctoral student from Indonesia, mochi pounding proved to be a good way to release stress. "The best time to do it is when you are frustrated," Rosyadi said. "Today my head was spinning after spending hours on research but I feel refreshed now."



International Party in Parabo

February 22, 2010 18:00~

February's International "C" Hour, co-sponsored by the Civic Activity Division of the Kitami City Office, was held at Parabo. It was the first time to have the "C" Hour outside the KIT campus. The event started with the lectures by two recent returnees of Japan Overseas Cooperation Program, one from Ghana and the other from Honduras. Dr. Yamagishi, the director of the KIT International Center, spoke next about his experience of international activities with a focus on the JICA exchange relationship with Kyrgyzstan.

In the party that followed, Dr. Yamagishi was presented with a huge flower bouquet in celebration of his receiving the Social Contribution Award from the Hokkaido government. Then the party mood was boosted by a band of 5 Malaysian students, female international student dancers, and a duo of a Mongolian shamisen player and a Japanese drummer. The 200 people who gathered at the party were greatly entertained by these attractions of international variety.

“Graduation” Ceremony for short-term exchange students

February 8 (Tu)

On February 8th, the “graduation” ceremony was held for the short-term exchange students who are completing their terms here and returning home at the end of this semester. Each student received a certificate from Dr. Yamagishi, director of the International Center. Then Lin PeiYi, from Taiwan, gave a farewell speech representing the 16 students in the fluent Japanese that she had acquired since she came to Japan. After that, all the attendants made a circle, held hands with the next persons and had a quiet time. Sounds of sobbing gradually became louder as they recalled their fun memories, difficult times and wonderful people that they had met. In the sharing time that followed, many of the students made remarks on what precious friends they made, and how they had changed and grown since they came. The ceremony ended with the slide show that Mr. Suzuki, the Japanese instructor made, with great pictures from the events of this academic year.



Field Trip to Mombetsu

February 20-21 (Sat/Sun)

A group of 28 students took part in the field trip to Mombetsu on February 20-21. On the first day, they attended the opening ceremony of the International Symposium of the Northern Region, where Bai Yuting, a doctoral student from China, gave a speech on behalf of the international students. On the second day, three graduate students gave a presentation at the symposium. Other activities of the day included a trip to the Okhotsk Sea Ice Museum and the Okhotsk Tower, and a cruise on the icebreaker Garinko-go. Although sea ice could not be seen nearby, the students enjoyed learning about aspects of the life in the Okhotsk area by visiting the room of minus 20C, feeding seals and looking at the display of sea creatures.

For Ganbold Mungun-Erdene, from Mongolia, it was her first time to see an ocean and get on a boat. She was so impressed that she did not seem to be able to find the right word to describe the impact that she got. “It was great - really, really great,” Mungun said.



Dr. Yamagishi

Greetings from Dr. Yamagishi

After 15 years' of working for the international programs at KIT, it is now time to resign. We have seen a big increase in the number of international students and overseas partner institutions. Our international graduates are having successful careers in many different parts of the world, which pleases me greatly. On the other hand, while the world is becoming borderless the hearts of human beings are not free from boundaries yet. I hope that the experience that you acquire at KIT helps you and empowers you in your future career. I wish you all the best of all!

Graduation Party

March 9 (Wed) in Atrium

A graduation party for the international graduates, which is the biggest event of the year sponsored by the International Center, was held at the atrium with about 100 participants from within and outside the campus. Of the 9 graduates on the list, 5 are staying here to pursue a higher degree, which delights us all. The event began with the greeting of the President Ayuta, followed by a speech by Chen Huaihua, who is completing his doctoral degree and returning home to teach at his home institution. Then Dr. Yamagishi, the director of the International Center, introduced each graduate and presented a memorial gift.

During the party, the graduating international students shared their memorial pictures with us on a slide show. Then for an attraction, two Chinese students sang songs, a group of Japanese students performed a pop dance, and an impromptu chorus of the people from the community sang a few traditional Japanese folk songs. The party mood was then enhanced by Uighur dancing of Ayinuer Abulizi, who was joined by many people from the floor. At the closing of the event, a slide show was shown to recognize the contributions over the years of Dr. Yamagishi, who is retiring at the end of March.



Congratulations to the Graduates!

Undergraduate Programs

YU Pengxin
FU Haojie
LI Jipeng
Lidyana binti ROSLAN

Master's Program

WU Juejun
LIU Junqiao
LEE Kyoung Moo

Doctoral Program

CHEN Haihua
Abeer SAAD



◎ April Calendar ◎

April	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23

■ 4 / 5 13 : 30 - Tutor guidance at A208

■ 4 / 6 Entrance Ceremony

■ 4 / 8 Class starts

■ 4 / 11 16 : 20 - Orientation for exchange students at A209

■ 4 / 14 16 : 20 - Orientation for 1st-year students at A209

■ 4 / 21 16 : 30 - International "C" Hour
at 3rd floor Meeting Room